MOZAMBIQUE: YOUR IMPACT

On March 14, 2019, Cyclone Idai plowed into Mozambique—one of the worst storms on record to hit Africa. The devastation left more than 600 people dead, injured more than 1,600, and resulted in nearly two million in need of humanitarian assistance. The winds, rains, and storm surge caused catastrophic damage to schools, homes, businesses, and crops. It destroyed 90% of the coastal city of Beira.

Humanity & Inclusion’s team organized a humanitarian response within the first 24 hours of the emergency. With an office and team in the country since 1986, we mobilized to meet the needs on the ground, with support from local partners.

Once the extent of the destruction was clear, our team deployed logistics expertise to strengthen the team already in Beira. Our goal was to understand the immediate needs of the population affected by the storm, with a particular focus on people with disabilities—individuals who are all too often left on the sidelines during an emergency response.

One month later, on April 25, a second storm—Cyclone Kenneth—hit the northern part of the country, causing more damage and distress to an already vulnerable community.

While the storms are long gone, the needs are still massive. Residents of Beira and the surrounding regions are still recovering. The impact is still very much palpable: with so many crops ruined, food is scarce, and any expected farming income is gone.

Thanks to their resilience, and to Humanity & Inclusion donors for fueling our actions in the collective humanitarian effort, life is slowly returning to normal. But our work won’t end until the community is fully back on its feet again.

“Humanity & Inclusion has pledged to support the most vulnerable victims: people with disabilities, orphaned and chronically ill children, and isolated older people, many of whom can be found in Beira’s forgotten communities,” says HI’s Claude Brade.

Over the long term, Humanity & Inclusion’s Mozambique team will provide a sustained humanitarian response for those identified as highly vulnerable in order to improve their resilience and mitigate the short- and long-term impacts of future disasters.

MEMORIAL TO THE UNKNOWN CIVILIAN

Tombs of unknown soldiers honor those whose lives were lost defending liberty. America’s rests in Arlington National Cemetery. France’s sits under the towering Arc de Triomphe in Paris, while Britain’s Grave of the Unknown Warrior rests in Westminster Abbey.

On Sept. 26, Humanity & Inclusion unveiled the world’s first Memorial to the Unknown Civilian in Paris. The goal? To denounce the devastating pattern of modern conflict, which sees innocent civilians harmed over and over again, in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and other countries ravaged by urban bombing, the damages are so great that civilians bear 90% of casualties—figures that seem to mock the rules of war.

Aleppo, Raqqia, Mosul, Sana’a—in the past decade, these cities have become symbols of disregard for civilian lives. The images are nearly carbon copies of one another—intense shelling and fighting in the heart of cities.

Humanity & Inclusion teams tend to the physical and mental anguish wrought by such bombings, and, true to our founding revolt against weapons targeting civilians, demand that the international community act decisively to protect civilians.

At the Vienna Conference, on Oct. 1 and 2, 133 countries alongside groups like Humanity & Inclusion gathered to discuss this topic. They emerged with a majority in support of creating a political declaration avoiding the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

This monument, and the innocent lives it represents, must be a signal for others to join this historic political process.
Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province runs along the Afghan border. Since the 1980s, it has experienced unrest, religious extremism, and conflict—scarring the local society. Among the most heartbreaking: children left with no safe places to play. Recently, that changed. Nine-year-old Shayan Khan, a boy with a disability and an active member of Humanity & Inclusion’s children’s clubs, cut a bright red ribbon, opening the area’s first inclusive playground!

“This is a big step,” says Tabriz Shamsi, program officer for Humanity & Inclusion in Pakistan. “In this region, children with disabilities are generally kept at home. Parents and local organizations have a charity-based approach towards them, meaning they are the passive recipients of aid. The idea of inclusion is rather new.”

A local orphanage, the Rashid Shaheed Foundation, donated secure and accessible land for the playground in Jalozai. Humanity & Inclusion teams constructed the swings, slides, and recreational equipment with help from community members. Two hundred children from the orphanage will plant trees to build a natural wall around the playground.

The playground is a result of HI’s Growing Together Project, financed by IKEA Foundation. The goal is to improve the lives of vulnerable children—especially kids from displaced and permanent resident families—in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Thailand. Jalozai once held one of Pakistan’s biggest refugee camps and still has a large internally displaced population. Thanks to IKEA Foundation and to HI donors for supporting this fun, inclusive project.

Playground helps kids swing toward inclusion

This January marks the tenth anniversary of the catastrophic, 7.0-magnitude Haiti earthquake, which killed at least 220,000 people, and forever altered the lives of thousands, including children like Christella and Moïse. Humanity & Inclusion deployed hundreds of staff, including rehabilitation experts, to provide care. Many of the people we support were kids who had lost limbs and peace of mind.

Our donors rose to the challenge. Thanks to their generosity, Humanity & Inclusion’s Haitian beneficiaries stand tall today!
Empowering children with disabilities to read

Learning to read is one of the most fundamental stages in a child's development. Reading brings joy, it sparks the imagination, and opens the door to success. That's why earlier this year, Humanity & Inclusion—in partnership with Save the Children and Room to Read Laos—launched a project called Learn to Read. This new, five-year project will improve reading outcomes for all children—including non-Lao speakers and children with disabilities.

