

Mais Escola para Mim (MEpM)
Magude District, Maputo Province



Lurdes Mutola Foundation

2008 Narrative Report

Overview

In 2008, the Lurdes Mutola Foundation's *Mais Escola para Mim* program provided 20 Mozambican girls from rural zones throughout Maputo Province with the chance to attend eighth grade in a secondary school. In 2009, LMF will enlarge MEpM to include two classes of scholarship recipients: a ninth grade group including 18 of the original 20 and a new eighth grade group of 20 girls.

This report continues where the initial six-month report left off. Taken together, the two provide an accurate synopsis of MEpM's entire first year. They do not, however, repeat the same information and they are not structured similarly. The July 2008 report follows a chronological order whereas this report, written in January 2009, is organized topically and in five sections. Section one includes information about the participants and their performance at the end of the 2008 school year. Section two provides an update on the construction of MEpM dormitory complex in Magude, in addition to information about new MEpM staff members. Section three details MEpM's funding situation and association with the Friends of the Lurdes Mutola Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity based in Palo Alto, California. Section four includes all foreseeable plans and preparations for 2009. Section five is a conclusion. An appendix with relevant photographs, layout images, and graphs follows.

I. The Program

All 18 of the girls that entered the third trimester passed their year-end examinations in October 2008, and did so with average scores noticeably higher than those of their peers. This confirms one of MEpM's basic tenets: girls with ample time to study in a supportive living environment can and will achieve academic success. In terms of wellbeing outside of classes, the girls continued to live comfortably and without incident in the dormitory. See Figure 1, "Academic Improvement."

To celebrate the end of the academic year and the success of the scholarship recipients, the Foundation organized an end of the year banquet for the 18 girls and LMF staff and family members. Local Magude school and administration officials like Alicidio Manjate were also invited, as they had provided indispensable help all year long. Gabriel Fossati-Bellani led the charge in organizing soccer games while others talked and prepared the delicious traditional Mozambican food. After eating, LMF Executive Director Macame Bruhane Macame made a spoke and prizes were awarded to the students with the highest average grade score in each trimester. (The girls also sang the national anthem as a chorus before the start of the local Magude soccer game). The next day all of the scholarship girls packed up and returned home for summer vacation. See Figure 2, "End of the Year Ceremony."

In December, all 18 girls completed re-application forms to enter MEpM for the 2009 school year. LMF distributed this application to update personal information and parental authorization, provide a means for feedback, and to state their goals for the next year.

LMF also conducted its recruitment process for MEpM's new group of eighth graders, extending opportunities to candidates from Panjane, Mapulanguene, Motaze, Mahel, Marule, Nwambyana, Bobe, and Manjangua. In the village of Mapulanguene, only a few kilometers

away from the South African border, we met with two girls, one of whom, Velosa Joao Cossa, was ready to enter eighth grade at 12 years old. In Motaze and Bobe, where LMF accepted candidates in 2008 and residents were already familiar with the program, the MEpM recruiting team encountered a room filled with every eligible girl in the area and their enthusiastic parents. This process required more traveling and logistical coordination than every before, but it was done to include those young Mozambican women with the greatest need. See Figure 3, “2009 Recruitment.”

Lessons Learned

- When selecting the new group, LMF took into account recommendations made after Year 1 and considered age a strong criterion for inclusion, along with geographical distance from Magude, financial need, academic record, and parental support. Further underlining the importance of age, LMF encountered one mother who denied her daughter from applying to the program because she had heard (mistakenly) that a girl participating in MEpM last year was impregnated while in Magude. This is an extremely sensitive issue for parents, as it is both a health and financial risk.
- The application, which was enlarged in an attempt to gather more information about each candidate, should actually have been reduced. There is no need for including a message from the Executive Director, more than one essay question, information about siblings, program rules, or more than one page of professor recommendation. In future years this application should be condensed as much as possible. It might be a worthwhile idea to plan one town-hall style information meeting in Magude in October and publicize the event to all of the surrounding primary schools and professors. Ideally, LMF would only need to travel to the schools once to complete all application activities.
- Acquiring textbooks for the 2009 group proved to be exceedingly difficult. Bypass the Diname Distributors altogether, or attempt to make a more formal contact through LMF directors.
- Although in most cases the 2008 girls said that the 50 Mtn stipend was appropriate for returning home, this amount will have to be changed given that girls in the 2009 group are coming from significantly farther away.

