

Personal Histories

Quantitative data and statistics tell only part of the story. The information gathered from personal histories and experiences provides valuable insight

into the day-to-day challenges of living with disability in Mozambique.

Armando's Story

Armando is a 63 year old man from Moamba district who had worked as a miner. Three years earlier he had stepped on a landmine while gathering wood to make charcoal for his family. He received a prosthesis for his below-knee amputation and successfully underwent rehabilitation therapy at the Maputo orthopedic centre. He now ambulates with no mobility aids and is fully independent. His gait is smooth and steady even on rough terrain, and it is difficult to perceive any gait abnormality. However, his employer has refused to give him his job back, despite Armando's confidence that he can continue in his full capacity. He receives no pension as the accident did not occur at work. Armando has four dependents, and now has difficulty supporting his family on the few crops he grows on his land. He also described shortage of seeds and young animals as major obstacles in trying to begin farming activity.

His story illustrates what appeared to be a common occurrence among the people that we interviewed; denied access to jobs due to the physical impairment. "Não é admitido" (I am not admitted) was the common response in answering why one was not working.

We also heard from many people that after the war and the drought they were left with no animals or crops. Animals had been stolen, killed or had died from disease. With no cash to buy seed or animal stock, many people have found it very difficult to rebuild after the war. Although land is free and available for Mozambique citizens, the means by which to start farming activity is not. Some people suggested to us that a system of loans be established so that they could purchase the necessary supplies to rebuild their farms.

