



Save the Children

# EDUCATION

## Save the Children Mozambique

Basic Education, Early Childhood Care and Development. Common Approaches



Save the Children was first established in 1919 to help children affected by the First World War. Today, we reach 50 million children in 120 countries around the world—including Mozambique. By 2030, we aim to inspire the following breakthroughs in the way the world treats children:

- **Survive:** No child dies from preventable causes before their fifth birthday.
- **Learn:** All children learn from a quality basic education.
- **Be Protected:** Violence against children is no longer tolerated.

We opened programmes in Mozambique in 1986 at the height of the Mozambican civil war. We started working with children and their families in some of the most marginalized communities affected by the conflict. Today, **Save the Children Mozambique (SCIMOZ)** has a mixed development and humanitarian portfolio, and offices in six Provinces: Gaza, Manica, Maputo, Nampula, Tete, and Zambezia. 590 full-time staff work in close partnership with government ministries and civil society organisations at all levels. In 2017, 1.6 million children (1,021,373 girls and 589,864 boys) and 2.9 million adults directly benefited from our activities. Indirectly, our activities reached more than seven million people. Education

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is a core thematic priority of the current strategy of SCIMOZ—alongside health and nutrition, child protection, child poverty, child rights governance, and emergency response.

### Our education goals in Mozambique

Education is at the heart of our mission. Every child has a right to education as enshrined in international and national law, and SCIMOZ will not rest until all children enjoy that right. Good quality education is the means by which we equip our children with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to thrive in the world. Education saves lives, protects, and builds peace and stability. Our 2016-2018 education strategy focuses on two goals, which align with the government's education priorities:

**Early Childhood Education and Development (ECCD):** we help children to develop foundational learning skills in the years leading up to school. Our goal is that by 2030, all children aged 0-8 have access to quality ECCD in Mozambique. Currently, only 3% of children aged 3-5 years benefit from pre-school education. Only 50,000 children are enrolled in community-based pre-schools, called 'escolinhas'.

**Basic Education:** our goal is that by 2030, primary school completion rates and transition to secondary school have increased and learning outcomes improved by 50%. SCIMOZ is committed to ensure that all school-age children complete each grade with the competencies foreseen in the curriculum. Our needs assessments show that currently, only 89% of children are enrolled in and less than 50% of children complete primary school. The number is significantly lower for girls. Frequent teacher absenteeism is another obstacle for quality education. To achieve our Basic Education goals, we support official teacher trainings, and provide in-service training where appropriate. To tackle common access and retention barriers, we prioritize **inclusive education**, and **girls' education** in line with the change envisaged by the Girls Education Challenge (GEC).

All of our education activities build on a Quality Learning Framework and make ample use of Save the Children's best practises called Common Approaches (see below). We design our education projects around a **Child Rights Programming Framework**, and link closely with Child Rights Governance, Child Protection, and Disaster Risk Reduction to make sure that (pre-)schools are a safe place for all children. We also frequently combine education activities with nutrition, resulting in **School Health and Nutrition interventions (SHN)**. Finally, all programs promote **Child Centred Accountability** through the effective engagement of children and other community members in school governance.

### Advocacy for quality education

Besides capacity building and frontline service delivery, we actively advocate for improved quality of government education services and increased official education budgets. For our advocacy work, we build on good practises and evidence from our own interventions, and collaborate with local education actors such as **Movement for Education for All**. An example of our advocacy in action is described in the section on the Quality Learning Framework (see below). Other advocacy achievements of 2017 included:



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- **Basic Education:** Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) included the community action component of Literacy Boost (see below) in the National Plan of Reading and Writing, and acknowledged the value of involving parents and communities in the promotion literacy. They also approved a gender strategy in the education sector, and a manual to promote extracurricular activities, including girls' clubs.
- **ECCD:** MINEDH recognized our evidence around producing education materials using local resources as a good practice. They also selected SCIMOZ for leading the capacity building for staff involved in ECCD at a national, provincial, district level, and for community mobilization.

## Reach and results of our education work in Mozambique

In 2017, our education activities supported 306 pre-schools and 572 primary schools. Overall, we directly reached more than 330,000 people (including 144,254 girls and 153,607 boys). Indirectly, 1.2 million people benefited from our education work. For 2018, SCIMOZ is targeting 78,155 pre-school children and 248,722 primary school children with its education activities. Currently, SCIMOZ has seven ongoing education projects focusing on basic education, ECCD, girl's education, and inclusive education in the Provinces of Manica, Gaza, Tete, Nampula, Sofala and Zambézia. The projects are supported by DFID, NORAD, USDA, UNICEF, the World Bank, and private donors.