II. MEpM Site and Staff

In the fall of 2008, LMF worked alongside local government officials in Magude to legally purchase the title and necessary licenses to a plot of land that would be suitable for a new two-house dormitory complex. This plot is located alongside the same tree-lined road that leads directly to the Magude Secondary School (a leisurely ten minute walk away). It is on the quieter side of town, away from the discotheque, club, and bars that surely distracted the students last year, especially on the weekends. There is enough to space to tend a garden and landscape, and the buildings give reason for the town to connect all neighbors to the electric grid and water pipeline.

Each house, one for the eighth graders and one for the ninth graders, was laid out to include an indoor kitchen (equipped with refrigerator, gas stove, sinks, modern appliances, etc.), a bathroom (three showers, sinks, toilets, and clothes washing area), a dining room area, a living room area, a separate coordinator bedroom, a bunking area for 20 girls, and a covered outdoor porch. These houses represent a significant improvement for the program. MEpM girls come from rural farm villages and oftentimes do not have experience doing “modern” things like cooking inside on a stove or bathing with a shower (neither of which could be done in the house last year). In the long term, this investment should also help MEpM remain fiscally sustainable, as the Foundation can now avoid inflated rent payments. See Figure 4, “Dormitory House Layout.”

A construction team led by Julio Manuel Bernardo Boana broke ground in October 2008 and is due to complete the first house in early February 2009 and the second house by the end of February 2009. This is approximately a month behind schedule but will not severely impact the program. When the 2009 scholarship recipients arrive on Wednesday, January 28th, eighth graders will return to the old dormitory (rent was extended until the end of February) and the ninth graders, who are already familiar with each other and Magude, will stay in the school “internato,” or dormitory. Once the first house is completed the ninth graders will move in and when the second house is completed the eighth graders will follow suit. Gabriel Fossati-Bellani, Director of Institutional Development at LMF, assumed the majority of project management responsibilities. See Figure 5, “Dormitory Construction.”

The second half of MEpM’s first year also included some notable staff changes. Sabina Sequiera, who played a large role in conceiving, implementing, and managing MEpM as LMF’s Program Coordinator in Education, left LMF at the conclusion of her one-year Princeton in Africa Fellowship. Sabina had developed strong bonds with MEpM’s inaugural class and made sure to slowly hand-over management responsibilities to her replacement and new Princeton in Africa Fellow, Kevin Block, so as to guard against any feelings of abandonment at the end of the year. Throughout the transition period, Sabina and Kevin visited Magude together (including an overnight trip) and the girls seemed to feel reasonably comfortable with Kevin’s presence, whether in the house studying or outside playing soccer.

In January 2009, Iracema Matsinhe joined LMF and will serve as the principle Program Coordinator for the second year of MEpM. Iracema, a young Mozambican and university graduate, participated in Year 2’s selection process and will be a great role model for the girls to follow.

Fatimah Manhique is the new social worker and head coordinator for the new 8th grade group, allowing Marianna Manhique (no relation) to remain with the group she worked with last year. Fatimah is a young Mozambican from Maputo. Although LMF hopes to increase the Magude community’s involvement in MEpM, LMF felt it was important to find someone to fill the second coordinator position who would not be distracted by family or other non-work related issues.

Finally, LMF hired Fernando Chadreque Malasse to replace Mazeze Maritane Randasse, who was fired after failing to protect construction materials and for his unproductive influence on

the scholarship girls. Alicidio Manjate personally recommended Sr. Malasse. LMF is looking to hire another guard to work alongside Sr. Malasse and split the guarding responsibilities. One of the two guards will work every night at the complex, from 18:00 in the evening until 06:00 in the morning.

