

MANY AFRICAN NATIONS are facing a huge shortage of health workers. There are not nearly enough doctors or nurses to properly staff health facilities, and there are no resources to fund more medical staff training. The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that some sub-Saharan countries will need at least a 140 percent increase in the medical workforce to meet Millennium Development Goals in the health sector by 2015.

RAISING *for* THE BAR *Public Health*

IN MOZAMBIQUE

by Jeremias França

Mozambique is one of the countries facing a critical shortage of health workers, with only 1.26 health workers for every 1,000 people. That means there are fewer than 900 doctors and only about 4,300 nurses to care for 20 million people! As WHO puts it, further progress toward the MDGs is not possible without a massive increase in the medical workforce.

In response to the crisis, Mozambique is already implementing plans for the training and employment of an additional 20,000 health workers by 2015. This would increase the number of doctors by more than 100 percent; nurses, by 68 percent; and skilled birth attendants, by 68 percent. Still, while this planning places the major focus on clinical or hospital care, there is a growing concern over the deterioration of public health in Mozambique's communities.

As a Global Health Missionary, I see this crisis as an opportunity. It's the right moment for all people of good will to help Mozambique promote community health.

Jeremias França, administrator of Chicuque Rural Hospital, in Chicuque, Mozambique, discusses building expansion plans for the hospital. Photo: Mike DuBose/UMNS



