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The Orphanage in Maputo

According to the reports from Mozambique, there is progress in the ICDP-work in the orphanage. Thanks to the donation from SDI, we can now hire one person to work with the most neglected infants there, her name is D. Guilhermina and she works with the ICDP supervisor from the Ministry, D. Meriamo.

It is so painful to watch particularly the babies in the orphanage, they are mostly abandoned orphans, abandoned because the family cannot cope any longer due to poverty and death connected with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In one case a baby was found sucking on the dead mother's breast. This baby, called Pedro, is screaming when he sees adults approaching, but when he is touched and caressed, even by a stranger, he becomes immediately and becomes peaceful and quite, but he starts screaming again when the contact is stopped (We have all of this on film). It is so obvious that what is needed for most of these children is intimate loving contact with stable caregivers to whom they can restore the broken emotional relationship. This is what ICDP tried to bring to this understaffed institution. (See picture of Pedro below)

Some babies are also abandoned, not only because of poverty, but because of malformations. This is the case with Franscico. He is a twin and when the mother saw his deformation of the mouth/nose after birth she was frightened and refused to take him, and he was sent to the orphanage. His deformation of the mouth/nose is so severe that it is very difficult to feed him and he loses weight. In addition he looks so deformed that adults tend to avoid contact with him. He is therefore deprived both nutritionally and psychologically. In some African contexts such deformations are associated with witchcraft and the impact of evil spirits and for that reason such children tend to be rejected. D. Guilhermina and Irina have been working particularly with this deformed baby (see picture below of Franscisco). In her recent report Irina writes:

"In the afternoon, I went to the Orphanage. Francisco, the baby, was being fed, and again it was so painful to see how difficult and dangerous it is for him to drink. The orthopaedic rubber for his feeding bottle that I asked from Portugal could not be delivered today.

The other children were OK, in their 'normality', and D. Guilhermina made them very happy, singing and dancing with the ones who can already walk. This was filmed for ICDP. Differences are really obvious... In the afternoon, we went (me and Santana) to the Orphanage, again, we delivered the orthopaedic rubber for his feeding bottle and we filmed Francisco's first smiles. It was very moving and rewarding. D. Guilhermina was active and warm, as usual..."

In order to sustain our work in the orphanage, we need more economical support from donors. And we are thinking particularly of Fransisco, if it

would be possible to collect enough funds so that we could send him to South Africa for an orthopedical operation. This is now the reason of this appeal. Donations should be sent to the ICDP headoffice in Oslo:<<mailto:icdp@icdp.no>>

With best greetings from ICDP for Christmas,

Rukman