III. Funding and Finances

A major development for MEpM was the creation of the Friends of the Lurdes Mutola Foundation in the summer of 2008. Under the current leadership of board members Esther Wojcicki (President), Cristina Ballerio (Treasurer), and Vittorio Fossati-Bellani (Director), the Friends of Lurdes Mutola Foundation (FLMF) describes itself on the website www.youngmindsofafrica.com as “A 501(c)(3) public charity whose goal is to promote the empowerment and development of youth in Mozambique.” Comprised exclusively of volunteers, it works in tandem with LMF, “To awaken the entrepreneurial, creative, and innovative spirits of young promising minds in Africa, and to use their physical and intellectual capacities to partner with community based organizations and leaders.”

Throughout the month of November 2008, Gabriel Fossati-Bellani met with potential donors in and around northern California in order to raise project funding for LMF. On Thursday, November 20th, 2008, he was the keynote speaker for a talk entitled “Empowering Young Minds of Africa” at the MacArthur Park Restaurant in Palo Alto. The Friends of the Lurdes Mutola Foundation is now the primary source of funding for MEpM and will help LMF build a third dormitory next year that will house another 20 girls. See Figure 6, “Empowering Young Minds of Africa.”

The 2008 financials are listed listed by category below. The show the income and expenses that were allocated from the FLMF and MEPM respectively:

Donor Friends Of Lurdes Mutola Foundation, USA

| Category | Budget Line | Data | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | Sum of Gross Amount (MT) | Sum of Gross Amount (USD) |
| Construction of two houses for Alumni | Basic materials (metal, sand, cement, bricks, wood) | 879,129.16 | 36,630.38 |
| | Labor contractor | 192,500.00 | 8,020.83 |
| | Trespass to land | 112,500.00 | 4,687.50 |
| Fuel | Fuel | 21,540.00 | 897.50 |
| House Consumables | House Consumables | 399,262.09 | 16,635.92 |
| House Rent and Renovations | Rent | 272,000.00 | 11,333.33 |
| | Security: Locks | 766.00 | 31.92 |
| | Utilities | 27,178.82 | 1,132.45 |
| Hygiene | Hygiene | 900.00 | 37.50 |
| Main House Equipment | Lamps | 187.20 | 7.80 |
| | Mattresses | 16,380.00 | 682.50 |
| | Trash cans, buckets, cleaning equipment | 6,414.00 | 267.25 |
| Medications | Medications | 70.00 | 2.92 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation Costs | Monitoring and Evaluation Costs | 105,411.16 | 4,392.13 |
| | Staff Per Diem Costs (Daily) | 1,500.00 | 62.50 |
| | Staff Per Diem Costs (Overnight) | 8,500.00 | 354.17 |
| Perishables | Perishables | 2,270.00 | 94.58 |
| Personnel | Guard | 11,000.00 | 458.33 |
| | Program Manager | 245,995.00 | 10,249.79 |
| | Social Worker: Activities Coordinator | 215,033.00 | 8,959.71 |
| | Social Worker: House Assistant | 12,750.00 | 531.25 |
| Prevention | Prevention | 430.00 | 17.92 |
| Program Development Costs | Office Utilities | 11,868.37 | 494.52 |
| | School/Student Selection/Start-up Transport Costs | 3,789.00 | 157.88 |
| School Materials | Matriculation | 720.00 | 30.00 |
| | Other | 787.50 | 32.81 |
| | School Materials | 140.00 | 5.83 |
| | Text Books | 1,835.50 | 76.48 |
| Staple Foods | Staple Foods | 4,991.07 | 207.96 |
| Transportation/Allowance | Monthly transportation home for scholars | 1,560.00 | 65.00 |
| | Transportation/Allowance | 1,835.00 | 76.46 |
| Grand Total | | 2,559,242.87 | 106,635.12 |

Donor Friends Of Lurdes Mutola Foundation, USA

| Sum of Gross Amount (USD) | |
|---|-------------------|
| Category | Total |
| Construction of two houses for Alumni - | 49,338.72 |
| Fuel | 897.50 |
| House Consumables | 16,635.92 |
| House Rent and Renovations | 12,497.70 |
| Hygiene | 37.50 |
| Main House Equipment | 957.55 |
| Medications | 2.92 |
| Monitoring and Evaluation Costs | 4,808.80 |
| Perishables | 94.58 |
| Personnel | 20,199.08 |
| Prevention | 17.92 |
| Program Development Costs | 652.39 |
| School Materials | 145.13 |
| Staple Foods | 207.96 |
| Transportation/Allowance | 141.46 |
| Grand Total | 106,635.12 |

