

ICDP asks for support for an extremely deprived institution in Maputo, Mozambique.

Excerpts from Rukman's report.

This is a state-owned institution called “1st of May”. This was a shocking experience – in some sense worst of its kind that I have seen. All kinds of abandoned children were dropped into this institution, children with cerebral palsy where lying alone on the ground without any care, crawling along, without any human contact than what they could do by touching and pushing each other. Some of them were so thin that they seemed like skeletons and when the caregivers were asked they did not know much about them except that they do not eat – clearly some of them would soon die... There was no medical care in the institution at all, and if they decided to take them to hospital they had to walk all the way in the heat and only those who could walk would get medical care. In addition, there were young children sitting alone in a state of apathy and depression. In the second floor there was a ward for infants and young children. This was also a tragic sight – isolated children depressed, just sitting and looking in front of them, or infants in bed craving for attention and care, but without any body paying attention and being emotionally available because of the understaffing and the general resignation of the staff... It was a shocking sight and what came as an additional shock was that the caregivers or the staff did not seem to understand the situation, they described this as normal and they complained that the government only gives the institution 100 US dollar to run the whole place! This means that the World Food Program provides some food and there is an Italian organization that has bought some dolls and toys and painted the wall, but nobody seems to recognize the terrible suffering of the abandoned children both physically and psychologically. *In this institution there were only 4 caregivers for more than 80 children, a large part infants! During weekends only 1 caregiver!*

At the same time, next door, there are rich child oriented NGOs and Foundations in air conditioned offices that discuss with advanced political correctness, how one can solve the tragedies of the emerging increase in orphans due to the AIDS pandemic – Why not look out of the window next door? It seems that, in all this impressive development rhetoric, the moral basis of compassion and contact with human realities are lacking ...Here is where ICDP enters!¹

What we can do.

The orphanage “1st of May” (see above) needs our help more than anything else. As we have limited funds, we could apply to some other agency like Susila Dharma and request them for some funding to improve the conditions in this orphanage.

¹ ICDP hope to raise some funds for this institution to relieve the most extreme suffering. In addition, two of our ICDP trainees will be working there with the most vulnerable children during the coming three months.

What is needed is some funding for medical assistance and supervision of the children, which means weekly visits by a doctor or a competent nurse. Further, there is need for psychosocial care of the children in line with the ICDP principles. Concretely this means that we would need part time funding for two ICDP facilitators to visit the orphanage three times a week over a period of one year. After that we should look for more permanent solutions with regard to staff and the training of the staff. Altogether this would amount to the following sum per month:

- Medical assistance including medicines, once a week- 4 weeks 300 US dollar
- Salary for two facilitators 100 US dollar each: this would be per month 200 US dollar
- Emergency cases needing hospital 100 US dollar
- **Total: 600 US dollar per month**

Through this moderate sum we would be able to help substantially 85 orphans in extreme situations.

As we have direct access to this institution because one of our newly trained ICDP facilitators is in fact the person inside the bureaucracy responsible for this institution.