



THE PEACE CORPS WELCOMES YOU TO

# MOZAMBIQUE



A PEACE CORPS PUBLICATION  
FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

March 2013, June 2013 CCD



## A WELCOME LETTER

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### **Welcome! BENVINDO!**

Dear Peace Corps/Mozambique Invitee,

On behalf of the 161 Health and Education Volunteers currently serving in Mozambique, our outstanding Mozambican and American staff, and the scores of Mozambican counterparts with whom PCVs are working daily throughout the country, I congratulate you on being selected to join our program!

Welcome to the world of Peace Corps, Southern Africa, and the Republic of Mozambique! The Peace Corps has a strong grassroots development and cross-cultural exchange track record in this beautiful land. We were invited by the Government of Mozambique to begin operations shortly after the end of the civil war and, since 1998, more than 900 Americans like you have served here. The country's development challenges are great, and your skills and your commitment to service are most welcome and needed here.

We are very excited to meet you and welcome you into our ranks as you begin an adventure that will surely be extremely rewarding. The road you will be on will have its twists and turns, to be sure, but the journey will be worthwhile, to put it mildly! We look forward to accompanying you on that journey.

Best wishes as you prepare for the transition.

Boa viagem, e até breve! Travel well and we'll see you soon!

Carl Swartz

Peace Corps/Mozambique  
Country Director



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# CORE EXPECTATIONS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

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In working toward fulfilling the Peace Corps Mission of promoting world peace and friendship, as a trainee and Volunteer, you are expected to:

1. Prepare your personal and professional life to make a commitment to serve abroad for a full term of 27 months
2. Commit to improving the quality of life of the people with whom you live and work; and, in doing so, share your skills, adapt them, and learn new skills as needed
3. Serve where the Peace Corps asks you to go, under conditions of hardship, if necessary, and with the flexibility needed for effective service
4. Recognize that your successful and sustainable development work is based on the local trust and confidence you build by living in, and respectfully integrating yourself into, your host community and culture
5. Recognize that you are responsible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your personal conduct and professional performance
6. Engage with host country partners in a spirit of cooperation, mutual learning, and respect
7. Work within the rules and regulations of the Peace Corps and the local and national laws of the country where you serve
8. Exercise judgment and personal responsibility to protect your health, safety, and well-being and that of others
9. Recognize that you will be perceived, in your host country and community, as a representative of the people, cultures, values, and traditions of the United States of America
10. Represent responsively the people, cultures, values, and traditions of your host country and community to people in the United States both during and following your service

# PEACE CORPS/MOZAMBIQUE HISTORY AND PROGRAMS

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## **History of the Peace Corps in Mozambique**

The government of Mozambique first approached the American government about the Peace Corps in the early 1990s, at a time when their post-independence civil conflict was coming to an end. In October 1998, the first Volunteers arrived to teach English in district secondary schools. The second group of Volunteers included a cohort of science teachers. The next group included not only secondary school English and science teachers, but also English teacher trainers, who began teaching in February 2002. In 2004, Peace Corps Volunteers began working in a new sector, community health. As community health promoters, Health Volunteers began working with a variety of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including international, national, community, and faith-based organizations on projects and programs in various areas such as HIV/AIDS education, care and treatment, nutrition, food security, and prevention of other diseases, such as cholera and malaria.

Currently 189 Volunteers serve in Mozambique (81 Health Volunteers and 108 Education Volunteers), many of whom will be a resource to you as you prepare for and begin your Peace Corps experience. You may be placed in a community with another Volunteer, replace a Volunteer who has just finished his or her service, or even be the first Volunteer assigned to a particular school, NGO, or community.

You will become an integral part of sustaining and expanding the Peace Corps program in Mozambique and will benefit greatly from the knowledge and experience of the Peace Corps/Mozambique staff. The staff consists of three Americans (a country director, associate director for health, and the administrative officer), a medical officer, and locally hired Mozambican or non-Mozambican professional and support staff.

## ***History and Future of Peace Corps Programming in Mozambique***

In 1999 the Peace Corps began a program to assist the government of Mozambique in its plans to teach English. English language capability is particularly important to the country as all of the countries surrounding it are English-speaking. Later, the Ministry of Education expressed a need for science teachers, so the next group of Volunteers included biology teachers. Both English and science Volunteers teach from eighth to 12th grade and also work with Mozambican teachers who seek to upgrade their language or teaching skills. In 2002 Peace Corps/Mozambique began placing Volunteers in teacher-training institutes. They joined a large international force of teachers from Cuba to Japan who are training Mozambican teachers to teach sixth- and seventh-grade English.

The purpose of the Peace Corps education project in Mozambique is to strengthen the culture of learning, teaching, and service in primary, secondary, technical schools, and teacher-training institutes. Peace Corps Volunteers accomplish this objective by (1) providing young men and women with quality instruction; (2) collaborating with and supporting Mozambican teachers in their efforts to be more qualified, creative, and effective; (3) assisting in the development of materials and resources to enhance English-teaching curricula and textbooks; and (4) strengthening links between schools and communities in environmental and public health education for girls, women, and out-of-school youth.

The secondary school academic year begins in February and has three trimesters: early February to early April, late April to mid-July, and late July to mid-October, when final exams begin. National exams run from November to early December. Agricultural and technical schools, to which some Volunteers are assigned, follow an August-to-June calendar.

An estimated 60 percent of schools and health posts were destroyed or closed during the war between the government and Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) in the 1970s and '80s. The Mozambican school system provides seven years of elementary education (first-seventh grades) and three years of either general secondary school (eighth-10th grades) or basic agricultural, commercial, or industrial school. Finally, there are two years of upper secondary or pre-university school (11th and 12th grades) or two to three years at an agricultural, commercial, or industrial school.

Through the collaboration with Mozambique's National AIDS Council, the health project has two goals: (1) that selected groups and individuals will organize and implement activities that encourage healthy lifestyle decisions, HIV/AIDS prevention, and support orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in their communities; and (2) that NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and faith-based organizations (FBOs) will have improved capacity to provide health and social services. Health Volunteers are placed with NGOs that are primarily working with HIV/AIDS projects. Volunteers' routine activities include community mobilization; training community health workers; assisting in the development of project plans; and assisting smaller organizations in professionalizing their outreach programs.

The AIDS pandemic strikes across all social strata in many Peace Corps countries. The loss of teachers has crippled education systems, while illness and disability drain family income and force governments and donors to redirect limited resources from other priorities. Fear and uncertainty caused by AIDS has led to increased domestic violence and stigmatizing of people living with HIV/AIDS, isolating them from friends and family and cutting them off from economic opportunities. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you will confront these issues on a very personal level. It is important to be aware of the high emotional toll that disease, death, and violence can have on Volunteers. As you strive to integrate into your community, you will develop relationships with local people who might die during your service. Because of the AIDS pandemic, some Volunteers will be regularly meeting with HIV-positive people and working with training staff, office staff, and host family members living with AIDS. Volunteers need to prepare themselves to embrace these relationships in a sensitive and positive manner. Likewise, malaria and malnutrition, motor vehicle accidents and other unintentional injuries, domestic violence, and corporal punishment are difficulties a Volunteer may confront. You will need to anticipate these situations and utilize supportive resources available throughout your training and service to maintain your own emotional strength so that you can continue to be of service to your community.



## COUNTRY OVERVIEW: MOZAMBIQUE AT A GLANCE

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### History

The modern boundaries of Mozambique were not defined until the late 19th century. For centuries before, kings, chiefs, and warlords rose and fell, populations settled and moved on, and frontiers between competing societies constantly shifted. Mozambique's first inhabitants were Bushmen and Hottentot hunters and gatherers. Bantu-speaking peoples migrated to the area from the north, passing through the Zambezi River Valley into the plateau and coastal areas between the first and fourth centuries. By the time Arab traders first landed on Mozambique's offshore islands around A.D. 300, the indigenous peoples had been absorbed into Bantu society. Portuguese explorers reached Mozambique in 1498. From then on, Portuguese trading posts became regular ports of call for European ships on new trade routes to the East. Later, traders traveled inland seeking gold and slaves. It is estimated that nearly 1 million people were sold as slaves to French colonies, Brazil, Cuba, and North America. Mozambique was a Portuguese colony for nearly 500 years.

The colonial policies of Lisbon were designed to benefit white settlers, members of elite Mozambican families, and Portugal. Little attention was paid to the development of Mozambique's economic infrastructure. What development did take place was linked to the powerful economy of neighboring South Africa through trade networks and the export of labor to South African mines. After World War II, while many European nations were granting independence to their colonies, Portugal clung to its overseas territories. In 1964, Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), led by U.S.-educated Eduardo Mondlane, initiated an armed campaign against Portugal. After 10 years of sporadic warfare, Mozambique gained independence on June 25, 1975, with Samora Machel as president and the Marxist FRELIMO as the sole legal political party.

A civil war between the FRELIMO government and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) began in 1976. RENAMO was initially supported by Ian Smith's apartheid regime in Rhodesia. After Rhodesia became the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980, apartheid South Africa took over the sponsorship of RENAMO. Local populations in the central and northern regions, who were dissatisfied with the FRELIMO government, supported RENAMO despite its human rights abuses. In 1984 the governments of South Africa and Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord, committing their countries to the cessation of hostilities. Despite the ensuing reduction in external support of RENAMO, the civil war continued. In 1986 President Machel was killed in a plane crash and was succeeded by Joaquim Chissano. An estimated 1 million people died during the war.

In 1989 FRELIMO officially abandoned Marxist-Leninism under pressure from the International Monetary Fund and The World Bank to make a structural readjustment and open up to a market economy. In 1990 direct talks began between the government and RENAMO. Negotiations were proceeding slowly when, in 1992, Mozambique suffered its worst drought in the 20th century. The government and RENAMO subsequently agreed on principles for humanitarian assistance while pledging security for relief operations. A formal cease-fire went into effect on October 4, 1992, and a U.N. peacekeeping force oversaw a successful two-year transition to multiparty elections. By 1995 the more than 1.7 million refugees who had sought asylum in neighboring countries as a result of the war and drought returned to Mozambique as part of the largest repatriation witnessed in sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, an additional 4 million internally displaced people returned to their areas of origin.

The determination of Mozambicans tired of civil war, the political transformations occurring in South Africa, and the efforts of donors and aid groups laid the foundation for Mozambique's peaceful elections in November 1994. The government has since encouraged development and a free-market economy, privatizing former

state-owned enterprises and supporting the freedom of the press and the development of an active civil society. Recent economic growth rates in Mozambique have been among the highest in the world. Vital road connections have been rebuilt, and the telecommunications system is much improved.

## **Government**

The country is a republic grounded in the 1994 constitution, which provides for a multiparty political system, a market economy, and free elections. The democratically elected government is composed of legislative, judicial, and executive branches. The president has a five-year term of office with a constitutional right to be reelected twice. He appoints a prime minister and ministerial cabinet that the National Assembly approves. The 146 members of the National Assembly are nominated by political parties and elected for five-year terms. The president appoints provincial governors without legislative approval. Thirty-three municipal councils are elected as blocks of councilors affiliated with one of the two major parties. The second round of municipal elections increased that number to 43 municipalities in 2008. In December 2004, Mozambique underwent a delicate transition as Joaquim Chissano stepped down after 18 years in office. His elected successor, Armando Emilio Guebuza, promised to continue the sound economic policies that have encouraged foreign investment.

