

Ray Of Hope Project Description:

The goal of Ray of Hope (RHP) is to assist AIDS orphans in Caia, Mozambique by improving their quality of life and increasing the chances for these children to grow up to be healthy and self-sufficient adults. The project is implementing four main programs to achieve this goal:

- Orphan Life Skills Program, whereby orphans enrolled in the program will attend life skills workshops each Saturday to learn skills useful to them now and later in life. Older orphans are also included in microenterprise and other small business initiatives and training.
- An Orphan Sponsorship Program, whereby orphans are paired with North American sponsors to receive monthly assistance with their basic needs (food production, shelter, education, and clothing) The orphan caregivers and their new families are provided with support, training, and tools to help them become self-sufficient.
- Orphan Meal Program, whereby orphans are provided with a nutritionally fortified breakfast before school each day and on the weekends. The children are also supplied with a second meal later in the day, 7 days a week. Much of this food comes from our own income generating initiatives such as bread from our bakery and chicken meat from the chickens we are raising. The Ray of Hope is now working in partnership with the World Food Program and is in the process of increasing the number of children in the Meal program to 100 orphans.
- HIV/AIDS Education Program, whereby AIDS educational events are presented to the community twice each month. This program is run by the RHP AIDS Education Project Coordinator and youth volunteers and is geared towards youth, adults, traditional doctors, and commercial sex workers as well as the community at large.

The project will also support women at risk by providing job opportunities along with the possibility of training, education, and self-sufficiency prospects for single mothers, grandmothers, widows, sex trade workers, and young women in the community who are affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS. There may also be opportunities for the intern to be involved with the new agriculture project which is part of the self sustainability program and will provide additional food to the orphans as well as opportunities for them to learn about food production, sanitary food preparation, marketing and other valuable skills.