SCIMOZ works closely with **government** partners (Ministry of Education and Human Development; Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action; Ministry of Health) and **community-based organizations** (e.g. MEPT – Movement for Education for All). We also coordinate with (Pre-)School Councils, Community Child Protection Committees, and other relevant community organizations.

## Our Quality Learning Framework (QLF) and MINEDH standards

The Quality Learning Framework (QLF) describes Save the Children's best understanding of what makes a quality basic education. It guides all of our education programmes. QLF describes five foundations that support the wellbeing and learning of all children, and should be found at all schools:

- 1) **Emotional and Psychosocial Protection:** Teachers and children are positive and respectful to one another. Children develop social and emotional skills, and learn how to make responsible decisions.
- 2) **Physical Protection:** Learning environments are safe and accessible to all children. Plans are in place to reduce and prevent any risks. There are clean latrines and handwashing facilities. Children are supported to be healthy and well-nourished.
- 3) **Teaching and Learning:** Teachers use active, child-centred teaching practices in languages children understand. They use appropriate learning materials, and monitor each child's progress individually.
- 4) **Parents and Community:** Children, parents and communities participate in decisions about their school. They support children's learning outside school.



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5) **School Leadership and Management:** School leaders lead learning and manage the school resources well. Inclusive and protective policies are in place that promote the safety and wellbeing of children and teachers.

While SCIMOZ started rolling out the QLF in Mozambique, the **Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH)** started working on its own quality standards. Between 2015-2017, SCIMOZ' education advocacy focused on integrating MINEDH's quality standards with the QLF—especially its emotional and psychosocial protection components. To kick-start the process, we presented the QLF to key personnel of MINEDH, including the vice ministry and all national directors. This was followed by monthly meetings and regular trainings, which eventually resulted in a *District Supervision Manual* that integrates the QLF standards. SCIMOZ provided support for the induction trainings on the manual in Nampula and Manica. In 2018, MINEDH has started rolling out the manual across the country.

## Common approaches: toolkits for successful education projects

Over the years, we have developed common approaches to address problems that children face around the world. Each common approach is a response—or solution—to a specific problem facing children. It provides tools that guide our activities, and represent our best understanding of what works and results in lasting change for children. All common approaches are designed to reach the most deprived children. When it comes to education, SCIMOZ has adapted four global common approaches: *Literacy Boost* and *Numeracy Boost* for primary school children, *Ready to Learn* for pre-school children, and *Safe Schools* for all school-aged children. We regularly share lessons learnt from these common approaches with MINEDH, and organize trainings for teachers and for our implementing partners.

### LITERACY BOOST

Literacy Boost (LB) helps primary school children to learn to read and write by training teachers, parents and community members to support them, both in and out of the classroom. It promotes six core skills: alphabet, vocabulary, phonological awareness, writing, fluency, and comprehension. The cost of implementation in up to 150 schools is usually between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per school per year. The costs for large-scale implementation (up to 1,500 schools) range between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per school. As a part of LB, SCIMOZ is implementing the following activities:

- **Train teachers** to incorporate literacy skills into existing curricula, to produce inclusive materials, and to continually assess their students to identify gaps and measure improvements.
- Provide children with materials to **practise and enjoy reading in any setting**, mainly via school and mobile libraries.
- Equip **parents, caregivers, families and communities** to help children learn to read outside of the classroom, for example by organizing reading groups and community reading fairs.

In Mozambique, we started rolling out LB to combat the chronic problem of low quality of learning in primary education. Between 2008-2001, 78 teachers, 10 school boards, and 4800 children benefited from



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our first LB-intervention in Gaza Province. The program provided teacher training, community mobilization, reading promotion and support for the creation of learning materials. Comparisons of LB-schools and other schools in the area found that LB had a school-wide impact on improving the attendance/retention of boys and especially girls. LB-students in all grades performed better than non-LB peers when tested for letters, and when asked to rhyme eight words on demand, to read 40 words per minute, and to write a dictated sentence. These findings encouraged us to bring LB to all of our intervention areas. By now, more than 200 schools in Manica Province are using LB, for example.



“My name is Augusto Celestino Mirione. I’m a primary school teacher in Nhamuchindue (Manica Province). In 2015, had the opportunity to be trained by SCIMOZ. I returned to my workplace and taught my colleagues. Right from that day, I started producing and using learning materials which were made from bottles. Then, I used the floor to help children to learn how to write using fingers. My classes became motivating; the children learned by playing and continued to do so outside of the classroom. In 2016, my third class got 100% in their test scores.”

