

Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

Country reports on the LDS Church around the world from a landmark almanac. Includes detailedanalysis of history, context, culture, needs, challenges and opportunities for church growth.



Mozambique

Population: 24.69 millions (#51 out of countries)

By David Stewart and Matt Martinich

Geography

Area: 799,380 square km. Mozambique occupies a large portion of the Indian Ocean coast of southeastern Africa. Bordering countries include South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Tanzania. A tropical to a semi-tropical climate results from Mozambique's latitudinal location and position next to the Indian Ocean. Northern Mozambique is marked by many plateaus and highlands while central and southern Mozambique consists of flatter areas with mountains near Maputo. The Zambezi River divides the country in half as it flows from west to east, emptying in the ocean. Mozambique is divided into 10 provinces and one city.

Population: 22,948,858 (July 2011)

Annual Growth Rate: 2.444% (2011)

Fertility Rate: 5.46 children born per woman (2011)

Life Expectancy: 51.01 male, 52.57 female (2011)

Peoples

African: 99.66%

Euro-Africans: 0.2%

Indians: 0.08%

Europeans: 0.06%

African peoples are Bantu in origin and primarily include Makhuwa and Lomwe in the north, Tsonga in the south, and Sena around the Zambezi River. Indians arrived over hundreds of years. Europeans of Portuguese heritage form most of the white population.

Languages: Emakhuwa (26.1%), Xichangana (11.3%), Portuguese (8.8%), Elomwe (7.6%), Cisena (6.8%), Echuwabo (5.8%), other ethnic languages (32%), other foreign languages (0.3%), unspecified (1.3%). Portuguese is the official language which is spoken by 33% of Mozambicans as a second language. 43 languages are spoken Mozambique. Languages with over one million speakers include Makhuwa (3.1 million), Tsonga (1.7 million), Ndau (1.6 million), Lomwe (1.5 million), Sena (1.3 million), and Tswa (1.2 million).

Literacy: 47.8% (2003)

History

Contact with the Middle East and South Asia came around 1000 AD. The Portuguese colonized the area of what is now Mozambique from the beginning of the sixteenth century. Mozambique was one of the last large African countries to gain independence from its colonizing European nation in 1975. Marxism was quickly adopted and civil war erupted in 1977. The civil war lasted until 1992, resulting in the widespread planting of landmines and delayed economic and social development. During the first decades of independence, many emigrated from Mozambique due to war and drought. After the civil war ended, many Mozambicans returned to their homeland. Despite recent growth and development of the country's infrastructure, Mozambique has some of the lowest standards of living, life expectancy, and health care.

Culture

Mozambique shares many cultural similarities with Portugal due to the hundreds of years Portuguese colonialism. Use of Portuguese as a second language has facilitated the unification of the country's many ethnic groups. The Catholic Church is a strong influence on society. A greater emphasis on Mozambican's native African heritage and culture has emerged following independence. Alcohol and cigarette consumption rates are lower than world averages.

Economy

GDP per capita: $1,000 (2010) [2.11% of US]

Human Development Index: 0.280

Corruption Index: 2.7

Due to Mozambique's long-lasting civil war, little economic growth occurred until recently. Agriculture drives the economy with over 80% of Mozambique's labor force employed in agriculture. Food, chemicals and aluminum mining dominate industry. Greater economic growth may result in projects improving Mozambique's infrastructure. Mozambique fails to take advantage of its coastal location to trade outside of Africa. South Africa is Mozambique's largest import and export partner. Other countries which receive Mozambican exports include Italy, Spain and Belgium. A large hydroelectric dam on the Zambezi River provides needed electricity, but falls short of requirements to further develop the economy. Corruption is perceived as widespread and present in all areas of society. Mozambique is a transshipment point for illicit drugs, some of which are also produced in Mozambique. The banking system is vulnerable to money laundering, but the poor banking and economic infrastructure limit Mozambique's utility as a money laundering center.