Revenue - FLMF -92,021.52

Deficit 14,613.60

IV. Plans and Preparations for Year 2

While MEpM will benefit from all the experience attained in 2008, the program is now more than twice the size and facing the logistical challenges of maintaining high living and academic standards for a larger group. LMF's goal for 2009 is to *formalize* and *systemize* MEpM activities as much as possible.

Scholar Profiles: With 38 scholars and two house coordinators, it will be important and possible to track academic progress closely (and electronically, i.e. on the computer). LMF will try to form a closer relationship with the Magude Secondary School and the professors that teach our girls. This is a matter of accountability, first and foremost. LMF needs to know if the girls are not learning because there is a problem with the teaching. Conferences should be organized with the Program Director, the House Coordinators, and the professors at least once or twice during the school year.

Extracurricular Activities: Last year there was too much time spent unproductively within and around the dormitory. As much as possible, after school and weekend activities should be planned. The girls, for example, like to play soccer; but instead of just having them kick around there on their own there should be actual practices or training sessions conducted under the supervision of an experienced adult. The girls like to sing; it would be relatively easy to have them form a chorus.

Integrating within the Magude/Independence from Maputo: While fresh bread will be provided every day from a bakery in Magude, most food items continue to be transported from Maputo by LMF. At this point MEpM would not be well served buying expensive food items from distributors in Magude. It could, however, arrange a monthly agreement with a trustworthy chapa-driver to deliver food from Maputo without occupying or relying on LMF office staff.

One idea that connects "Integrating within Magude" and "Extracurricular Activities" is to have the girls trained as nurse assistants at the hospital and maternity ward in Magude. Many of these girls wrote down that their dream is to become a nurse, and if they received basic nurse or health training now than they could become immediate assets to their respective communities.

Tutoring: The girls are least capable in English and sciences. Finding regular tutoring would be one solution, and finding a live-in tutor would be ideal. Kevin Block has contacted the Princeton University International Internship Program to see if there are any American college students capable of speaking Portuguese and interested in an unpaid internship with LMF. This female American would work as a tutor during the months of June, July, and August. LMF has not yet extended an offer. This is just one option in bolstering the girls's abilities in these difficult areas.

Life Skills Course: Underdeveloped and consequently under-implemented. LMF could take the time to develop its own manual, which would be an interesting project and something that could be more widely dispersed, or it should look into utilizing manuals that are already in existence.

Field Trips: Many of the girls have never been to Maputo. If possible, it might be beneficial to bring them to the city for a day trip.

V. Conclusion

MEpM is bigger and logistically more demanding than last year, but it also better equipped to serve the Maputo Province. 2009 will be an important year in establishing MEpM as sustainable and accountable. It should also prove that the initial success was by no means tenuous.

Appendix

Figure 1. “Academic Improvement”

The graphs below compare grade averages between MEpM girls in the first two trimesters and those of their classmates from the Magude Secondary School. The MEpM girls are steadily distinguishing themselves with superior grade.