In Laos, drop-out rates at the primary school level remain high, especially in remote areas. Half of the children don’t speak Lao as their first language, and as a result face additional barriers. The outlook is more dire for children with disabilities who require additional support. Learn to Read will be implemented in all pre-primary, first, and second grade classrooms at public schools in 16 target districts. Humanity & Inclusion provides technical expertise and ensures the project is fully inclusive—leaving no child behind.

Our team will support the design and development of reading improvement resources for teachers, so that they can help ensure children with disabilities are included in the project. We will also implement a student screening process along with assessment tools and materials to ensure they are inclusive for all.

Because of donors like you, more than 65,000 children are expected to benefit.

32 MILLION children with disabilities do not go to school.

BBC VISITS COLOMBIA

In July, a BBC film crew visited HI’s team in Colombia, where they followed the work of 24-year-old deminer, Paola Sanchez. Paola risks her life every day, finding and deactivating explosive remnants of war. With support from HI donors, those weapons of war are being cleared. Watch the news clip: bit.ly/PaolaCol

CLUSTER MUNITIONS IN SYRIA

The 2019 Cluster Munition Monitor tallied at least 674 cluster munition attacks in Syria since mid-2012, with 38 attacks in the last year alone. The majority (53%) of 2018 global casualties from the weapon were recorded in Syria. Twenty-six States and three regions remain contaminated by deadly sub-munition remnants worldwide.

MIGHTY BIG GRANT

Mighty Citizen, an Austin, Texas-based marketing firm, marked its 20th anniversary, by offering $25,000 in strategic marketing services to one lucky, mission-driven organization. More than 500 groups applied, and Mighty Citizen’s team chose Humanity & Inclusion! We are grateful for this creative, pro bono support.

More than 50 years after the U.S. Air Force dropped its first bombs on Laos during the Vietnam War, it remains the country most heavily polluted by cluster munition remnants, which have killed and maimed more than 50,000 people since 1964. Since 2006, Humanity & Inclusion has cleared more than 40 million sq. ft. of land and destroyed some 28,000 explosive remnants of war in Laos. Across 229 villages, we have taught Laotians, especially children, to spot, avoid and report these weapons.

Humanity & Inclusion’s dedicated deminers like Lumngen risk their lives every day to make the land and the people safe. Lumngen, a mother of two, is passionate about her job. “I am a deminer because I want to make people in Laos safe,” she says.

When Lumngen was a little girl, her father went to plant his field. When he struck the ground with his hoe, he hit a cluster munition and was severely injured. Lumngen says that her dad’s experience is what gave her the power to become a Humanity & Inclusion deminer.

Now as a section commander, Lumngen works alongside six other Humanity & Inclusion staff on the technical survey team. Their job is to find evidence of cluster munitions on or under the ground. The terrain makes this work challenging. Once they find weapons through the thick vegetation and dirt, they mark the contaminated areas and notify the team leader. Later in the day, a roving team comes by and destroys the unexploded ordnance, making land safe again.

Thanks to deminers like Lumngen, hundreds of areas have been made safe for farming, building schools, clinics, roads, and expanding villages in Laos. Support from Humanity & Inclusion donors makes this work possible.
A DECADE OF DIFFERENCE

With the 10th anniversary of the Haiti earthquake on January 12, we take a moment to recognize the dedicated donors who have stood alongside Humanity & Inclusion’s beneficiaries, fighting for their right to live with dignity and independence, advocating to shift attitudinal barriers, and even clearing explosive remnants of war from their paths. These generous Americans have been committed to fighting injustice since we opened our U.S. doors in Maryland in 2006.

One of these loyal donors is Phyllis Taylor. Phyllis and her husband, Dick, live in Philadelphia, PA, and have supported Humanity & Inclusion for the past 13 years! They’ve seen Humanity & Inclusion expand programs to 60+ countries and have helped our teams reach more than 2 million individuals with care in 2018. Phyllis took time recently to talk to Humanity & Inclusion’s U.S. Development Officer, Emily Grimes. Here’s her story:

“We support Humanity & Inclusion because we are passionate about helping vulnerable populations, providing support to poverty stricken countries, and getting rid of a culture of exclusion toward individuals with disabilities,” Phyllis explained. She notes that Humanity & Inclusion’s commitment to promoting disability rights, providing rehabilitation, and ensuring people live safely after conflict perfectly aligns with her and her family’s interests and values.

Making a difference in the world has always been a vital part of who Phyllis and Dick are. Married for 56 years, the couple met through civil rights work, sharing a passion for social justice. Their work with families in war-torn areas is the reason they were drawn to Humanity & Inclusion’s demining efforts and rehabilitation projects for victims of conflict in urban areas. They have first-hand experience working with people who have lost limbs after happening upon explosives, and they have seen how disabilities can lead to exclusion.

Phyllis expressed concern about the lack of awareness surrounding civilian casualties from explosive weapons, including landmines and cluster munitions. Here in the U.S., we are very removed from the threats of dormant explosives, but the story is not the same for more than half of the world’s countries that are contaminated by explosive remnants of war.

From donors who have been with us since the beginning, to new donors who joined Humanity & Inclusion last month, we are grateful—and proud!—to have so many individuals ensuring that we can act where the need is greatest, and for the people who are so often excluded. Every gift makes a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. People like Phyllis, Dick, and you make this work possible. Thank you!