Faiths

Christians: 41.3%

Muslim: 17.8%

Other: 17.8%

None: 23.1%

Christians

Denominations Members Congregations

Catholic: 4,000,000

Zion Christian 3,792,124

Seventh Day Adventist: 255,452 993

Jehovah's Witnesses: 49,306 1,013

Latter-day Saints: 5,392 24

Religion

Mozambique has one of the largest populations in Africa that does not profess any religion organized religion, with many following tribal beliefs. Catholicism arrived with Portuguese colonization and is strongest in Quelimane. Muslims mainly reside in the north and their numbers are disputed. Protestant groups function throughout the country and are quickly growing.[1]

Religious Freedom

Persecution Index:

The constitution protects the freedom of religion which is also upheld by the government. Christian missionaries operate freely. Some Muslims feel mistreated due to most government leaders professing Christianity.

Major Cities

Urban: 37%

Maputo, Matola, Nampula, Beira, Chimoio, **Nacala**, **Quelimane**, **Mocuba**, Tete, **Gurué**, **Lichinga**, **Pemba**, **Xai-Xai**, Maxixe.

Cities listed in bold have no LDS congregations.

Seven of the 14 cities with over 100,000 inhabitants have an LDS congregation. 21% of the national population resides in the 14 most populous cities.

LDS History

The first Mozambicans joined the Church in other countries. These early converts later returned, shared the gospel with their families, and assisted in establishing the Church and prepared the way for missionaries to arrive. The first branch in Mozambique was created in Maputo in 1996,[2] where Brother Samo Paulo Goncalves proved instrumental in the Church's legal recognition by the government in that same year. In the Beira area, the first converts baptized in the city organized several unofficial congregations with hundreds attending in 1999. In 1999 the first senior missionary couple and the first two young full-time missionaries were assigned to the country from the South Africa Johannesburg Mission. Elder Richard G. Scott visited in October and dedicated Mozambique for missionary work.[3] Mozambique as a whole was assigned to the South Africa Johannesburg Mission sometime in late 1999 or the early 2000s. The Mozambique Maputo Mission was organized in 2005 and also included Angola. In the late 2000s and in 2010, missionaries were assigned to half a dozen cities outside of Beira, Maputo, and Marromeu for the first time.

Membership Growth

LDS Membership: 5,392 (2010)

There were 200 members in 1997 and 528 members in 2000. Rapid membership growth occurred throughout most of the 2000s as membership reached 1,352 in 2002, 2,951 in 2004, 3,733 in 2006, 4,851 in 2008, and 5,392 in 2010. Annual membership growth rates ranged from a high of 60.6% in 2001 to a low of 4.7% in 2009 and generally varied from 15-50%. In 2010, one in 4,256 was LDS.

Congregational Growth

Branches: 19 Groups: 5+

In 1999 there were two branches in Mozambique: One in Beira and one in Maputo. The Beira Branch was administered by the Zimbabwe Harare Mission whereas the Maputo Branch administered by the South Africa Johannesburg Mission. A branch was created in 2000 in Marromeau, an isolated town on the banks of the Zambezi River in central Mozambique.[4] By the end of 2000, there were five branches.

Rapid growth in membership and new congregations continued, resulting in the creation of the first district in Mozambique in Beira in 2003. The Beira Mozambique District initially included the Beira 1st, Beira 2nd, Manga, Inhamizua, and Marromeau Branches.[5] A second district was organized in Maputo in July 2003. The number of branches totaled nine in 2003, 14 in 2004, 17 in 2005, 15 in 2007, 18 in 2008, 17 in 2009, 18 in 2010, and 19 in early 2011.

The first branches outside of Beira and Maputo were organized in 2005 in Nampula, Tete and Quelimane. Branches in Nampula and Quelimane were discontinued in 2007. The Nampula Branch became a group and it is unclear whether a group continues to function in Quelimane. In the fall of 2008, the Nampula Branch was reorganized and missionaries were assigned to the city for the first time. New branches organized in 2010 and 2011 included the Manga 3rd and the Luaha Branches. For reasons that are not entirely clear, two branches in Marromeau were consolidated into a single branch in 2011. In 2011, there were at least six groups operating in Chimoio, Djuba, Maxixe, Quelimane, and Dondo (Dondo and Balansa).

