

What an incredible journey. As we near the end of our time here in Cambine, I have been reflecting on all that we have seen and done during our stay. It is really amazing what the missionaries are doing here. I would like to think that something about our stay has been transforming for the people of Cambine, but I know it has been a transforming experience for us.

We have had the opportunity to experience so many different things, that is hard to decide where to begin. As always we come with projects to do, but the truth is that the projects are secondary when you have so many people to interact with. While there are differences in the languages, there are enough interpreters and informal sign language that we can truly communicate.

Whether working on the guest house with the local laborers, who were truly wonderful to work with, visiting the widows in Hanhane and offering foot washing and sharing lunch, presenting the Shade and Fresh Water project to the seminary students and hearing their stories of what the life of a child in Africa is like (heart wrenching), watching a deaf-mute orphan of 18 or 20 years old offer a song during the service today, playing with the orphans, or spending time talking with the missionaries, the opportunity to interact with so many people here has made our time precious and of course more difficult as it comes to an end.

This is my second trip to [Mozambique](#), but really the first time I have had the opportunity to really get to know the local people. To begin to understand some of their culture (and trust me, I am only beginning to understand), to hear their stories is to begin to appreciate what lies ahead for one of the poorest countries in the world. Their children are like our children in so many ways, but often are unable to receive the most basic needs - to be loved, to play, to be heard, to be valued. The young adults are not that different from ours - trying to find their calling in life, but often with very little hope of finding a job - regardless of education level. The adults are no different than ours - trying to make ends meet, having to make difficult decisions, but often with many fewer resources, and very little in the way of support of family or

community. The elderly are also the same, looking for a peaceful and graceful way to move to the end of this life, but often alone, and much like the children, needing love and to be cared for.

I hope that when I return to my home and indulgent life, I will continue to be as conscious of these things and can keep my new friends here in [Mozambique](#) in my heart. I do not know if I have made any difference in my stay here - I hope I have, but I know that as I continue on my life journey, I will be forever blessed by my experience here.

Erin M.

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