Like the Ministry of Education, the hierarchy of the Ministry of Health is geographical. Below the national-level departments headquartered in Maputo are the provincial, district, and community levels. Every level has personnel responsible for management and implementation of activities of several or all the national departments. At the community level are health posts, in which minimally trained workers provide basic medicines for and advice on prevention and cure of illnesses, and maternity wards, in which midwives provide basic prenatal and postnatal care. People in need of medical care go to doctors at district health clinics and provincial hospitals.

## **Economy**

Despite the impressive political achievements mentioned above, Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The country still faces a heavy international debt burden, although indications are that much of that will be renegotiated or forgiven. In 2011 the per capita GDP was \$534.81. The infant mortality rate was 78.95 deaths per 1,000 live births (compared with 6 per 1,000 in the United States). In 2009, the literacy rate was 70.13 percent for men and 41.47 percent for women.

Mozambique has huge economic potential. It has abundant agricultural, hydroelectric, mineral, and transportation resources. Agricultural output is at only 31.96 percent of the GDP, and industry is only 24.20 percent of the GDP. Foreign assistance programs supply the foreign exchange required to pay for imports of goods and services. However, the peace accords signed in October 1992 improved Mozambique's prospects for growth. Foreign-exchange receipts have been greatly increased by the restoration of electrical transmission lines to South Africa, completion of a transmission line to Zimbabwe (permitting the Cahora Bassa, a giant hydropower plant to export large amounts of electricity), and construction of a natural gas pipeline to South Africa. Increases in tourism and reform of transportation services, such as a major four-lane highway that links the port of Maputo with Witbank, South Africa, have increased revenue flow as well.

## **People and Culture**

There are 11 main population groups, ranging from Tsonga in the south to Swahili in the north. There are 17 linguistic groups, ranging from Zulu to Kiswahili. Researchers suggest that there are two lineage systems that reflect Mozambican values: the matriarchal societies found north of the Zambezi River and the patriarchal societies found to the south. Yet, despite the vast cultural and linguistic differences in Mozambique, its people have several common features.

In Mozambican communities, traditional local officials and elders have an important influence on relationships in the community and often act as counselors or mediators. Position and hierarchy are important features of relationships within a community. For example, in a meeting, the position of the most important leader is always the center chair along a table; people do not start eating until the elders have begun; people tend not to disagree with leaders in public. In other nonverbal signs of respect in many locations, community members walk behind a leader, lower their eyes when the leader addresses them, and often shake hands of their leaders holding the right arm with the left hand.

Mozambican people are generally sociable and enjoy making friends with people of other cultures. Friendship is taken seriously, sometimes implying obligation at first, yet often becoming familiar and less formal. It is not uncommon for Mozambicans to invite Volunteers to their homes for a meal. As the Mozambican saying goes, if invited you should be prepared to take along your mouth, stomach, and good mood.

## Environment

Mozambique, an elongated country on the southeast coast of Africa, is 320,636 square miles (801,590 square kilometers), which is approximately twice the length of California, and has a population of approximately 22 million. The climate is tropical to subtropical, and the terrain ranges from coastal lowlands to high plateaus to mountains.

In early 2000, the central and southern regions of Mozambique experienced the worst flooding the country had seen in over 50 years. Hundreds died and tens of thousands were left homeless. This was a serious setback to the country's progress in economic growth, access to education and health care, and infrastructure. The north-south national highway, which links the capital of Maputo to the rest of the country, was cut in several places, many rural schools and health posts were seriously damaged, and thousands of Mozambicans lost their homes and farms. In 2001 floods also ravaged the Zambezi River basin in the northern provinces. Despite many natural and human-caused setbacks to continued development, the government and people of Mozambique remain incredibly determined to rebuild their lives and country.



## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Following is a list of websites for additional information about the Peace Corps and Mozambique and to connect you to returned Volunteers and other invitees. Please keep in mind that although we try to make sure all these links are active and current, we cannot guarantee it. If you do not have access to the Internet, visit your local library. Libraries offer free Internet usage and often let you print information to take home.

A note of caution: As you surf the Internet, be aware that you may find bulletin boards and chat rooms in which people are free to express opinions about the Peace Corps based on their own experience, including comments by those who were unhappy with their choice to serve in the Peace Corps. These opinions are not those of the Peace Corps or the U.S. government, and we hope you will keep in mind that no two people experience their service in the same way.

### ***General Information About Mozambique***

#### **www.countrywatch.com**

On this site, you can learn anything from what time it is in Maputo to how to convert from the dollar to the Meticaís currency. Just click on Mozambique and go from there.

#### **www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations**

Visit this site for general travel advice about almost any country in the world.

#### **www.state.gov**

The State Department's website issues background notes periodically about countries around the world. Find **Mozambique** and learn more about its social and political history. You can also go to the site's international travel section to check on conditions that may affect your safety.

#### **www.psr.keele.ac.uk/official.htm**

This includes links to all the official sites for governments worldwide.

#### **www.geography.about.com/library/maps/blindex.htm**

This online world atlas includes maps and geographical information, and each country page contains links to other sites, such as the Library of Congress, that contain comprehensive historical, social, and political background.

#### **www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/info.asp**

This United Nations site allows you to search for statistical information for member states of the U.N.

#### **www.worldinformation.com**

This site provides an additional source of current and historical information about countries around the world.

### ***Connect With Returned Volunteers and Other Invitees***

#### **www.rpcv.org**

This is the site of the National Peace Corps Association, made up of returned Volunteers. On this site you can find links to all the Web pages of the “Friends of” groups for most countries of service, comprised of former Volunteers who served in those countries. There are also regional groups that frequently get together for social events and local volunteer.

#### **www.PeaceCorpsWorldwide.org**

This site is hosted by a group of returned Volunteer writers. It is a monthly online publication of essays and Volunteer accounts of their Peace Corps service.

#### **www.facebook.com**

While not an official Peace Corps site, often currently serving Mozambique Peace Corps Volunteers and Invitees use Facebook groups to connect with one another. (Search ‘Peace Corps Mozambique).

### ***Online Articles/News Sites About Mozambique***

#### **maputo.usembassy.gov**

The site of the U.S. Embassy in Maputo

#### **www.embamoc-usa.org**

The site of the Mozambican Embassy in Washington, D.C.

#### **news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/default.stm**

News about Africa from the BBC

#### **www.africa-confidential.com**

An online newsletter about Africa (subscription required)

#### **www.africaaction.org/index.php**

The site of Africa Action, a U.S. organization that works for political, economic, and social justice in Africa

### ***International Development Sites About Mozambique***

#### **[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)**

The World Bank

#### **[www.psi.org](http://www.psi.org)**

Population Services International

#### **[www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)**

Save the Children

[www.care.org](http://www.care.org)

Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere

[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

U.S. Agency for International Development

[www.africare.org](http://www.africare.org)

Africare

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

United Nations Children's Fund

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

United Nations Development Programme

[www.wfp.org/index2.html](http://www.wfp.org/index2.html)

World Food Programme

### **Books about Mozambique**

1. Finnegan, William. *A Complicated War: The Harrowing of Mozambique*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
2. Hanlon, Joseph. *Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots?* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
3. Henriksen, Thomas H. *Revolution and Counterrevolution: Mozambique's War of Independence 1964-1974*. Westport, Colo.: Greenwood Press, 1983.
4. Hoile, D. (ed.). *Mozambique 1962-1993: A Political Chronology*. London: Mozambique Institute, 1994.
5. Magaia, Lina. *Dumba Nengu/Run for Your Life: Peasant Tales of Tragedy in Mozambique*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1988.
6. Msabaha, Ibrahim. "Negotiating an End to Mozambique's Murderous Rebellion." In *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, edited by I. William Zartmen. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995.
7. Munslow, Barry (ed.). *Samora Machel: An African Revolutionary* (selected speeches and writings). London: Zed Books, 1985.
8. Newitt, M.D.D. *A History of Mozambique*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
9. Young, Tom, and Margaret Hall. *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique Since Independence*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997.

### **Books About the History of the Peace Corps**

1. Hoffman, Elizabeth Cobbs. *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000.
2. Rice, Gerald T. *The Bold Experiment: JFK's Peace Corps*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985.
3. Stossel, Scott. *Sarge: The Life and Times of Sargent Shriver*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2004.

### **Books on the Volunteer Experience**

1. Dirlam, Sharon. *Beyond Siberia: Two Years in a Forgotten Place*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: McSeas Books, 2004.
2. Casebolt, Marjorie DeMoss. *Margarita: A Guatemalan Peace Corps Experience*. Gig Harbor, Wash.: Red Apple Publishing, 2000.
3. Erdman, Sarah. *Nine Hills to Nambonkaha: Two Years in the Heart of an African Village*. New York, N.Y.: Picador, 2003.
4. Hessler, Peter. *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*. New York, N.Y.: Perennial, 2001.
5. Kennedy, Geraldine ed. *From the Center of the Earth: Stories out of the Peace Corps*. Santa Monica, Calif.: Clover Park Press, 1991.
6. Thompsen, Moritz. *Living Poor: A Peace Corps Chronicle*. Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1997 (reprint).

# LIVING CONDITIONS AND VOLUNTEER LIFESTYLE

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## **Communications**

### ***Mail***

Few countries in the world offer the level of postal service considered normal in the United States. If you expect American standards for mail service, you will be in for some frustration. There is enormous variation in the time it takes for mail and packages to arrive at Volunteers' sites, ranging from two to three weeks in the south to even longer in the north. Some mail may simply not arrive (fortunately this is not a frequent occurrence, but it does happen). Letters may arrive with clipped edges because someone has tried to see if any money was inside (again, this is rare, but it does happen).

Some Volunteers open post office boxes in their towns or provincial capitals, and some have mail sent to the Peace Corps/Mozambique office to be delivered by staff or picked up directly whenever possible. In any case, advise your family and friends to number their letters for tracking purposes and to write "Airmail" and "Par Avion" on their envelopes.

Despite the delays, we encourage you to write to your family regularly and to number your letters. Family members typically become worried when they do not hear from you, so it is a good idea to advise them that mail service is sporadic and that they should not worry if they do not receive your letters regularly.

Sending mail from Mozambique to the United States is expensive, so you may want to bring a supply of U.S. postage stamps to take advantage of Americans traveling back to the United States who are willing to mail your letters stateside. You are likely to have several opportunities a year to send letters this way.

Your address during pre-service training will be as follows:

Your Name, PCT  
Peace Corps  
C.P. 4398  
Maputo, Mozambique

### ***Telephones***

Long-distance communication via telephone is generally available but is expensive. Cellphone service is available in most of the country. Volunteers often purchase local cellphones for \$50-\$100 and use the phones to receive phone calls and send text messages. It is possible to bring an unlocked smartphone to be used with the local SIM cards. The Peace Corps does not issue cellphones to Volunteers but does provide some monetary assistance toward the purchase of cellular phones.

Currently, no major U.S. long-distance carrier offers calling card services in Mozambique, but many volunteers use toll-free or low-cost services such as Google Voice and Skype to contact families and friends, as it is cheaper and generally a better connection than cellular service.

