



## Obrigado Mozambique!

*Welcomed by young and old, speeches and song, SGS Consulting discovered Mozambique's twin magic of big hearts and raised fists.*

In the minds of most, there are perhaps a few deep-seated images that come to mind when thinking about Mozambique – luxury huts rising from the Indian Ocean, the revolutionary Samora Machel, a woman giving birth in a tree. Mozambique is all this and more, as we learned on our recent trip to Maputo. We spent a week with two inspiring organisations - Micaia Community Foundation and Muleide, a human rights organization working to empower women.

Founded between 2007 and 2009, Micaia is a conglomeration of Micaia Foundation, Micaia UK support group and a social enterprise, Eco-Micaia. The Foundation, occupying an executive office in Maputo and an operational base in Chimoio City, Micaia, works to help Mozambican communities influence their own development. Micaia utilizes its own funds and support from local donors to award scholarships and to mobilize small grants for community action. Micaia also supports the work of youth banks in Chimoio City, youth-led associations that mobilise assets for community development.

We met with Micaia to discuss the prospect of their transition to a Community Foundation Support Organisation (CFSO). Meeting with 12 community-based organisations (CBOs) co-ordinated by Micaia, offered a grassroots perspective of the socio-economic issues in the country. The CBOs were keen to learn more about community philanthropy and the role of community foundations. During our visit, they also engaged with Giving for Change on the feasibility of the transition.



Staff of Micaia

Representatives of the CBOs that attended the workshop on community philanthropy



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## A COLLECTIVE VOICE



Learners of the after-school programme

It was great to learn about Micaia's reach through their partners. ACADEC is an association of 15 organisations supported by Micaia, with interests ranging from sustainable livelihoods, to arts and culture, to women's rights.

ACADEC operates from a multipurpose resource centre; the child-like voices and confident singing that wafted from a creche gave the space a vibrant and busy feel. A young man serenaded us with a song that was both simple and profound in its message – "we need to love one another". It was inspiring to witness the power of individual efforts and organisational partnerships to improve communities and livelihoods.

We also met with Friends of Africa, a youth-led organization that is definitely punching effortlessly above its weight. Its mission is to establish centres of hope in each valley and strengthen networks

in select districts in Mozambique. It serves as a haven for children, women and youth affected by homelessness, HIV/AIDS, violence and limited social support. In partnering with local health clinics, the organization assists with tracking and supporting individuals who default on their HIV treatment. By being first responders to neighbouring communities engulfed by floods, Friends of Africa plays a significant role in disaster preparedness. Going forward, the organisation intends to strengthen its focus on resource mobilisation and incentivizing volunteer tutors to assist young learners. Regarding the last point, we saw this up close: tutors and kids were huddled over homework as part of an after-school programme. This is a response to broader community goals such as improving literacy rates and also assists working families with child care.



Volunteer teacher assisting a learner



ACADEC creche

## SHARPENING SKILLS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



Staff and board of Muleide

As part of the Southern Africa Resource Hub Initiative to strengthen CBOs working on social justice, we visited Muleide. This women-led organization has ample expertise on women's rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence (GBV) and providing legal assistance at the community level. Muleide coordinates a 200-member network across Maputo, Sofala and Cabo Delgado.

Before we began earnest discussions about our support in the development of Muleide's 2024/29 Strategic Plan, we were welcomed in true African style with songs, clapping and dancing. The group was made up largely of women, a reminder of the role that women played in the country's struggle for independence and the contribution they continue to make to democracy and community strengthening.

The warm welcome was, in our eyes, the community version of praise singing, a creative and spirited red carpet that is rolled out to welcome visitors who are revered. It was a humbling experience and set the tone for our engagement.

When we got down to business, the organisation's board members offered us their initial thoughts on what they envisioned for the process and final document, due to be submitted to the General Assembly in December 2023.



## Visit to George Dimitrov



We were excited to visit the George Dimitrov community where we were welcomed by Mama Neomai and various community members, including the community chief. Mama, now retired, worked for Muleide for over 20 years as a paralegal and is now seen as a well of wisdom and tireless champion in her community. In the office that stands opposite her home and one that was built for her by Muleide, Mama consults and convenes training workshops on women's rights, GBV and premature unions (child marriage). She is also determined to see women being actively involved in initiatives that could improve their livelihoods. Mama offered valuable suggestions on how Muleide, through partnering with SGS Consulting, could deepen its impact in the community.

## Designing the right support for CBOs



Resource Hub addressing social justice civil society organisations

Meeting CBOs working in the social justice space in Mozambique was insightful and helpful in understanding contextual challenges. Collectively, these organisations address issues of gender inequality, poverty and hunger, unemployment, child trafficking and premature unions. It was also a great opportunity to address shared, internal organisational challenges. Once the session was over, the group agreed on the benefit of creating a network where they could support and learn from each other.

We convened an information session with local consultants to present to visiting Chimoio City in the next few months to conduct capacity building sessions on community philanthropy and the assets-based community development approach. We'll also engage existing youth banks. We anticipate this will be a huge learning for us as we're in the early stages of establishing a Southern African member network of organisations working on community philanthropy. We hope this will be spearheaded by young people. In October 2023, the Micaia team will visit South Africa for an exposure visit.



Até já

As part of our Resource Hub Initiative, we'll be visiting Muleide again in August 2023 to embark on its strategy development process.

As always, we are grateful to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Ford Foundation for supporting these initiatives.

Aluta Continua!