Activity and Retention

650 members attended the organization of the Beira Mozambique District in 2003. The average number of members per congregation increased from 106 in 2000 to 300 in 2010. 430 were enrolled in seminary and institute during the 2009-2010 school year. The number of active members in Mozambique is difficult to ascertain due to sporadic changes in sacrament attendance in many of the branches. Many Mozambican members who attend sacrament meetings do not do so regularly, leaving many branches with problems with leadership. Missionaries frequently serve in branch presidencies or report vacancies in branch presidencies which take months to fill.

In Marromeau, many members attend the two branches. Even with high attendance that rivals nearby Beira where an entire district of the Church of six branches functions, one of the three missionary companionships in Marromeau was designated as reactivation missionaries in the fall of 2009. By the spring of 2009, attendance in the Nampula Branch was reported to be around 70 people a week. Some branches report sacrament attendance as high as 200 on some weeks.

Nationwide, the average number of active members appears to be around 100 active members per branch. Most groups have between 40 and 120 attending church meetings weekly, although most are investigators. The number of active members in Mozambique is estimated at approximately 2,000 or 38% of total membership.

Language Materials

Languages with LDS Scripture: Portuguese

Most church materials and all LDS scriptures are available in Portuguese. No native languages have church materials translated.

Meetinghouses

One of the challenges missionaries serving in Mozambique report is the Church's difficulty in adjusting to Mozambican standards of living. Some LDS chapels built in the country look very out of place in a nation where many of the people live in poverty. Missionaries reported some congregations meet in very humble, more commonplace locations such as in older buildings and in tent-like structures. However a recently completed chapel in Marromeau is perhaps the most modern, well built structure in the entire town. Although the Church seeks to provide clean and beautiful chapels for worship, some of these structures are reported by missionaries to seem very out of place and perhaps even condescending in the context of Mozambican living standards, in addition to the high costs incurred in their construction and maintenance.

Humanitarian and Development Work

Mozambique suffers from poverty and high unemployment. The Church has participated in humanitarian projects, most of which aim to meet Mozambicans most immediate needs of clean water and aid from natural disaster. Many humanitarian projects had been carried out by the Church since as early as 1990.[6] Aid was sent to Mozambique and other drought affected African nations in 1992.[7] Another shipment of aid to Mozambique and Zimbabwe was sent by the Church in 2000.[8] The Church donated wheelchairs that were distributed among the 10 administrative provinces in 2004.[9] The Church in conjunction with other aid organizations such as the American Red Cross began a country-wide vaccination of children for measles in an effort to try to eliminate the disease. A total of seven million youth received vaccinations in a 10-day period in 2005.[10] The

Church has also held employment workshops and has carried out clean water projects.[11]

Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects

Religious Freedom

The Church has increasingly utilized widespread religious freedom with the organization of the Mozambique Maputo Mission and the opening of additional cities to missionary work. Opportunities for missionary work among Muslim groups, which in many nations cannot be proselytized, have yet to be explored in northern Mozambique.

Cultural Issues

LDS missionaries report that Mozambicans are highly receptive to missionary activity and willingly accept baptism, but often struggle to develop habitual church attendance and a single affiliation with a particular Christian denomination. Many converts are consequently baptized prematurely and are not retained. Illiteracy and poverty limit growth and member activity. Nominalism and syncretism may also have contributed to the low LDS activity rates.

National Outreach

16.5% of the national population resides in cities with LDS congregations. LDS mission outreach significantly expanded in the 2000s as membership increased by a factor of ten and the number of congregations nearly quadrupled. Despite recent progress expanding national outreach, many areas of the country still do not have an official church presence. Mozambicans living in the six provinces without an independent branch amounted to 10.6 million in 2007, or 51% of the total population of the country. Unreached areas with the highest populations are in northern Mozambique. The lack of national outreach has partly resulted from the Church's recent entry into Mozambique.