### ***Computer, Internet, and Email Access***

Most Volunteers do not have access to public computers at their sites, so Volunteers are encouraged to bring a laptop or netbook (the majority of sites have electricity). Although there are computers at some schools and NGO offices, they are usually not available for personal use. There are several Internet service providers in

Mozambique and all of the provincial capitals, as well as several municipalities, have them. Volunteers can access the Internet and email at private Internet businesses or at the government telecommunication centers located in some district capitals. The Internet is also accessible via a cellular phone with Internet capabilities almost anywhere in the country.

Additionally, Volunteers have access to the Peace Corps Information and Resource Center located inside the Peace Corps/Mozambique offices in Maputo, Chimoio, and Nampula, where Volunteers can use the Internet and print documents. Many Volunteers find flash drives useful for downloading emails and documents to save time and money at Internet cafes. As with anything valuable you may bring to Mozambique, bear in mind the risks involved with bringing a computer along.

## **Housing and Site Location**

Education Volunteers live in provincial capitals, district capitals, or in rural areas where the secondary schools and teacher-training institutes are located. These areas generally have populations that average 10,000-20,000 people.

Most NGOs have offices in provincial and/or district capitals, although few Health Volunteers live near these offices. Most live in small communities near where the activities of their NGO take place. Other Health Volunteers work and live within walking distance of their smaller, community organizations.

The provincial capitals all have electricity. In the district capitals, most buildings have electricity. Your house will be located within a reasonable distance to a general market/store where you can buy basics such as bread, batteries, rice, soap, spaghetti, beans, and pots and pans.

Your host institution will provide your housing. Volunteers may live in a cement house with a tin roof or a reed house with cement walls and floors and tin roof. The toilet, bath, and cooking facilities may be indoors or outdoors. Many Volunteers have electricity and a few have running water. There may be a small plot of ground around your house where you can grow flowers, herbs, and vegetables or begin some type of interesting secondary project.

Some Volunteers share a house with another Volunteer or, less frequently, a Mozambican co-worker of the same sex (except in the case of married couples); in this case each person has a separate locking bedroom but shares the bathroom, kitchen, and living space. Note that American concepts of privacy and personal space are not necessarily shared by or are realistic for Mozambicans, and adapting to a more communal lifestyle may require considerable flexibility on your part. Also note that sharing a house with another Volunteer requires extra flexibility and open communication, as you both will have your own stressors to contend with.

Most schools are established buildings made of brick or cement, but some schools hold classes in makeshift classrooms or under trees because there are not enough classrooms. Many have access to water, but some do not have electricity. There may or may not be glass in the windows of cement buildings. A typical classroom holds 50-100 students and may not have enough benches for all of them. Other than blackboards, the visual aids common in American schools are nonexistent on Mozambican schoolroom walls. Schools rarely have a library, so very few books are available for students or teachers. Some schools have a staff room for teachers.

The NGOs vary considerably regarding their available resources; some offices may be located in nice buildings with computers, telephones, and everything necessary for a well-functioning office, including vehicles. Many smaller NGOs have virtually nothing, operating out of a run-down building shell with few desks and writing all their reports and financial accounts by hand. Many smaller NGOs must rely on public transportation and walking to conduct their activities.

## **Living Allowance and Money Management**

The Peace Corps will provide you with a settling-in allowance to purchase initial household goods such as a small stove, kitchen equipment, and a bicycle. You can also find colorful cloth, straw mats, rattan furniture, and other local products to make your home more comfortable. A living allowance paid in local currency will allow you to live at about the same level as your local counterparts.

The local currency is the metical (plural: meticais). In 2012, the exchange rate was approximately 27.75 meticais to \$1. It is possible to obtain cash advances with credit cards at certain banks in Mozambique. All Volunteers receive debit cards that can be used at the ATM in or close to their site. Visa is the most widely accepted card at hotels, stores, and restaurants that accept debit and/or credit cards. Traveler's checks can be cashed at the major banks in Beira and Maputo and at some of the better hotels. Bear in mind that there are high fees for banking transactions in Mozambique.

## **Food and Diet**

The climate in Mozambique allows for the production of many seasonal fruits and vegetables, but your site location will determine which fruits and vegetables are available to you and when. At some times of the year you may find only onions, tomatoes, and bananas in your local market. Packaged and canned goods—imported from South Africa, Swaziland, Malawi, or Zimbabwe—are more expensive than local products. Canned and boxed products, whether Mozambican or imported, can be found in provincial capitals and some district capitals. Dried fish is available at most sites, and fresh fish is available along the coast. While it is possible to be a healthy vegetarian in Mozambique, your diet will lack the variety you may be used to. Rice, beans, bread, eggs, and pasta will be your main foods at home, and you will usually be able to get eggs, some vegetables, beans, rice, bread, and fried potatoes at restaurants.

## **Transportation**

Crowded buses and taxis provide most of the transportation in urban settings. Rural transportation ranges from minibuses and pickup trucks to bicycle taxis, boat taxis, or simply lots of walking. Large buses run between most of the provincial capitals. Although Mozambique has invested heavily in restoring its main roads and bridges, travel conditions are still poor, especially off the main paved roads and during the rainy season. Public transportation is not always on schedule or reliable—it can take two hours of riding, waiting, and changing buses to get to a town that is only 25 miles away. You may have to walk a few miles from your home to get to your work site or to get to town to shop for supplies, go to the post office, and so on. Peace Corps Volunteers are also given the option of purchasing a bicycle; Volunteers must wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. A helmet will be provided by the Peace Corps/Mozambique medical office.

## **Geography and Climate**

Three major factors influencing Mozambique's climate are the warm Indian Ocean current moving south from the equator, Antarctic cold fronts that push northeast through South Africa, and the altitude of the plateaus. Temperatures are hot and humid for half the year, and rain can be very heavy in the summer months (December through March). The weather is cooler and drier in the winter months (May through August). Temperatures vary considerably by geographical location. For example, you can expect extremely hot temperatures in places around Tete City, where the average temperature—day and night—is above 86 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees C) for several months, topping out at 105 degrees F, while just a few hours north of the city on the Angonian plateau the temperatures are mild and you may even find frost on the ground during the cooler months. Cooler weather also exists in the Manica and Niassa provinces, where mountains reach elevations close to 4,000 feet, and temperatures in May, June, and July range from the high 70s to the low 50s. Temperatures along the coast and in low-lying areas reach into the high 90s in the summer months and tend to be more humid. Flooding can occur in the rainy season, restricting transportation and communications for periods of time.

The hot weather will take some getting used to during your first months at your site, especially for those who work in the afternoon. Though the winter temperatures may appear to be relatively mild, it is sometimes difficult to feel warm during the winter because Mozambican buildings do not have heating systems and are built mostly of cement, a poor heat conductor. You will need a variety of clothing for both hot and cold weather.

## **Social Activities**

Needless to say, recreation varies among sites and the preferences of individual Volunteers. You might enjoy visiting the friends and families of your students, colleagues, or community neighbors and improving your conversational skills in Portuguese or a local language in a neighborhood hangout. You may enjoy watching soap operas, making or listening to music, going to a *discoteca* on weekends, traveling to different sites and provinces, shopping at markets, attending traditional cultural events, growing a home garden, cooking, reading, or writing letters.

Many Volunteers find that reading for pleasure becomes very important, so be sure to bring your favorite books (paper or electronic) to enjoy and share with other Volunteers. Also, bring pictures of your family, friends, and hometown to show to fellow Volunteers and Mozambican friends. Consider bringing portable musical instruments, sports equipment, or games you like to play. Soccer, basketball, and volleyball are popular sports among students and community members. If you are an avid runner, for safety reasons, you may not be able to enjoy the freedom of running whenever and wherever you want, but you will be able to find ways to get the exercise you need.

## **Professionalism, Dress, and Behavior**

One of the difficulties of finding your place as a Peace Corps Volunteer is fitting into the local culture while maintaining your own cultural identity and acting like a professional at the same time. It is not an easy thing to resolve, and we can only provide you with guidelines. You will be assigned to a school, an international NGO, or a community or faith-based organization and will be expected to dress professionally at work, as Mozambicans do. A foreigner who wears ragged, torn clothing is less likely to be taken seriously.

Although different work sites may have different dress codes (at least one school requires male teachers to wear ties), for the most part professional dress can be considered casual business wear. Professional clothing for men means button-down shirts, slacks or good jeans, and casual, comfortable shoes. For women it means dresses, skirts or slacks (including nice jeans) with blouses, and dress shoes or sandals. For men, short/well-groomed hair is considered professional and most volunteers prefer to remain clean-shaven, as beards should also be well-groomed. Earrings and other piercings are not always acceptable for men. For women, many communities, especially in the central and northern provinces, expect professional dress to cover the shoulders and knees. Sleeveless blouses and shorts or skirts that fall above the knee may not be acceptable. Shorts, dirty jeans, and flip-flops are unacceptable at work for either gender. Outside of work it is acceptable to wear tank tops and shorts, depending on the site, so bring some casual clothes in which you feel comfortable.

## **Personal Safety**

More detailed information about the Peace Corps' approach to safety is contained in the "Health Care and Safety" chapter, but it is an important issue and cannot be overemphasized. As stated in the Volunteer Handbook, becoming a Peace Corps Volunteer entails certain safety risks. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment (oftentimes alone), having a limited understanding of local language and culture, and being perceived as well-off are some of the factors that can put a Volunteer at risk. Many Volunteers experience varying degrees of unwanted attention and harassment. Petty thefts and burglaries are not uncommon, and incidents of physical and sexual assault do occur, although most Mozambique Volunteers complete their two years of service without incident. The Peace Corps has established procedures and policies

designed to help you reduce your risks and enhance your safety and security. These procedures and policies, in addition to safety training, will be provided once you arrive in Mozambique. Using these tools, you are expected to take responsibility for your safety and well-being.

Each staff member at the Peace Corps is committed to providing Volunteers with the support they need to successfully meet the challenges they will face to have a safe, healthy, and productive service. We encourage Volunteers and families to look at our safety and security information on the Peace Corps website at [www.peacecorps.gov/safety](http://www.peacecorps.gov/safety).

Information on these pages gives messages on Volunteer health and Volunteer safety. There is a section titled “Safety and Security —Our Partnership.” Among topics addressed are the risks of serving as a Volunteer, posts’ safety support systems, and emergency planning and communications.

## Rewards and Frustrations

There will be challenges throughout your service that test your commitment to serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer. We hope that you find, as do most Volunteers, that the rewards far outweigh the frustrations. You will derive deep satisfaction from knowing that you have made an important contribution to Mozambique’s development. In addition, you will learn more about yourself, your culture, and the culture of Mozambique. You will gain new job skills and friendships that will last throughout your life.



# PEACE CORPS TRAINING

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## **Overview of Pre-Service Training**

Pre-service training takes place in a community-based setting in a village called Namaacha about two hours from downtown Maputo. It is a 10-week program designed to help you gain the skills needed to successfully begin your Peace Corps service. These skills will help you integrate into your community and develop an appropriate work plan with your community and co-workers. Because training occurs six days a week, trainees have few opportunities to visit the capital.

The training content consists of five major interrelated components: technical, language, cross-cultural, health, and safety. You must demonstrate specific competencies related to each component to complete training and be sworn in as a Volunteer. You will be expected to take an active role in the process by setting goals for learning and evaluating your progress.