## NUMERACY BOOST

Numeracy Boost support students, teachers, parents and communities to help primary school children develop numeracy skills, both inside and outside the classroom. The approach steers teachers away from teaching through memorisation, repetition and workbooks. Instead, it emphasises learning through interactive activities and games, so students can understand and explain their reasoning. A cost estimate found the implementation of *Numeracy Boost* costs \$5 to \$9 per student per year. Critical activities are:

- **Teacher training** helps teachers think differently about math concepts and how to teach using child-centred methods.
- **Student assessments** are used to identify gaps and evaluate children’s knowledge and problem-solving skills.
- **Community action** involves the entire community in children’s learning outside of school, and demonstrates the importance of maths in everyday life.

## READY TO LEARN

Ready to Learn helps three to six year-olds develop the foundational literacy and math skills they need to learn. Without this, many do not succeed at school. We provide training, guidance and understanding of how to develop emergent literacy and math skills through play. This includes using common objects found in homes and communities for counting and sorting, and a Ready to Learn toolkit, which includes play-



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oriented activity cards. Costs are estimated to range from \$10 to \$85 per child, depending on the level of support needed and the integration into current systems. Core components of Ready to Learn:

- **Learning at Centres** enhances preschool practices by supporting teachers to integrate over 100 play-based activities into their daily schedules.
- The **International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA)** is an easy-to-use assessment that measures children's progress and allows for comparison across contexts.
- **Learning at Home** extends opportunities to children who have no access to a preschool. This features 25 simple, hands-on games that caregivers can do at home with their children.

## SAFE SCHOOLS

*Safe Schools* simultaneously works with policies, systems, school management, infrastructure, teachers, children, parents and communities. It combines three interventions that address different threats for children into a single approach that will keep children safe in and around schools:

- **Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP)** supports children facing disruptions in education due to attacks on schools, arrests, forced recruitment or classrooms used as storage for military personnel or weaponry.
- **Violence Free Schools (VFS)** supports schools to prevent and respond to physical, psychological or sexual violence involving teachers and students. An important component is the strengthening of complaint and referral mechanisms to enhance accountability. Under our sponsorship programmes, we have currently chosen 60 schools to pilot VFS.
- **Comprehensive School Safety (CSS)** provides an approach to reduce risks from all hazards to the education sector, including disasters, climate change, conflict and other risks. To operationalize the CSS-component in Mozambique, we teamed up with MINEDH, UN-Habitat and UNICEF to produce a guide about risk-reduction and emergency activities in a school context. The guide explains the structure and functions of school-based risk-reduction clubs, outlines activities and infrastructural measures to make schools safe together with children, and summarizes the basics of first aid.

## Success story: community action eliminated drop-outs (Manica)

For the past three years, we have been working towards strengthening community action for education in Manica Province under a cooperation agreement with NORAD. We have been revitalizing and training School Councils, Child Protection Community Committees (CPCC) and Child Groups at 180 schools with a total of more than 60 000 students. All of these groups regularly meet under the umbrella of **Civil Society Platforms**, which have been established for every school. Since the project started in 2015, most of the schools have **eliminated drop-outs**. How did School Councils, CPCC and Child Groups achieve this elimination?

Although **School Council** structures exist at every public school, none of the 180 Councils were functioning before the project started. School Councils are composed of parents and other community



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members. Their function is to mobilize community members to participate in the construction of school infrastructure. SCIMOZ trained School Councils to take on more responsibilities, supporting them to become an active link between their school and community members. The 180 supported School Councils are now involved in monitoring student performance and attendance to identify students who are at risk of dropping out. If a student is about to drop out due to financial or other difficulties, they find ways to support her or him. If a girl is about to drop out because of marriage, they will talk to her parents to convince them of the importance of education. School Council members also participate in the management of school funds, monitor teacher presence, encourage parents to participate in children's homework, and organize reading fairs. School Council's strengthened role was key in moving the QLF implementation from 0% to 50% at the targeted schools between 2015-2017.

Concomitant with the school council, the **Child Protection Community Committees (CPCC)** mobilize parents and children to make sure that children enter school and stay in school. They identify school-aged children, including orphans and children with disabilities, and follow up when they are not enrolling in school or when their performance is dropping. CPCC also works with children to strengthen complaint mechanisms, and they refer cases of abuse and violence that might happen at school and community level to the relevant police units and courts.

Meanwhile, we trained 20-30 children to take the lead in informing their peers about their rights, disaster risks, climate change, and sexual and reproductive health using speeches, dance, and theatre among other techniques. These children now form **Child Rights Nuclei** and **DRR Committees**. They join the CPCC and School Councils in mobilizing their community around the importance of education and conduct home visits when their peers are about to drop out.

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