The location of the Mozambique Maputo Mission's headquarters in the southernmost tip of the country creates a large obstacle for the future growth. Although Maputo is Mozambique's capital and largest city, it is disconnected from the rest of the country where the majority of people reside. This has presented greater difficulty in opening additional cities to missionary work in the north. No cities or towns in the surrounding areas of Maputo have opened to missionary work since the mission was organized in 2005, indicating that distance is not the absolute factor in determining when and where new cities are opened for missionary work. Rather the lack of new cities being opening for missionary work has resulted from low member activity rates, limited missionary manpower, and an emphasis on building up established congregations.

Additional cities will likely open as Mozambicans join the Church and move to cities without LDS congregations and the number of missionaries assigned to the mission increase. Some cities without congregations have members who travel to the city with the closest branch for Sunday meetings. Missionaries serving in Nampula in 2009 reported that the first counselor in the branch presidency traveled every week from his home in Nacala for Church meetings. Devoted Mozambican members are laying a foundation for growth in the years to come in congregations closest to where they reside and in the communities in which they live.

Teaching literacy skills to illiterate Mozambicans provides opportunities for service and outreach. Numerous humanitarian opportunities also exist which can help to expand national outreach.

Member Activity and Convert Retention

The number of branches increased from 14 at the end of 2004 to 18 at the end of 2008, while membership increased from 2,951 to 4,851. Due to membership growth rates exceeding congregation growth rates, the average number of members per branch increased from 170 in 2000 to 270 in 2008. This indicates either a worsening member inactivity problem or policies delaying the creation of new branches until existing branches achieve larger active membership. Missionaries reported that inactivity and retention problems were most severe in Beira, where missionaries report that little gospel teaching and preparation provided to converts during the years when the most rapid growth in nominal membership occurred. Overall Mozambican membership struggles with increasing dedication and consistency in church activity.

The large number of converts who are not retained limits church growth. Many investigators were rushed to baptism without developing habits of regular church attendance before baptism. Since the organization of the Mozambique Maputo Mission, retention in the country appears to have stabilized but the number of baptisms in the country has declined dramatically. This decrease in the convert baptisms reflects increased missionary time spent strengthening less active members, training active members, and assisting in leadership positions, but less missionary time is spent proselyting and finding with the exception of cities recently opened to missionary work. The mission has made significant progress increasing convert baptismal standards in

recently opened cities such as Dondo and Maxixe as indicated by waiting for investigators to develop habitual church attendance and receive training and support to later hold leadership positions, thereby reducing demands of full-time missionaries for administrative duties. Time will only tell whether these standards are consistently enforced.

Membership in Mozambique is concentrated in Beira, Maputo, and Marromeau. The distribution of the bulk of membership between these three widely separated cities lessens the likelihood of a stake being organized in Mozambique in the near future. Other African nations with smaller memberships have experienced the organization of a first stake when church membership has been concentrated around one large city. These African nations also have higher member activity rates than Mozambique.

Ethnic Issues and Integration

Little ethnic violence occurs in Mozambique compared to neighboring nations. Challenges exist in accommodating converts of differing cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds into the same congregations.

Language Issues

No Church materials or scriptures have been translated into native languages of Mozambique. Nearly all missionary work is conducted among those who can speak Portuguese. The scriptures and most Church materials are available in Portuguese due to the large Portuguese-speaking membership in South American and Portugal. The Book of Mormon and several Church materials have been translated into Shona, a language spoken in neighboring Zimbabwe which has linguistic similarities with many languages in central Mozambique such as Ndau. The long-term potential for Portuguese is limited as only about 40% of Mozambicans speak Portuguese as a first or second language and most of these, approximately 33%, are second-language speakers with limited proficiency. As the Church grows in areas where most Mozambicans do not speak Portuguese, it is likely that church materials will be translated into commonly spoken native languages. Low literacy rates delay the need for translations of LDS materials into indigenous languages.