We will help you assess your progress and make recommendations at several points during training. To be sworn-in, you must demonstrate the following: (1) a working knowledge of Portuguese; (2) knowledge of health and safety risks common in Mozambique and consistent practice of preventive health and safety strategies; (3) interpersonal and cross-cultural skills and knowledge that enable you to communicate, make friends, understand your environment, understand how Mozambicans perceive and interact with you, and work effectively with Mozambicans; (4) the technical skills and knowledge necessary to fulfill your primary responsibilities as a teacher or health educator; and (5) an understanding of the Peace Corps' philosophy of development and how you fit into your project's long-term plan.

We will provide you with the information, direction, materials, training opportunities, feedback, coaching, counseling, and moral support you need to prepare yourself for service, as well as generous amounts of encouragement.

### ***Technical Training***

Technical training will prepare you to work in Mozambique by building on the skills you already have and helping you develop new skills in a manner appropriate to the needs of the country. The Peace Corps staff, Mozambique experts, and current Volunteers will conduct the training program. Training places great emphasis on learning how to transfer the skills you have to the community in which you will serve as a Volunteer.

Technical training will include sessions on the general economic and political environment in Mozambique and strategies for working within such a framework. You will review your technical sector's goals and will meet with the Mozambique agencies and organizations that invited the Peace Corps to assist them. You will be supported and evaluated throughout the training to build the confidence and skills you need to undertake your project activities and be a productive member of your community.

### ***Language Training***

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, you will find that language skills are the key to personal and professional satisfaction during your service. These skills are critical to your job performance, they help you integrate into your community, and they can ease your personal adaptation to the new surroundings. Therefore, language training is the heart of the training program, and you must successfully meet minimum language requirements to complete training and become a Volunteer. Mozambican language instructors teach formal language classes five days a week in small groups of four to five people.

Your language training will incorporate a community-based approach. In addition to classroom time, you will be given assignments to work on outside of the classroom and with your host family. The goal is to get you to a point of basic social communication skills so that you can practice and develop language skills further once you are at your site. Prior to being sworn in as a Volunteer, you will work on strategies to continue language studies during your service.

### ***Cross-Cultural Training***

As part of your pre-service training, you will live with a Mozambican host family. This experience is designed to ease your transition to life at your site. Families go through an orientation conducted by Peace Corps staff to explain the purpose of pre-service training and to assist them in helping you adapt to living in Mozambique. Many Volunteers form strong and lasting friendships with their host families.

Cross-cultural and community development training will help you improve your communication skills and understand your role as a facilitator of development. You will be exposed to topics such as community mobilization, conflict resolution, gender and development, nonformal and adult education strategies, and political structures.

### ***Health Training***

During pre-service training, you will be given basic medical training and information. You will be expected to practice preventive health care and to take responsibility for your own health by adhering to all medical policies. Trainees are required to attend all medical sessions. The topics include preventive health measures and minor and major medical issues that you might encounter while in Mozambique. Nutrition, mental health, setting up a safe living compound, and how to avoid HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are also covered.

### ***Safety Training***

During the safety training sessions, you will learn how to adopt a lifestyle that reduces your risks at home, at work, and during your travels. You will also learn appropriate, effective strategies for coping with unwanted attention and about your individual responsibility for promoting safety throughout your service.

## **Additional Trainings During Volunteer Service**

In its commitment to institutionalize quality training, the Peace Corps has implemented a training system that provides Volunteers with continual opportunities to examine their commitment to Peace Corps service while increasing their technical and cross-cultural skills. During service, there are usually three training events. The titles and objectives for those trainings are as follows:

- **In-service training:** *Provides an opportunity for Volunteers to upgrade their technical, language, and project development skills while sharing their experiences and reaffirming their commitment after having served for three to six months.*
- **Midterm conference** *(done in conjunction with technical sector in-service): Assists Volunteers in reviewing their first year, reassessing their personal and project objectives, and planning for their second year of service.*
- **Close of service conference:** *Prepares Volunteers for the future after Peace Corps service and reviews their respective projects and personal experiences.*

The number, length, and design of these trainings are adapted to country-specific needs and conditions. The key to the training system is that training events are integrated and interrelated, from the pre-departure

orientation through the end of your service, and are planned, implemented, and evaluated cooperatively by the training staff, Peace Corps staff, and Volunteers.



# YOUR HEALTH CARE AND SAFETY IN MOZAMBIQUE

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The Peace Corps' highest priority is maintaining the good health and safety of every Volunteer. Peace Corps medical programs emphasize the preventive, rather than the curative, approach to disease. The Peace Corps in Mozambique maintains a clinic with a full-time medical officer, who takes care of Volunteers' primary health care needs. Additional medical services, such as testing and basic treatment, are also available in Mozambique at local hospitals. If you become seriously ill, you will be transported either to an American-standard medical facility in the region or to the United States.

## Health Issues in Mozambique

Health conditions in Mozambique are typical of those of any developing country. Gastrointestinal diseases, respiratory infections, and viral hepatitis are common, as well as HIV/AIDS. Additionally the presence of land mines poses a threat. Because malaria is endemic in Mozambique, drug prophylaxis against this disease is mandatory for all trainees and Volunteers, beginning at the pre-departure orientation (staging). Immunizations are required for service in Mozambique and must be kept current during your tour.

Recent statistics suggest that the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique is approaching that of neighboring South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi, which have the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection in the world. In Mozambique the disease affects men and women equally, and is primarily transmitted through unprotected sexual contact.

The beautiful beaches of Mozambique are sure to tempt you during vacations. You must wear a life jacket for boat travel and have a scuba-diving license on file with the Peace Corps/Mozambique medical officer in order to go diving. Scuba diving is not regulated in Mozambique, so you will need to research the company you plan to dive with and take all precautions. Volunteers are prohibited from driving cars or motorcycles.

## Helping You Stay Healthy

The Peace Corps will provide you with all the necessary inoculations, medications, and information to stay healthy. Upon your arrival in Mozambique, you will receive a medical handbook. At the end of training, you will receive a medical kit with supplies to take care of mild illnesses and first-aid needs. The contents of the kit are listed later in this chapter.

During pre-service training, you will have access to basic medical supplies through the medical officer. However, you will be responsible for your own supply of prescription drugs and any other specific medical supplies you require, as the Peace Corps will not order these items during training. Please bring a three-month supply of any prescription drugs you use, since they may not be available here and it may take several months for shipments to arrive.

You will have physicals at mid-service and at the end of your service. If you develop a serious medical problem during your service, the medical officer in Mozambique will consult with the Office of Medical Services in Washington, D.C. If it is determined that your condition cannot be treated in Mozambique, you may be sent out of the country for further evaluation and care.

## Maintaining Your Health

As a Volunteer, you must accept considerable responsibility for your own health. Proper precautions will significantly reduce your risk of serious illness or injury. The adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," becomes extremely important in areas where diagnostic and treatment facilities are not up to the

standards of the United States. The most important of your responsibilities in Mozambique is to take the following preventive measures:

Many illnesses that afflict Volunteers worldwide are entirely preventable if proper food and water precautions are taken. These illnesses include food poisoning, parasitic infections, hepatitis A, dysentery, Guinea worms, tapeworms, and typhoid fever. Your medical officer will discuss specific standards for water and food preparation in Mozambique during pre-service training.

Abstinence is the only certain choice for preventing infection with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. You are taking risks if you choose to be sexually active. To lessen risk, use a condom every time you have sex. Whether your partner is a host country citizen, a fellow Volunteer, or anyone else, do not assume this person is free of HIV/AIDS or other STIs. You will receive more information from the medical officer about this important issue.

Volunteers are expected to adhere to an effective means of birth control to prevent an unplanned pregnancy. Your medical officer can help you decide on the most appropriate method to suit your individual needs. Contraceptive methods are available without charge from the medical officer.

It is critical to your health that you promptly report to the medical office or other designated facility for scheduled immunizations, and that you let the medical officer know immediately of significant illnesses and injuries.

## **Women's Health Information**

Pregnancy is treated in the same manner as other Volunteer health conditions that require medical attention but also have programmatic ramifications. The Peace Corps is responsible for determining the medical risk and the availability of appropriate medical care if the Volunteer remains in-country. Given the circumstances under which Volunteers live and work in Peace Corps countries, it is rare that the Peace Corps' medical and programmatic standards for continued service during pregnancy can be met.

If feminine hygiene products are not available for you to purchase on the local market, the Peace Corps medical officer in Mozambique will provide them. If you require a specific product, please bring a three-month supply with you.

## **Your Peace Corps Medical Kit**

The Peace Corps medical officer will provide you with a kit that contains basic items necessary to prevent and treat illnesses that may occur during service. Kit items can be periodically restocked at the medical office.

### ***Medical Kit Contents***

Ace bandages  
Adhesive tape  
*American Red Cross First Aid & Safety Handbook*  
Antacid tablets (Tums)  
Antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin/Neomycin/Polymycin B)  
Antiseptic antimicrobial skin cleaner (Hibiclens)  
Band-Aids  
Butterfly closures  
Calamine lotion

Cepacol lozenges  
Condoms  
Dental floss  
Diphenhydramine HCL 25 mg (Benadryl)  
Insect repellent stick (Cutter's)  
Iodine tablets (for water purification)  
Lip balm (Chapstick)  
Oral rehydration salts  
Oral thermometer (Fahrenheit)  
Pseudoephedrine HCL 30 mg (Sudafed)  
Robitussin-DM lozenges (for cough)  
Scissors  
Sterile gauze pads  
Tetrahydrozoline eyedrops (Visine)  
Tinactin (antifungal cream)  
Tweezers

## **Before You Leave: A Medical Checklist**

If there has been any change in your health—physical, mental, or dental—since you submitted your examination reports to the Peace Corps, you must immediately notify the Office of Medical Services. Failure to disclose new illnesses, injuries, allergies, or pregnancy can endanger your health and may jeopardize your eligibility to serve.

If your dental exam was done more than a year ago, or if your physical exam is more than two years old, contact the Office of Medical Services to find out whether you need to update your records. If your dentist or Peace Corps dental consultant has recommended that you undergo dental treatment or repair, you must complete that work and make sure your dentist sends requested confirmation reports or X-rays to the Office of Medical Services.

If you wish to avoid having duplicate vaccinations, contact your physician's office to obtain a copy of your immunization record and bring it to your pre-departure orientation. If you have any immunizations prior to Peace Corps service, the Peace Corps cannot reimburse you for the cost. The Peace Corps will provide all the immunizations necessary for your overseas assignment, either at your pre-departure orientation or shortly after you arrive in Mozambique. You do not need to begin taking malaria medication prior to departure.

Bring a three-month supply of any prescription or over-the-counter medication you use on a regular basis, including birth control pills. Although the Peace Corps cannot reimburse you for this three-month supply, it will order refills during your service. While awaiting shipment—which can take several months—you will be dependent on your own medication supply. The Peace Corps will not pay for herbal or non-prescribed medications, such as St. John's wort, glucosamine, selenium, or antioxidant supplements.

You are encouraged to bring copies of medical prescriptions signed by your physician. This is not a requirement, but they might come in handy if you are questioned in transit about carrying a three-month supply of prescription drugs.

If you wear eyeglasses, bring two pairs with you. If a pair breaks, the Peace Corps will replace it, using the information your doctor in the United States provided on the eyeglasses form during your examination. The Peace Corps discourages you from using contact lenses during your service to reduce your risk of developing a serious infection or other eye disease. Most Peace Corps countries do not have appropriate water and sanitation to support eye care with the use of contact lenses. The Peace Corps will not supply or replace contact lenses or associated solutions unless an ophthalmologist has recommended their use for a specific medical condition and the Peace Corps' Office of Medical Services has given approval.