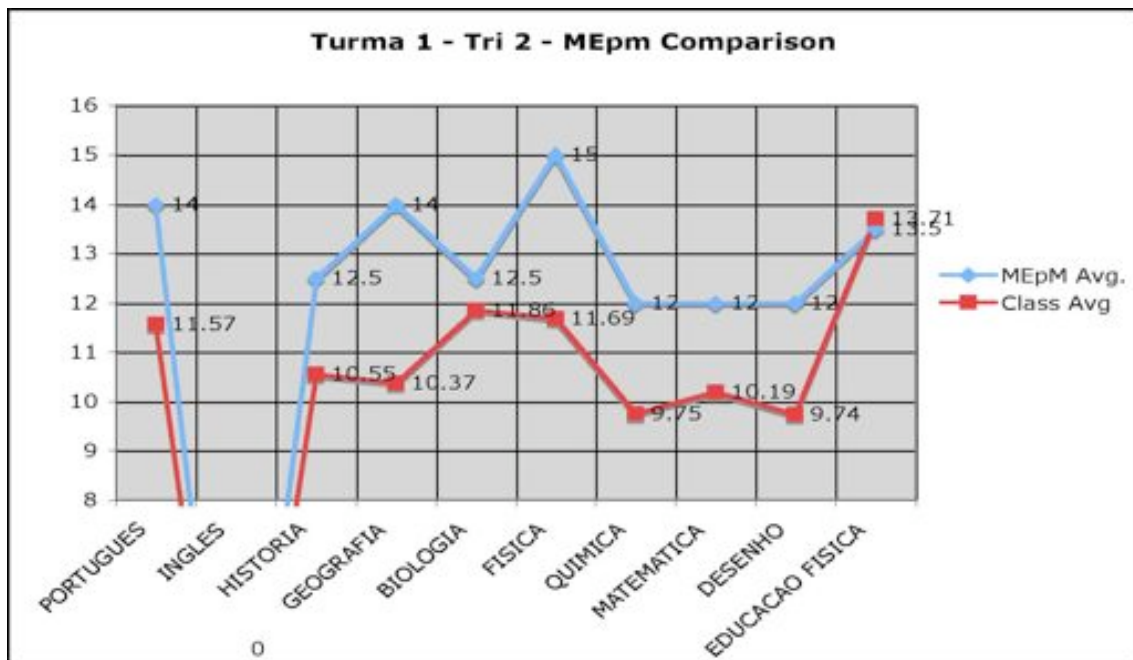
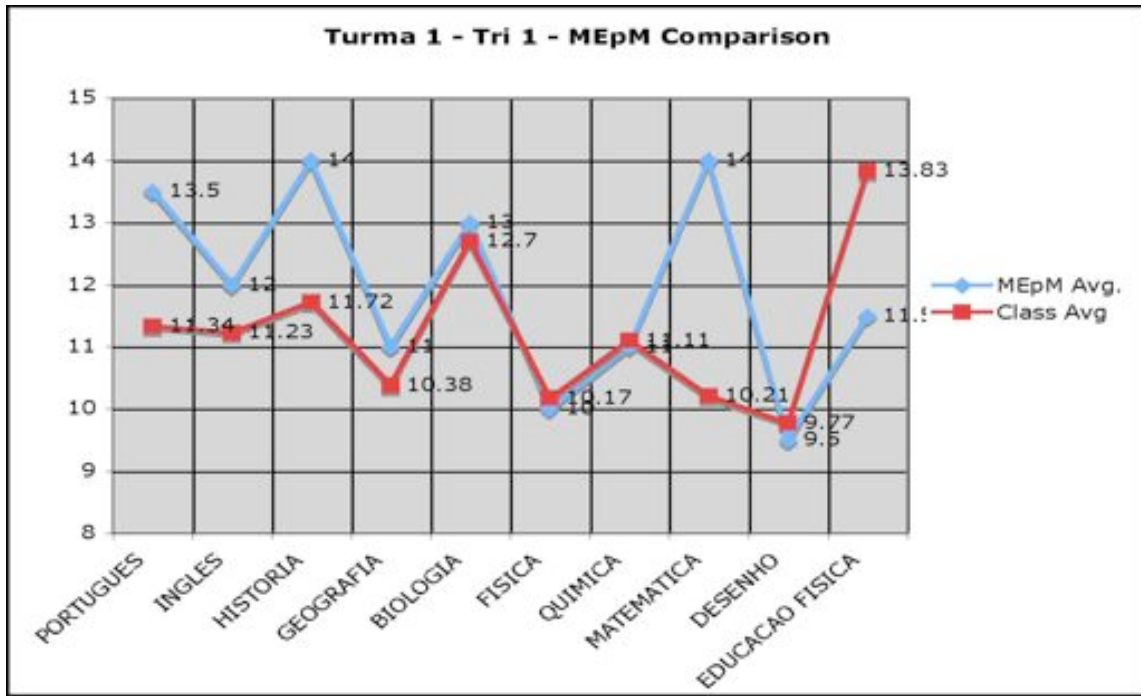


Figure 2. “End of the Year Ceremony”

To celebrate the success of the girls and the first year of MEpM, LMF held an end of the year banquet in Magude. LMF staff members and their families joined the scholarship girls to share in the festivities. Below, Jarcia Mundo, an LMF intern, presents an award for academic excellence.