Missionary Service

The first missionary from Mozambique to serve a full-time mission was called in 2000. Two years later, 20 Mozambican missionaries were called or serving.[12] By the end of 2004 there were approximately 30 missionaries serving in Mozambique.[13] Starting in late 2005 or early 2006, missionaries serving in Mozambique began attending the Missionary Training Center (MTC) in Sao Paulo, Brazil to be instructed in the Portuguese language. In addition to Mozambique, missionaries serving from Angola, Cape Verde, and Zimbabwe also began to receive training at the Brazilian MTC.[14] In 2009, the number of missionaries serving in Mozambique increased to around 100. Local members regularly serve full-time missions but are unable to be self sufficient in staffing the Mozambique Maputo Mission. Emphasis on youth attending seminary and institute offers valuable missionary preparation and training which could increase rates of missionary service.

Leadership

Growth in membership maturity was evident in the Maputo Mozambique District Conference in November 2004 when 40 men were sustained to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood.[15] Local members appear to serve as branch presidents in nearly all branches in the country whereas full-time missionaries often lead groups or dependent branches. Although limited in number, returned missionaries offer an excellent source of trained, experienced leadership if they remain active after their missions. Careful and coordinated efforts to retain male converts and channel them into leadership positions in their local congregations may increase the strength and size of the local leadership body.

Temple

Mozambique is assigned to the Johannesburg South Africa Temple district. Temple trips do not appear to occur regularly despite relative close proximity to the temple in South Africa. Travel costs and time appear the primary barrier reducing the number of members who would potentially go to the temple. Prospects for a closer temple to Mozambique appear unlikely for the foreseeable future due to limited church membership in the region.

Health and Safety

Apostle Elder Russell M. Nelson visited Mozambique with his wife in May 2009 and attended a district conference. Prior to attending the district conference, Elder and Sister Nelson and the mission president and his wife were assaulted and robbed in the mission home by armed assailants.[16] Missionaries and mission leaders hoped that the incident would not lead towards animosity between the Church and Mozambique. This incident was a reminder of the dangers that exist in many of the nations where the Church is now established.

Comparative Growth

The LDS Church in Mozambique experienced some of the most rapid membership and congregational growth in the world during the 2000s among countries with fewer than 10,000 members. Member activity rates and the percentage of members enrolled in seminary and institute is comparable to other nations in southern Africa. The percentage of the population reached by the Church is representative of Africa. No other nation in Africa appears to have experienced as great of an expansion in national outreach as Mozambique during the past decade.

Other Christian denominations which stress member involvement in missionary work report moderate to rapid growth. Pentecostal Christianity has experienced great success in Mozambique whereas Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses report moderate growth in recent years. Most outreach-oriented Christians have operated in Mozambique for decades longer than the LDS Church. Recent growth in most Christian denominations in Mozambique indicates that Mozambicans demonstrate interest in Christianity and in organized religion.

Future Prospects

The Church will likely experience moderate growth in the coming years in Mozambique due to the high receptivity of Mozambicans but continued struggles with maintaining member activity rates and retaining converts. Challenges will likely continue for new converts to stay active in the Church, serve in various Church callings, and develop in spiritual maturity. Groups in Dondo, Maxixe, Chimoio, Quelimane, and Djuba will likely become branches in the near future as long as self-sustaining leadership is established. Additional cities will likely open to missionary work and have groups established, including Inhambane, Nacala, and Xai-Xai due to periodic visits by missionaries to some of these cities and the proximity of these cities to cities in which the Church has already been established. To better service populations in northern areas, an additional mission may be organized in Beira and may facilitate greater progress with chronic inactivity issues in Beira. More regular training for local leadership and greater monitoring of convert baptismal standards would likely occur if a second mission were created in Beira. The Maputo Mozambique District appears closest to becoming a stake as the headquarters for the mission is based in the city and growth has been more sustainable.

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