If you are eligible for Medicare, are over 50 years of age, or have a health condition that may restrict your future participation in health care plans, you may wish to consult an insurance specialist about unique coverage needs before your departure. The Peace Corps will provide all necessary health care from the time you leave for your pre-departure orientation until you complete your service. When you finish, you will be entitled to the post-service health care benefits described in the Peace Corps *Volunteer Handbook*. You may wish to consider keeping an existing health plan in effect during your service if you think age or preexisting conditions might prevent you from reenrolling in your current plan when you return home.

## **Safety and Security—Our Partnership**

Serving as a Volunteer overseas entails certain safety and security risks. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment, a limited understanding of the local language and culture, and the perception of being a wealthy American are some of the factors that can put a Volunteer at risk. Property theft and burglaries are not uncommon. Incidents of physical and sexual assault do occur, although almost all Volunteers complete their two years of service without serious personal safety problems.

Beyond knowing that Peace Corps approaches safety and security as a partnership with you, it might be helpful to see how this partnership works. Peace Corps has policies, procedures, and training in place to promote your safety. We depend on you to follow those policies and to put into practice what you have learned. An example of how this works in practice—in this case to help manage the risk of burglary—is:

- Peace Corps assesses the security environment where you will live and work
- Peace Corps inspects the house where you will live according to established security criteria
- Peace Corps provides you with resources to take measures such as installing new locks
- Peace Corps ensures you are welcomed by host country authorities in your new community
- Peace Corps responds to security concerns that you raise
- You lock your doors and windows
- You adopt a lifestyle appropriate to the community where you live
- You get to know neighbors
- You decide if purchasing personal articles insurance is appropriate for you
- You don't change residences before being authorized by Peace Corps

- You communicate concerns that you have to Peace Corps staff

### **Factors that Contribute to Volunteer Risk**

There are several factors that can heighten a Volunteer's risk, many of which are within the Volunteer's control. By far the most common crime that Volunteers experience is theft. Thefts often occur when Volunteers are away from their sites, in crowded locations (such as markets or on public transportation), and when leaving items unattended.

Before you depart for Mozambique there are several measures you can take to reduce your risk:

- Leave valuable objects in the U.S.
- Leave copies of important documents and account numbers with someone you trust in the U.S.
- Purchase a hidden money pouch or "dummy" wallet as a decoy
- Purchase personal articles insurance

After you arrive in Mozambique you will receive more detailed information about common crimes, factors that contribute to Volunteer risk, and local strategies to reduce that risk. For example, Volunteers in Mozambique learn to:

- *Choose safe routes and times for travel, and travel with someone trusted by the community whenever possible*
- *Make sure one's personal appearance is respectful of local customs*
- *Avoid high-crime areas*
- *Know the local language to get help in an emergency*
- *Make friends with local people who are respected in the community*
- *Limit alcohol consumption*

As you can see from this list, you must be willing to work hard and adapt your lifestyle to minimize the potential for being a target for crime. As with anywhere in the world, crime does exist in Mozambique. You can reduce your risk by avoiding situations that place you at risk and by taking precautions. Crime at the village or town level is less frequent than in the large cities; people know each other and generally are less likely to steal from their neighbors. Tourist attractions in large towns are favorite worksites for pickpockets.

The following are other security concerns in Mozambique of which you should be aware:

As a Volunteer in Mozambique you will draw unwanted and unsolicited attention that exposes you to a risk of harassment greater than that in the United States. Mozambique is coming out of a violent and turbulent period in its history. Many young people caught up in the civil war are finding it difficult to earn a livelihood, and some of them fall into crime. You are likely to experience petty crime (e.g., pick pocketing) while you are on a crowded bus or burglary of your home while you are on an extended vacation. You will need to exercise special caution in Mozambique's larger cities.

Mozambique still has an estimated 1 million land mines in its soil. De-mining operations are underway, but many areas are still heavily mined. Although Peace Corps Volunteers and staff have not had any incidents with land mines, it is important to be aware of the risks from land mines. As long as you are careful when traveling, walking only on roads and well-traveled paths and seeking knowledge of land mine placements from local people in the community, you should be safe.

While whistles and exclamations may be fairly common on the street, this behavior can be reduced if you dress conservatively, abide by local cultural norms, and respond according to the training you will receive.

### ***Staying Safe: Don't Be a Target for Crime***

You must be prepared to take on a large degree of responsibility for your own safety. You can make yourself less of a target, ensure that your home is secure, and develop relationships in your community that will make you an unlikely victim of crime. While the factors that contribute to your risk in Mozambique may be different, in many ways you can do what you would do if you moved to a new city anywhere: Be cautious, check things out, ask questions, learn about your neighborhood, know where the more risky locations are, use common sense, and be aware. You can reduce your vulnerability to crime by integrating into your community, learning the local language, acting responsibly, and abiding by Peace Corps policies and procedures. Serving safely and effectively in Mozambique will require that you accept some restrictions on your current lifestyle.

### ***Support from Staff***

If a trainee or Volunteer is the victim of a safety incident, Peace Corps staff is prepared to provide support. All Peace Corps posts have procedures in place to respond to incidents of crime committed against Volunteers. The first priority for all posts in the aftermath of an incident is to ensure the Volunteer is safe and receiving medical treatment as needed. After assuring the safety of the Volunteer, Peace Corps staff response may include reassessing the Volunteer's worksite and housing arrangements and making any adjustments, as needed. In some cases, the nature of the incident may necessitate a site or housing transfer. Peace Corps staff will also assist Volunteers with preserving their rights to pursue legal sanctions against the perpetrators of the crime. It is very important that Volunteers report incidents as they occur, not only to protect their peer Volunteers, but also to preserve the future right to prosecute. Should Volunteers decide later in the process that they want to proceed with the prosecution of their assailant, this option may no longer exist if the evidence of the event has not been preserved at the time of the incident.

## **Crime Data for Mozambique**

Crime data and statistics for Mozambique, which is updated yearly, are available at the following link: <http://www.peacecorps.gov/countrydata/mozambique>.

Few Peace Corps Volunteers are victims of serious crimes and crimes that do occur overseas are investigated and prosecuted by local authorities through the local courts system. If you are the victim of a crime, you will decide if you wish to pursue prosecution. If you decide to prosecute, Peace Corps will be there to assist you. One of our tasks is to ensure you are fully informed of your options and understand how the local legal process works. Peace Corps will help you ensure your rights are protected to the fullest extent possible under the laws of the country.

If you are the victim of a serious crime, you will learn how to get to a safe location as quickly as possible and contact your Peace Corps office. It's important that you notify Peace Corps as soon as you can so Peace Corps can provide you with the help you need.

## **Volunteer Safety Support in Mozambique**

The Peace Corps' approach to safety is a five-pronged plan to help you stay safe during your service and includes the following: information sharing, Volunteer training, site selection criteria, a detailed emergency action plan, and protocols for addressing safety and security incidents. Mozambique's in-country safety program is outlined below.

The Peace Corps/Mozambique office will keep you informed of any issues that may impact Volunteer safety through **information sharing**. Regular updates will be provided in Volunteer newsletters and in memorandums from the country director. In the event of a critical situation or emergency, you will be contacted through the emergency communication network. An important component of the capacity of Peace Corps to keep you informed is your buy-in to the partnership concept with the Peace Corps staff. It is expected that you will do your part in ensuring that Peace Corps staff members are kept apprised of your movements in-country so they are able to inform you.

**Volunteer training** will include sessions on specific safety and security issues in Mozambique. This training will prepare you to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle and exercise judgment that promotes safety and reduces risk in your home, at work, and while traveling. Safety training is offered throughout service and is integrated into the language, cross-cultural aspects, health, and other components of training. You will be expected to successfully complete all training competencies in a variety of areas, including safety and security, as a condition of service.

Certain **site selection criteria** are used to determine safe housing for Volunteers before their arrival. The Peace Corps staff works closely with host communities and counterpart agencies to help prepare them for a Volunteer's arrival and to establish expectations of their respective roles in supporting the Volunteer. Each site is inspected before the Volunteer's arrival to ensure placement in appropriate, safe, and secure housing and worksites. Site selection is based, in part, on any relevant site history; access to medical, banking, postal, and other essential services; availability of communications, transportation, and markets; different housing options and living arrangements; and other Volunteer support needs.

You will also learn about Peace Corps/Mozambique's **detailed emergency action plan**, which is implemented in the event of civil or political unrest or a natural disaster. When you arrive at your site, you will complete and submit a site locator form with your address, contact information, and a map to your house. If there is a security threat, you will gather with other Volunteers in Mozambique at predetermined locations until the situation is resolved or the Peace Corps decides to evacuate.

Finally, in order for the Peace Corps to be fully responsive to the needs of Volunteers, it is imperative that Volunteers immediately report any security incident to the Peace Corps office. The Peace Corps has established **protocols for addressing safety and security incidents** in a timely and appropriate manner, and it collects and evaluates safety and security data to track trends and develop strategies to minimize risks to future Volunteers.



## DIVERSITY AND CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

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In fulfilling its mandate to share the face of America with host countries, the Peace Corps is making special efforts to see that all of America's richness is reflected in the Volunteer corps. More Americans of color are serving in today's Peace Corps than at any time in recent years. Differences in race, ethnic background, age, religion, and sexual orientation are expected and welcomed among our Volunteers. Part of the Peace Corps mission is to help dispel any notion that Americans are all of one origin or race and to establish that each of us is as thoroughly American as the other despite our many differences.

Our diversity helps us accomplish that goal. In other ways, however, it poses challenges. In Mozambique, as in other Peace Corps host countries, Volunteers' behavior, lifestyle, background, and beliefs are judged in a cultural context very different from their own. Certain personal perspectives or characteristics commonly accepted in the United States may be quite uncommon, unacceptable, or even repressed in Mozambique.

Outside of Mozambique's capital, residents of rural communities have had relatively little direct exposure to other cultures, races, religions, and lifestyles. What people view as typical American behavior or norms may be a misconception, such as the belief that all Americans are rich and Caucasian, with blond hair and blue eyes. The people of Mozambique are justly known for their generous hospitality to foreigners; however, members of the community in which you will live may display a range of reactions to cultural differences that you present.

To ease the transition and adapt to life in Mozambique, you may need to make some temporary, yet fundamental compromises in how you present yourself as an American and as an individual. For example, female trainees and Volunteers may not be able to exercise the independence available to them in the United States; political discussions need to be handled with great care; and some of your personal beliefs may best remain undisclosed. You will need to develop techniques and personal strategies for coping with these and other limitations. The Peace Corps staff will lead diversity and sensitivity discussions during pre-service training and will be on call to provide support, but the challenge ultimately will be your own.

### **Overview of Diversity in Mozambique**

Except for the few who work at development agencies, Mozambicans have had little exposure to Americans, especially non-Caucasians. The ideas Mozambicans have about Americans come mostly from the images they see in the media. As powerful and far-reaching as American media are, chances are good that even Mozambicans in remote areas have seen U.S. television programs. As a result, they may think all Americans are white, young, affluent, and promiscuous. Explaining repeatedly that American TV shows and films do not necessarily represent your lifestyle or values may test your patience, but it is worth persevering to break through the stereotyping and encourage your Mozambican colleagues and friends see you as a unique person with virtues and faults that have nothing to do with the media.

