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Working In Mozambique

Mozambique, one of the poorest countries in Africa, is located in the south-eastern part of the continent. Due to its colonial history the official language is Portuguese. After 16 years of civil war (1976–1992) Mozambique is still in a period of reconstruction, particularly in the health sector, where the country – like most African countries – is struggling with an overwhelming HIV/AIDS epidemic which exhibits an HIV seroprevalence of up to 20%.

In the rural areas, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is now establishing day hospitals throughout the country which provide Antiretroviral Therapy (ART). However, the number of HIV positive patients on ART is still far away from the target goal, which may also be caused by the lack of skilled workers.

Health Data Mozambique

- Average life expectancy is now estimated to be 35 years, down from the previously estimated 44 years.
- Over 40% of the population is without access to health services (defined as living within 15 kilometres of the nearest health facility)
- Infant mortality rate is 135 in 1,000 live births
- Under-five-mortality rate is 201 in 1,000 live births
- Illiteracy is estimated at 50%

Personal Experience

We are now working in a small day hospital run by the Catholic Mission of Mangunde in the province of Sofala, a very, very rural and remote area in the central part of Mozambique. We are working for "Horizont3000" one of Austria's leading organizations in the field of international development cooperation. Our medical training was performed in Austria, we became "general practitioners", and we did our residency at the Landeskrankenhaus of Schaerding in Upper Austria. In order to get prepared for working in "International Health", we went to Hamburg and participated in a three month diploma course in tropical medicine at the renowned Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine.

After qualification we applied for an overseas job at Horizont3000. During a three month multidisciplinary preparation course in Vienna, including a language course (Portuguese), Horizont3000 organized all official formalities, including acknowledgement and translation of personal documents and certificates such as visa, tickets and of course insurance.

In February 2006 we arrived in Mozambique. In the beginning we were required to work at the University Hospital of Beira in order to receive our license to practice medicine in Mozambique. The official duration for licensing of foreign MDs is about three months, but due to good connections of the mission to the MOH it could be reduced to three weeks.

For ART training we attended a 10 days course in Maputo organized by the Italian



organization of Sant'Egidio, which is also involved in the organization of diagnostic and therapeutic processes

Working in an HIV Day Hospital the majority of our patients are HIV positive, ranging from HIV-stage I to IV. Next to the Day Hospital is a common Health Centre where we also help the local staff in treating different kinds of infectious diseases, esp. Malaria. There is also a male and female ward containing four beds each, however the high number of patients usually results in many sleeping on the floor.

In the hospital we are the only doctors, actually we are two of only three docs working in the southern part of the province. We work on weekdays, starting at 7 a.m. up to an undetermined hour (usually late afternoon), as we live about 100 m away from the hospital we are actually 24 hours on duty, but only for real emergencies, which appear very infrequently.

Payments/Salaries

Horizont3000 pays for MDs on missions abroad €672 per month in the first year, after the 13th month the salary is €959

additionally a monthly amount of €388 is provided. The annual leave is 25 days; Horizont3000 provides also an all inclusive insurance package for volunteers abroad.

Payments/Salaries for Mozambique MDs

The MOH pays for a MD €454 up to €900 per month (Meticais 15.000 up to Meticais 30.000).

The MOH in Mozambique also contracts expatriate MDs as employees on US-\$ contracts. MDs earn US-\$1,300 up to US-\$1,500 plus 15% special fees for night duties, danger bonus, and infection bonus.

Opportunities for Overseas Trained Doctors

The lack of locally trained doctors creates a demand for foreign MDs, especially in larger Mozambique cities. A large number of expatriate personnel work for international Non Government Organizations (NGOs) such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Health Alliance International (HAI), Collegues Universitaires Aspirants et Medecins Missionnaires (CUAMM).

If a foreign MD wishes to work in Mozambique on his/her own, especially in the short term, the official formalities could be quite overwhelming especially pertaining to issues such as residency, license to practice and obtaining work permits.

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www.horizont3000.at

An Austrian organization for development co-operation, Horizont3000 is co-operating with the following countries through the placement of field personnel: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Papua New Guinea.

www.bni.uni-hamburg.de

For 100 years the Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine has dedicated itself to research regarding tropical illnesses, treatment of patients affected, and to the vocational training of doctors in the field of tropical medicine

www.misau.gov.mz

Mozambique Ministry of Health (Portuguese)

<http://dream.santegidio.org/homep.asp?Curlang=IT>

Program "D.R.E.A.M" of the Community of Sant'Egidio to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS malnutrition in many countries of sub-Saharan Africa

www.rm.co.mz/

Radio Mozambique, National Radio with news and stream. (Portuguese)

www.goinginternational.org

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