

Tete Province, Mozambique



Left: country of Mozambique
Above: Tete Province (bright green)
where our team will be traveling

An ecclesial context

Portuguese Roman Catholics were the first Christians in Mozambique. The Swiss Presbyterian Church sent the first protestant missionaries. David Livingstone, of the London Missionary Society, passed through northern Mozambique on his way to and from the Mozambican Coast following the great Zambezi River. Livingstone preached the Gospel as he went. but his ministry established no churches.

During the 300 years of Portuguese rule, the Roman Catholic Church received favored status from the government. The

protestant church wasn't even recognized as a viable church and was prohibited from doing any evangelism in the northern provinces. Hence, until independence, the Presbyterians were largely concentrated in the southern provinces of Maputo and Gaza.

PCUSA missionaries became involved in 1993 with evangelism, church planting and Christian development. 15 years of working together with pastors from the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique (WM), has birthed 70 churches and many community based health, education, evangelism, and church leadership development projects.



Modern Political Synopsis

Mozambique was a colony of Portugal between 1505 and 1974. Following 12 years of violent struggle for independence by various groups under the single banner FRELIMO (the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) Mozambique liberation fighters achieved independence. Although the revolution had begun by an American educated man, the country swiftly aligned itself with Soviet interests with Marxism dominating the country's political, economic, and religious ideologies.

Following 1975, 20 years of civil war, sabotage from neighboring states, and economic collapse scarred the young nation. Also marking this period were the mass exodus of Portuguese nationals, weak infrastructure, nationalization, and economic mismanagement. Mozambique refugees fled to neighboring countries.

Civil war ended in 1992 under President Chissano (1986-2004), which inaugurated a mass return of refugees (est. 5.7 mil) in a few years. Reforms continue under President Guebuza (2005-present). Current economic conditions are associated with the coal, tobacco, hydroelectric (Cahora Bassa dam) industries. High mortality rates, illiteracy, landmine accidents, HIV/AIDS, and malnutrition are the foci of many significant humanitarian relief efforts.