The Peace Corps staff in Mozambique recognizes the adjustment issues that come with diversity and will endeavor to provide support and guidance. During pre-service training, several sessions will be held to discuss diversity and coping mechanisms. We look forward to having male and female Volunteers from a variety of races, ethnic groups, ages, religions, and sexual orientations, and hope that you will become part of a diverse group of Americans who take pride in supporting one another and demonstrating the richness of American culture.

Within Peace Corps/Mozambique, Volunteers have established specific committees, such as the Volunteer Advisory Committee and the Peer Support Network, to help support one another in different areas of Volunteer life and to represent the voice and position of Volunteers to Peace Corps staff. The Peace Corps-endorsed secondary projects such as JUNTOS, REDES, Science Fair, FUEMO, and English Theater also have national and provincial leadership teams that oversee the activities/events and budgets of these various programs. An electronic resource named MozSoft is a useful, digital compilation of information and resources collected to assist all Volunteers in various aspects of person and professional Volunteer life. It is updated and augmented annually and made available for sharing via digital media usually during PST.

## **What Might a Volunteer Face?**

### ***Possible Issues for Female Volunteers***

Mozambique's long history of male labor migration, displaced communities, and wartime insecurity has led to a decline in the traditional values that used to offer support if marriages broke down. As a result, many Mozambican women throughout the country support their households alone. Although Mozambique's constitution provides for the equality of men and women, in reality women have the less-favored position legally, economically, and customarily. The culture of male-female relationships is very conservative, and there is very little public affection between males and females.

Learning to live and work in this environment can be challenging for female Volunteers, who are likely to experience some form of sexual harassment or have different expectations placed on them because they are women. Fewer than 20 percent of teachers at the secondary-school level are women, fewer than 50 percent of secondary students are female, and even fewer women attend technical schools. In rural areas, where 62 percent of the population lives, women are engaged in subsistence farming and child rearing, and girls have less time for school. On the other hand, the majority of community health workers at health posts are female.

The independent lifestyles of many women raised in the United States (i.e., living alone as a single woman) will often appear odd or be seen as cause for *medo* (fear) or loneliness to Mozambicans. It is important to realize that they are not seeking to restrict your independence but are merely expressing concern and curiosity based on a different upbringing. You should be able to resolve the situation simply by explaining that this is the way you are used to living.

Another issue female Volunteers inevitably face in Mozambique is their immediate popularity with men. Female Volunteers quickly realize that "amigo" sometimes has an added connotation here and that they should not be surprised if every other bus driver falls in love with them in the course of a 30-minute drive. The hardest part of such situations is the defensive attitude they may provoke in you. If you can be abundantly clear about your intentions from the beginning, it will save you trouble in the end. You will need to keep a low social profile and practice discretion in public (e.g., not drinking alone in bars) to avoid developing an undesirable reputation in your community.

Mozambicans are very generous, and the time you spend with Mozambican women will be endearing and enlightening. The friendships you form with women, and even men, within your community and throughout Mozambique are sure to be a positive aspect of your time in Mozambique.

### ***Possible Issues for Volunteers of Color***

Mozambicans may expect African Americans to learn local languages quicker than other Volunteers and may ask them what their tribal languages and customs are. Assumed to be Africans, black Americans may be treated according to local social norms, which can have both positive (e.g., being more readily accepted than other Volunteers) and negative aspects. African Americans may also be perceived as considering themselves superior to Africans.

Asian Americans may be assumed to be Chinese or Japanese nationals and may be asked if they are martial arts experts (a result of the kung fu videos shown throughout the country). Limited understanding of geography and diversity may cause much confusion, as Mozambicans might be hesitant to believe that anyone with Asian characteristics can be from places other than China. Hispanic American Volunteers may be mistaken for Portuguese or called “el Cubano,” “Mexicano,” etc. Like Asian Americans and even sometimes African Americans, they may not be considered real Americans. Though it requires much patience, carefully explaining American diversity can be both educational for Mozambicans and a relief for volunteers feeling harassed or misunderstood.

### ***Possible Issues for Senior Volunteers***

In training, seniors may encounter frustration in having their needs met for an effective learning environment in areas such as timing, presentation, and style. They may need to be assertive in developing an effective individual approach to language learning.

Some seniors may feel left out socially among the group of younger trainees. Or they may find that younger Volunteers look to them for advice and support, an enjoyable experience for some seniors but not necessarily for all. In addition, seniors may not receive adequate support from younger Volunteers, who may have little understanding of the lives of seniors.

### ***Possible Issues for Married Volunteers***

Married volunteers enjoy some advantages over single volunteers in that they may experience fewer romantic proposals from locals and have a close companion to confide in and help stave off loneliness. However, Mozambican concepts of marriage are not always considered as serious or monogamous as American concepts of marriage. This may mean that you are not necessarily expected to be faithful, and you may receive proposals for relationships despite your marriage ring. Married volunteers also face the frustration of Mozambicans expecting them to carry out traditional gender roles as a couple. Mozambicans may be confused to see husbands washing dishes, or wives walking in front of their husbands. As always, giving patient explanations and making special efforts to break gender-role concepts can be educational and enlightening for Mozambicans as well as comforting to both volunteers involved.

### ***Possible Issues for Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Volunteers***

Although homosexuality is not illegal for adults in Mozambique (the legal age of sexual consent is 14), it is not widely accepted and rarely practiced publicly, especially outside the capital city Maputo. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual Volunteers are thus not likely to be able to be open about their sexual orientation and are advised to keep their sexual behavior discreet.

Peace Corps/Mozambique has open gay, lesbian, and bisexual Volunteers who are presently serving. Many of these Volunteers are open in discussing the ways in which sexual orientation relates to life here in

Mozambique. A recommended resource for support and advice prior to and during your service is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender U.S. Peace Corps Alumni website at [www.lgbrpcv.org](http://www.lgbrpcv.org).

### ***Possible Religious Issues for Volunteers***

An estimated 17.9 percent of Mozambicans are Muslims and approximately 56.1 percent are Christians. Traditional African faiths are widespread and often combined with Christian or Muslim beliefs. The northern region is predominantly Muslim, while the central and southern regions where Volunteers serve are more diverse. Mozambicans are quite tolerant of religious differences, and there is little, if any, conflict among people of different faiths.

### ***Possible Issues for Volunteers With Disabilities***

As part of the medical clearance process, the Peace Corps Office of Medical Services determined that you were physically and emotionally capable, with or without reasonable accommodations, to perform a full tour of Volunteer service in Mozambique without unreasonable risk of harm to yourself or interruption of service. The Peace Corps/Mozambique staff will work with disabled Volunteers to make reasonable accommodations for you in training, housing, job sites, or other areas to enable you to serve safely and effectively.

Disabled Volunteers in Mozambique face a special set of challenges. As in other parts of the world, some people may hold prejudicial attitudes about individuals with disabilities and may discriminate against them. Additionally, there is very little of the infrastructure to accommodate individuals with disabilities that has been developed in the United States.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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This list has been compiled by Volunteers serving in Mozambique and is based on their experience. Use it as an informal guide in making your own list, bearing in mind that each experience is individual. There is no perfect list! You obviously cannot bring everything on the packing list, so consider those items that make the most sense to you personally and professionally. You can always have things sent to you later. As you decide what to bring, keep in mind that you have a 100-pound weight limit on baggage.

### ***How much luggage am I allowed to bring to Mozambique?***

Most airlines have baggage size and weight limits and assess charges for transport of baggage that exceeds those limits. The Peace Corps has its own size and weight limits and will not pay the cost of transport for baggage that exceeds these limits. The Peace Corps' allowance is two checked pieces of luggage with combined dimensions of both pieces not to exceed 107 inches (length + width + height) and a carry-on bag with dimensions of no more than 45 inches. Checked baggage should not exceed 100 pounds total with a maximum weight of 50 pounds for any one bag.

Peace Corps Volunteers are not allowed to take pets, weapons, explosives, radio transmitters (shortwave radios are permitted), automobiles, or motorcycles to their overseas assignments. Do not pack flammable materials or liquids such as lighter fluid, cleaning solvents, hair spray, or aerosol containers. This is an important safety precaution.

### ***What is the electric current in Mozambique?***

The electric current is 220 volts, 50 cycles. If you bring any American-manufactured electrical items with you, a small power converter set (with plug adapters and a transformer) will be necessary. Some Volunteers do not have electricity in their homes or only have electricity for a few hours a day while others have it 24 hours a day. Some Volunteers live at sites that are prone to occasional power outages of a few hours or a few days. Some Volunteers find it useful to bring a solar battery charger and batteries. Almost all sites have at least one place in town with access to electricity or a generator for light, cold beverages, and so on.

### ***How much money should I bring?***

Volunteers are expected to live at the same level as the people in their community. You will be given a settling-in allowance and a monthly living allowance, which should cover your expenses, a travel allowance for occasional business trips to the Peace Corps offices in Maputo, Chimoio, or Nampula (depending on your region of placement), and a leave allowance for every month of service. Often Volunteers wish to bring additional money for vacation travel inside Mozambique and to other countries. Credit cards are preferable to cash and traveler's checks. Volunteers are also given the option to place money, credit cards, and other valuables in the Peace Corps safe for safekeeping.

### ***When can I take vacation and have people visit me?***

Each Volunteer accrues two vacation days per month of service (excluding training). Leave may not be taken during training, the first three months of service, or the last three months of service, except in conjunction with an authorized emergency leave. Family and friends are welcome to visit you after pre-service training and the first three months of service as long as their stay does not interfere with your work. Extended stays at your site are not encouraged and may require permission from your country director. The Peace Corps is not able to provide your visitors with visa, medical, or travel assistance.

***Will my belongings be covered by insurance?***

The Peace Corps does not provide insurance coverage for personal effects; Volunteers are ultimately responsible for the safekeeping of their personal belongings. However, you can purchase personal property insurance before you leave. If you wish, you may contact your own insurance company; additionally, insurance application forms will be provided, and we encourage you to consider them carefully. Volunteers should not ship or take valuable items overseas. Jewelry, watches, radios, cameras, and expensive appliances are subject to loss, theft, and breakage, and in many places, satisfactory maintenance and repair services are not available.

***Do I need an international driver's license?***

Volunteers in Mozambique do not need an international driver's license because they are prohibited from operating privately owned motorized vehicles.

***What should I bring as gifts for Mozambique friends and my host family?***

This is not a requirement. A token of friendship is sufficient. Some gift suggestions include knickknacks for the house; pictures, books, or calendars of American scenes; souvenirs from your area; hard candies that will not melt or spoil; simple jewelry or makeup/nail polish, small toys such as balls or cars, or photos to give away.

***Where will my site assignment be when I finish training, and how isolated will I be?***

Peace Corps trainees are not assigned to individual sites until after they have completed pre-service training. This gives Peace Corps staff the opportunity to assess each trainee's technical and language skills prior to assigning sites, in addition to finalizing site selections with their ministry counterparts. If feasible, you may have the opportunity to provide input on your site preferences, including availability of meat or vegetables, living alone or with a housemate, distance from other Volunteers, and distance from the capital. However, keep in mind that many factors influence the site selection process and that the Peace Corps cannot guarantee placement where you would ideally like to be.