**Figure 3. “2009 Recruitment”**

For the 2009 recruitment process, LMF traveled to villages even farther away from Magude than in 2008. Below, MEpM Program Manager Iracema Matsinhe (white jacket), MEpM House Coordinator Mariana Manhique (red shirt), staff members Jaime Machanga and Avelina Langa (black shirts), met with prospective students, their parents, and their teachers in Panjane



Figure 4. “Dormitory House Layout”

MEpM will be better equipped and increasingly self-sufficient in 2009. Below is a construction plan for one of the two new dormitory houses.

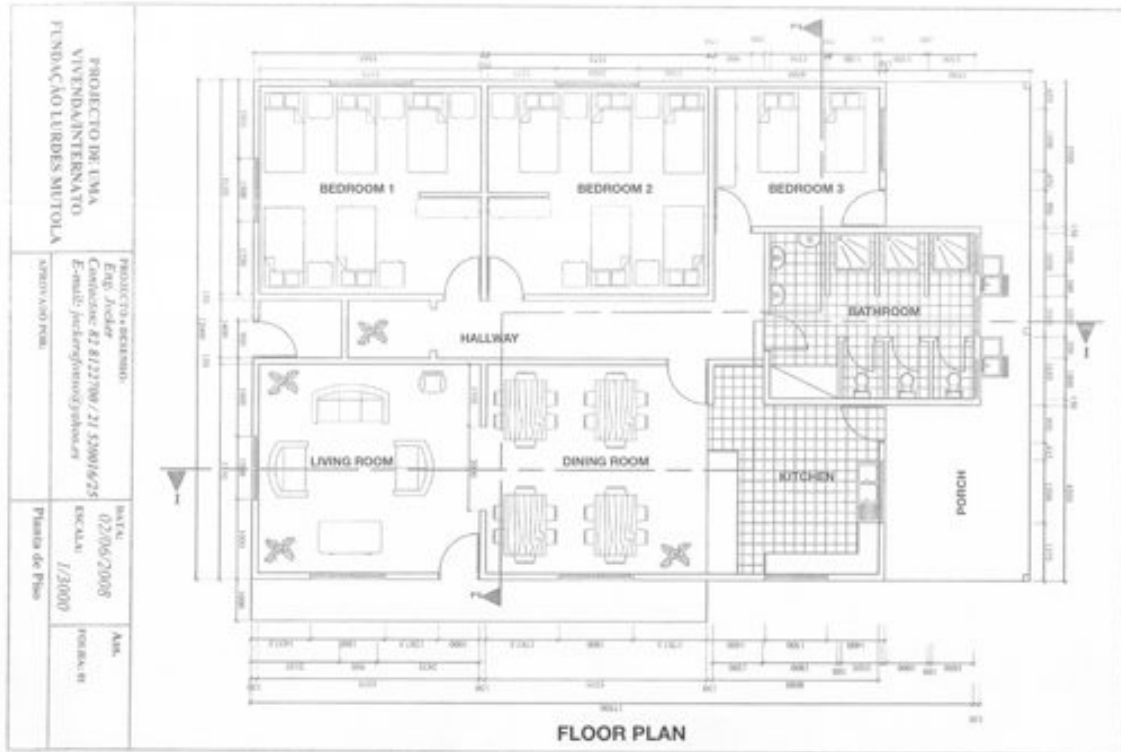


Figure 5. “Dormitory Construction”

A picture of one of the new dormitory houses from early January, looking through the outdoor porch into where the bathroom (center) and coordinator’s bedroom (right) will be.



Figure 6. “Empowering Young Minds of Africa”

Gabriel Fossati-Bellani, Director of Institutional Development for LMF, spoke to the Friends of the Lurdes Mutola Foundation donors at a luncheon in Palo Alto, California in November.