***How can my family contact me in an emergency?***

The Peace Corps' Counseling and Outreach Unit (COU) provides provides assistance in handling emergencies affecting trainees and Volunteers or their families. Before leaving the United States, instruct your family to notify the Counseling and Outreach Unit immediately if an emergency arises, such as a serious illness or death of a family member. During normal business hours, the number for the Counseling and Outreach Unit is 855.855.1961, then select option 2; or directly at 202-692-1470. After normal business hours and on weekends and holidays, the COU duty officer can be reached at the above number. For non-emergency questions, your family can get information from your country desk staff at the Peace Corps by calling 855.855.1961.

***Can I call home from Mozambique?***

International phone service in Mozambique, while fairly good by African standards, is less reliable than that in the United States. Placing a call through an operator can take an hour or longer. Calling card service to and from Mozambique is not yet available, and collect calls are also difficult to make.

Calls to the United States are very expensive, ranging from \$3 per minute for a direct call to \$8 per minute for a call through an operator or from a hotel. Most Volunteers contact friends and family through email. Friends and family can also use programs such as Google Voice or Skype to contact Volunteers. These alternatives to international calling are much cheaper both for the Volunteer and their loved ones.

***Should I bring a cellular phone with me?***

Some U.S. cellphones (and smartphones) work in Mozambique. Please check with the phone's manufacturer to ensure its compatibility with the network in Mozambique. Cellphones can be purchased in Mozambique for approximately \$50-\$100.

***Will there be email and Internet access? Should I bring my computer?***

During pre-service training, you will be able to send and receive email fairly regularly. Access to computers and the Internet is still relatively limited outside provincial capitals but is expanding at a significant rate. Most Volunteers in Mozambique have a computer with them, and some Volunteers use their computers at their organizations or schools. Most places in the country, Internet can be accessed via Internet-capable phones or USB modems.



## WELCOME LETTERS FROM MOZAMBIQUE VOLUNTEERS

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If you're anything like I was pre-departure, you're running around in circles creating to-do lists, fidgeting a little too often and really, wondering what is this craziness you're getting yourself into. How do you pack for two years of the unexpected? But really, be fair to yourself: No experiences or sage advice can make you feel comfortably prepared to spend two years abroad immersed in a completely new and foreign culture. There's nothing wrong with having nerves and sweating over how many pairs of Chacos you should pack. After all, no good adventure story lacks its moments of anxiousness and suspense. The fun thing is, you are writing your own story. You get to be the creator of a new life, in which you make a new home yours, new friends your own, and maybe even a new sense of self. Of your making. Yes, some parts of your lifestyle may change, but you know what you need to be content and you'll make that space for yourself too, whether that be cooking spaghetti marinara just the way you like it, or just having a comfy place to read a book. Better yet, you get to make up for what you left behind in the States: Rather than spending an afternoon surfing YouTube, you might be involved in a lively discussion about the possible existence of witches or dancing and singing for your neighbor's coming-of-age ceremony. And let's be honest: You'll make mistakes too—and laugh a good deal over them.

And then there are details you won't make because they will be given to you. You'll be given appreciation, whether by students who crowd you after class is over to ask the questions they were afraid to ask other teachers, or maybe by a woman you kept company while she waited for results of an HIV test. You'll be given a million random acts of kindness, from the stranger who walks a mile and a half with you to make sure you find the bus stop you need, or by your 7-year-old neighbor who takes the broom from your hands to sweep your porch before you can do so. And you'll be given a peek into the developing world that so many Americans are too afraid to begin to understand—and you'll be given the chance to quell those fears.

As for my favorite part of the story? All of the zany details that make this my adventure, whether sharing a bus seat with an equally confused (and vocal) goat, or deciding whether or not to accept an offer of rat on a rotisserie skewer. I declined, but maybe you'll accept. It's up to you. So while you pack and repack your bags trying to guess the unexpected, I promise you one thing you can expect is to never find life dull: Mozambique is full of incredible surprises. We all look forward to having you and we wish you good luck!  
*Boas vindas!*

—Angie Palombo  
Zobwe, Tete

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I would tell you what to expect if I could, but the thing is, what your experience here will be like depends largely on you. You may become a passada fiend and dazzle people with your sultry dance moves late into the night. Or perhaps you will find passada “cheesy” and prefer the knee-knocking beats of kuduru. You might plant an herb garden, successfully protect it from neighborhood goats, chickens, and ducks, and become a gourmet chef. Or instead subsist on the delectable combination of bread and fried bean-mush sandwiches and tomato-onion salads. You could get here and find the Mozambican sense of time endlessly frustrating as meetings start at least 45 minutes after they were supposed to, deadlines pass without notice, and buses refuse to leave until every available space is full. Or maybe you will find that life's lazy pace is a refreshing break from the constant rush of the States and a good excuse to read those books you always meant to and discover hobbies you never had time for. You may miss the entertainment of movies, TV, magazines, concerts, baseball

games, Sunday newspapers, late-night pizza, coffee dates, and draft beer, but you might also appreciate the ability to sit and chat for hours on end without a single distraction. You, perhaps, are a beach bum and will frequent the gorgeous beaches of Inhambane, or maybe you are a mountaineer and would rather go hiking in Manica. And it's possible you are a firm believer in fashion norms preaching that "two patterns can't be mixed," but might think differently when you see the beauty of women wearing four different patterned cloths at the same time. Perhaps you will have an "open door" policy at your house and be delighted by a constant stream of visitors who come to ask about your health, look at pictures of your family (for the fifth time), teach you to pound peanuts into flour, ask for help on their English homework, lament you for not sweeping your yard, braid your hair, and tell you stories about pigs that breathe under water and hail so big it kills cows. Or you could be someone who likes to stroll around town and converse with your neighbors over an icy cold Fanta or visit others in their homes to swoon over newborn babies, drink tea, and munch on fried cassava while sitting on a reed mat beneath a mango tree. Oh, yes, the possibilities here are endless, and it all depends on you.

—Alexandra Fallon  
Chicupe, Inhambane

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What an adventure to be a Peace Corps Volunteer. I don't believe I will ever experience a more diverse, challenging, and exciting time in my life. Or, if I do, the experience will always be compared with this journey I am on. Mozambique is a great place to live, the sense of community is strong, friendships are easy to make and hard to break, and I have rarely been surrounded by such bright and beautiful people in my life.

My social skills have increased greatly because being involved and integrated in the community necessitates talking, sharing, and listening. This means I have had to be more vocal than usual: I am a great listener but usually sit in the background taking it all in. Here in Mozambique this is not the way to do things: Thus, I talk more. This is especially interesting because most social communication is done in Portuguese, a language I did not know before coming here.

I hope you think seriously about serving in Mozambique. Talk to returned Volunteers from the Peace Corps/Mozambique program, and I am sure they will all recommend this diverse, friendly, and special country as an excellent place to be a Volunteer.

—Blake Schmidt  
Chockwe, Gaza

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"Mozambique sounds like a lovely country." My mother couldn't have been more right. When holding the Welcome Book in my hands for the first time, I felt as though I possessed the sacred book of knowledge for the next two years of my life. I read about all the unique experiences of former Mozambique Volunteers, and I was ready to embark on my journey. Now I am living in Vanduzi, a small, beautiful village surrounded by mountains in Manica Province. I remember looking at National Geographic magazines as a kid and wanting to someday go to Africa. I can now say now that my life reads and looks like a National Geographic article.

I get up every morning around 5 a.m. when my neighborhood rooster crows and start the day off with a cup of Ricoffy (instant chicory coffee) while watching the rising sun peek out from behind the mountains. Quickly, I have to snap into teacher mode and go over my biology lessons in Portuguese. Teaching biology to

eight, ninth, and 10th graders in Portuguese at first felt like an impossible task. After time and a lot of practice it becomes second nature, and you enjoy all the time spent with your students. This past year I had the privilege of working with other science teachers from Manica and Sofala provinces to organize a science fair in the town of Gorongosa. You cannot imagine the sense of accomplishment students give you when they can explain to you the “germination of spinach in different soil substrates.” At the end of my first year of teaching, I am already looking forward to the second half of my journey and the Third Annual Science Fair.

Mozambique, with pristine beaches, breathtaking mountain ranges, and beautiful savannas, has so much to offer every journeyer, although the best part of the journey is the warmth and friendliness of the people. Each one of you will be able to go on your own journey by chapa (rural bus), a pé (on foot), or by avião (plane). Chances are that after two years you will go home and say, “Yeah, Mom, Mozambique is a lovely country.”

—Erik Smith

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It is hard to imagine the next two years of your life in Mozambique. I had many preconceived notions of where I would live and what I would be doing, all of which have ended up being wrong. It is best to keep an open mind because during the next two years your mind will be stretched further than you ever thought possible.

I had imagined a solitary existence very far away from cities. In reality, my town is 20 minutes from an important urban hub. Being this close to a city, I am able to get a wide variety of food and even occasionally run into another Peace Corps Volunteer. I live in a reed hut with no electricity or running water. These amenities, which seemed so necessary at first, became easy to do without. I live next to the school, and every morning I wake up to the singing of the national anthem as the morning classes start. I teach in the afternoons, so I spend mornings planning my lessons, going to the market to buy food for dinner, and talking with students who drop by my house. They want to practice English, look at the current Newsweek, or seek help with their homework. At noon I walk across the football (soccer) field to get to class and start my afternoon of teaching. I am usually done at 5 p.m. I then make dinner and plan what I have to do the next day. Each night before I go to bed I look up at the stars and listen to the noise of my town, amazed that another day has passed.

To all you prospective Volunteers my advice is this: Do not get stressed about Portuguese, where you will live, or what it will look like. Just be ready with an open mind, and you will have the most interesting time of your life.

—Stacy Hegg

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No day in Mozambique will ever be the same, though it can be certain that something ridiculous will happen, whether it's a man you pass on the street wearing a hot pink “World's Biggest Drama Queen” T-shirt or a discussion about Celine Dion on a minibus with your fellow passengers at 6 a.m. Daily interactions here are so much more vibrant than in the United States. It's very hard to walk around on autopilot here because there is always someone who will scold you later when you didn't see them in the market and say hi, or because a goat or child would run into you. And oh the things you would miss: the funny conversations, questions, and touching exchanges. The kids are amazing and their innovativeness is astonishing. I could watch them wheel around their toy truck contraptions made of old wire and crushed pop cans for hours. You

also get really good at going with the flow here, and perhaps will find that watching the wall becomes a favorite pastime and just how many thoughts actually come out of it. Or how lovely it can be to relax with your 80-year-old neighbor on a straw mat at dusk, communicating with smiles, gestures and a mixture of Portuguese and the local language. Or just how dorky you realize you have become, when you flash yet another person a thumbs-up in greeting. And the bonds that you form with the other PCVs and how you're all in it together. And despite the horrible days that will inevitably come, just how amazing this experience is and how very fortunate we are to be able to live this life.

—Lindsey Hutchison  
Xai-Xai, Gaza

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Welcome to the beautiful country of Mozambique. There is a lot to fall in love with here. When I arrived I fell for the scenery: bright-colored capulanas adorning women with children tied to their backs and large basins of fruit balanced miraculously on their heads, rhythmic music from all corners of town, kids dancing in the streets, and deep red sunsets into the mountains.

It was only when I began to form relationships, however, that my presence in Mozambique took a purpose. The women I stop and chat with on the way home from school, the librarian that stays after hours to discuss different places in the world, the primary school teacher who started an English club with me, and students who come by to practice speaking, or just to talk, make life rich. They teach me to cook with cashews and green mangoes, to speak their language, and to braid my hair. I show them maps and photos, grammar books, and American songs.

Mozambique is a large country with much to find, learn, and share. In my time here I have discovered more than I knew about life, myself and the world. I hope you enjoy it.

—Kim Martin  
Namapa, Nampula



# PACKING LIST

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This list has been compiled by Volunteers serving in Mozambique and is based on their experience. Use it as an informal guide in making your own list, bearing in mind that experience is individual. There is no perfect list! You obviously cannot bring everything on the list, so consider those items that make the most sense to you personally and professionally. You can always have things sent to you later. As you decide what to bring, keep in mind that you have an 80-pound weight limit on baggage. And remember, you can get almost everything you need in Mozambique.

## Unisex Items (Not to Leave at Home)

- **Three-month supply of any medicine you will need including OTCs**
- **Two pairs of eyeglasses**
- Lightweight coat or jacket (it gets colder than you think)
- Waterproof rain jacket or poncho
- Swimsuit
- More than two pairs of jeans or casual pants (the comfy ones that you wear at home)
- Comfortable T-shirts and tank tops (remember, they will get dirty and/or ruined)
- Sweatpants
- One or two heavy sweatshirts or sweaters
- One or two long-sleeved shirts
- Six to eight pairs of good-quality socks
- Nice soap and face wash (two-year supply of each)
- Pair of flip-flops (you can get them here but U.S. quality is better)
- Baseball hat, sun hat, or visor
- Headlamp (and batteries)
- Converter and adaptor
- Two-year supply of razors and shavers
- Ankle socks (hard to find here)
- Zip-close bags (variety of sizes)
- Sturdy compact umbrella (you can get cheap ones here)
- Toothbrushes (cheaper quality ones are widely available)

- A few high-quality, sharp cooking knives
- **Laptop, high-capacity flash drives and/or external hard drive (insurance is highly recommended and easily purchased)**<sup>1</sup>
- Digital camera (insurance is recommended)
- iPod with **portable speakers** (insurance is recommended)
- Your favorite music. You will want your music!
- TSA locks
- Sunglasses (preferably polarized)
- At least one Nalgene water bottle
- Extra funds for travel and vacations; **should you choose to bring** some, cash and credit cards are more practical than traveler's checks
- Nice pens (favorite brand), markers (different colors)
- Sunscreen for training (the medical office will supply sunscreen after you swear in)
- Deodorant (two-year supply) depending on how attached you are to your brand. Deodorant can be purchased in Mozambique.
- School-esque backpack/shoulder bag (you will use it every day)
- Gold Bond Medicated Powder

### **For Men (Not to Leave at Home)**<sup>2</sup>

- Two or three pairs of professional pants
- Three or four button-down shirts, polo shirts (both short- and long-sleeved)
- Two or three pairs of walking-length shorts
- 10-15 pairs of underwear
- Shorts
- One or two belts
- Good facial shaving cream

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<sup>1</sup> To learn more about personal property insurance specifically tailored to outgoing Volunteers, please visit: [http://www.clements.com/expatriate/peacecorps/personal\\_property/overview.asp](http://www.clements.com/expatriate/peacecorps/personal_property/overview.asp)

<sup>2</sup> **Travel clothing website:** <http://www.magellans.com/?Args=>

## For Women (Not to Leave at Home)

- **Three to five knee-length** or longer skirts or dresses
- Three blouses
- Two nice pairs of pants for work (khakis, nice jeans—non-weathered—are also good)
- One or two nice outfits for going out
- Tank tops are fine as long as they are not spaghetti straps (not appropriate for work)
- Five T-shirts
- Two pairs of leggings
- Three to five scarves (to jazz up outfits)
- Facial moisturizer with sunscreen
- If you have your favorite toiletries, i.e., shampoo, conditioner, or facewash, bring them!
- 10-20 pairs of underwear
- Sports bras and your regular bras
- Hair ties/hair elastics/bobby pins/hair gel/mousse
- Six-month supply of female hygiene products (especially tampons)
- If you wear makeup, bring some!
- If you wear jewelry, bring some (but leave your mother's pearls at home)
- Two-piece bathing suits are OK
- Bag/purse with a **zipper** (for walking in city)

## Shoes (Not to Leave at Home)

Volunteers walk many miles every week, so shoes wear out quickly. Female Volunteers suggest bringing one pair of fashionable sandals or shoes, as there are chances to dress up a bit and go out once in a while. People with large feet (especially men who wear size 11 or larger) should bring an extra pair or two of shoes, as larger sizes are hard to come by in Mozambique.

- Professional shoes
- Athletic shoes/running shoes with good soles
- **Durable walking sandals (such as Chacos, Tevas, or Keens, if you like them)**

## Miscellaneous (recommended but not required)

- Watch—reliable, durable, preferably with Indiglo, but inexpensive
- Money belt that fits under your clothes

- Duct tape
- Leatherman tool or Swiss army knife (preferably with bottle/can opener capabilities)
- Rechargeable batteries and charger
- Mosquito tent (convenient for use when traveling around so you don't have to carry and put up a mosquito net every time—easy to set up, automatic mosquito-free/bug-free sleeping)<sup>3</sup>
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, cheap paint sets, and colored chalk
- Medium-sized towels (large ones are difficult to wash) or quick-dry towels
- Scissors
- Sewing kit with clothing thread and **nylon thread** for fixing bags and hanging items on walls in your home
- Printed pictures of home, family, and friends
- Lightweight sleeping bag or fleece blanket
- Games (Scrabble, chess, Frisbee, cards, etc.)
- Compact tent, if you like to camp
- Hobby materials and games, e.g., journal, art supplies, seeds for veggies, playing cards, sudoku books, crossword books
- Favorite books and movies (paperback books are a great help, as you will have lots of quiet time to read or a Kindle e-reader)
- Tweezers/nail clippers
- Hairbrush/comb
- Somewhat professional big purse/bag for work
- Small pocket notebooks, Moleskins
- Maps
- Two-year supply of contact lenses, cases, and solution (\*PCMO recommends Volunteers wear glasses instead of contacts during their service to avoid eye infections.)

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<sup>3</sup> Options for free-standing mosquito tents/bug huts:

[http://www.campmor.com/outdoor/gear/Product\\_27833](http://www.campmor.com/outdoor/gear/Product_27833) / <http://www.rei.com/product/777772> / <http://www.rei.com/product/777771>

- Your favorite cologne or perfume for special occasions

### **Food (recommended but not required)**

- Spices (taco seasoning, oregano, cilantro, garlic powder, cinnamon, adobo, cumin, dill, chili powder, etc.)
- Seeds. Vegetable seeds can be purchased at most sites, but herbs are difficult to get and make a nice project during training and at site. Basil, mint, thyme, and oregano are very helpful. Flower seeds are nice too.
- Juice mixes (Kool-Aid, Crystal Light, Hawaiian Punch, Nestea, etc.). You will need to drink a lot of water, so it's nice to mix it up a bit.
- Ground coffee, which can be purchased in Maputo, but the freeze dried stuff can be purchased anywhere. A small plastic French press is nice too.
- Non-stick frying pan
- Measuring cups
- If you like cheese, bring grated Parmesan (e.g., Kraft), no refrigeration needed.
- Easy recipes from home (And if you don't know how to cook some basic things, ask someone to teach you a few recipes before you come. Once you are at site, you are on your own!)
- Small dry food packets of anything "just add water/milk/egg/etc.":mashed potatoes, gravy, pasta sauce, mac 'n cheese (noodles can be bought here), cookies, Jell-O, pudding, etc.

# PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

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The following list consists of suggestions for you to consider as you prepare to live outside the United States for two years. Not all items will be relevant to everyone, and the list does not include everything you should make arrangements for.

## Family

- Notify family that they can call the Peace Corps' Counseling and Outreach Unit at any time if there is a critical illness or death of a family member (24-hour telephone number: 1-855-855-1961, then press 2; or directly at 202-692-1470).
- Give the Peace Corps' *On the Home Front* handbook to family and friends.

## Passport/Travel

- Forward to the Peace Corps travel office all paperwork for the Peace Corps passport and visas.
- Verify that your luggage meets the size and weight limits for international travel.
- Obtain a personal passport if you plan to travel after your service ends. (Your Peace Corps passport will expire three months after you finish your service, so if you plan to travel longer, you will need a regular passport.)

## Medical/Health

- Complete any needed dental and medical work.
- If you wear glasses, bring two pairs.
- Arrange to bring a three-month supply of all medications (including birth control pills) you are currently taking.

## Insurance

- Make arrangements to maintain life insurance coverage.
- Arrange to maintain supplemental health coverage while you are away. (Even though the Peace Corps is responsible for your health care during Peace Corps service overseas, it is advisable for people who have preexisting conditions to arrange for the continuation of their supplemental health coverage. If there is a lapse in coverage, it is often difficult and expensive to be reinstated.)
- Arrange to continue Medicare coverage if applicable.

## Personal Papers

- Bring a copy of your certificate of marriage or divorce.

## Voting

- Register to vote in the state of your home of record. (Many states consider voting and payment of state taxes as evidence of residence in that state.)

- Obtain a voter registration card and take it with you overseas.
- Arrange to have an absentee ballot forwarded to you overseas.

### **Personal Effects**

- Purchase personal property insurance to extend from the time you leave your home for service overseas until the time you complete your service and return to the United States.

### **Financial Management**

- Keep a bank account in your name in the U.S.
- Obtain student loan deferment forms from the lender or loan service.
- Execute a power of attorney for the management of your property and business.
- Arrange for deductions from your readjustment allowance to pay alimony, child support, and other debts through the Office of Volunteer Financial Operations at 855.855.1961, ext. 1770.
- Place all important papers—mortgages, deeds, stocks, and bonds—in a safe deposit box or with an attorney or other caretaker.

## CONTACTING PEACE CORPS HEADQUARTERS

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This list of numbers will help connect you with the appropriate office at Peace Corps headquarters to answer various questions. You can use the toll-free number and extension or dial directly using the local numbers provided. Be sure to leave the toll-free number and extensions with your family so they can contact you in the event of an emergency.

### Peace Corps Headquarters

**Toll-free Number:** 855.855.1961, Press 1,

### Peace Corps' Mailing Address:

Peace Corps Headquarters  
1111 20th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20526

<b>For Questions About:</b>	<b>Staff:</b>	<b>Toll-free Ext:</b>	<b>Direct/Local Number:</b>
Responding to an Invitation:	Office of Placement	x1840	202-692-1840
Country Information:	Heidi Broekemeier	x2255	202-692-2255 Desk Officer/ Lesotho & Mozambique <a href="mailto:Mozambique@peacecorps.gov">Mozambique@peacecorps.gov</a> Fax: 202-692-2301, Attn: Mozambique Desk
Plane Tickets, Passport, Visas, or other travel matters:	CWT SATO Travel	x1170	202-692-1840
Legal Clearance:	Office of Placement	x1840	202-692-1840
Medical Clearance and Forms Processing (includes dental):	Screening Nurse	x1500	202-692-1500
Medical Reimbursements (handled by a subcontractor):			800-818-8772
Loan Deferments, Taxes, Financial Operations:		x1770	202-692-1770

