

MOZAMBIQUE

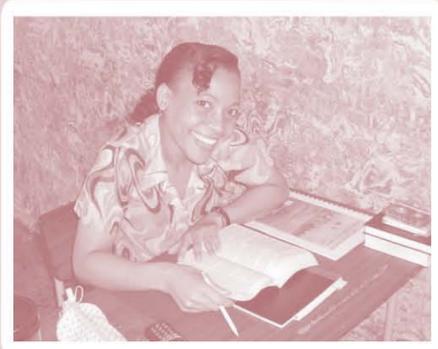
"Women have a role to play in God's overall purpose"

Wherever she gets the chance she speaks about men and women being equal in God's sight. "Men and women have the same destiny; everyone has a role to play in God's overall purpose" says Anisa Moosa. "In Mozambique, especially in the rural churches, few women are committed to God because they don't understand their value and their place in His plans."

It's not the appearance of this small Zambian that impresses people, but the truth of her words. That truth caused the church and community leaders to slowly but surely accept her as a single woman leader. In the beginning Anisa struggled against the cultural belief that women can't lead. Today she says: "God has called me and so I speak, and I see how people are changed".

Recently Anisa spoke at a church conference in Marromeu (Mozambique) and there were different work duties that had to be done. When there were not enough women to fetch water, men were asked to step in and help. "When one man refused, one who had not been in the meeting when I spoke, another man responded by saying 'You weren't there yesterday but you better help because fetching water is not only a women's job'", Anisa smiles.

Anisa is the present base leader of YWAM Quelimane in Mozambique. Trained as a physiotherapist, she also works in a local hospital on a voluntary basis. In addition she has a ministry of teaching, equipping and mentoring leaders and she teaches sewing to young girls.



Anisa Moosa

Her desire is to see Mozambican women rise up to their destiny in God and to be used in their nation. "I want to see women stand up in the church and take their place. If they have to preach, they preach. Whether it's through teaching, praying, interceding... that they begin to serve God. Personally I believe that women in Mozambique can contribute a lot in the area of prayer. In many nations God has done things because women were praying and I believe that this can happen in Mozambique too."

With thanks to Nelson Vale Livingston.

FACTS

Name: Anisa Moosa
Country: Zambia
1993 DTS
1997 YWAM Beira, Mozambique
2001 YWAM Quelimane, Mozambique



Fatu's story

A few years ago, Fatu, a woman from a Muslim unreached people group in West Africa, took her daughter aboard the Mercy Ship, Anastasis, to undergo a surgical operation. When the little girl's grandmother had, against the wishes of her parents, taken her to be circumcised, the operation had gone badly wrong. After several attempts by the traditional practitioners to correct the problem, the little girl was left barely able to urinate, and only then with great pain.

Happily, corrective surgery aboard the Anastasis was a great success. Moreover during the course of the medical care Fatu had been deeply impacted, firstly by seeing the Jesus film several times, but also by the genuine love and care she had witnessed from the ship's personnel.

Back home, Fatu began to pester a group of YWAMers in her village "Let me join you". After keeping this up for a long time, eventually the group told her, if you really want to follow Isa (Jesus) we will tell you what it means. And so they began to take her through a series of 'Chronological Bible Stories'. From the outset it was clear Fatu was eagerly drinking in the things she was learning. When the series reached the birth of Isa her zeal intensified further. Ever since seeing the Jesus film, she had been strongly drawn to his character. Finally, after hearing of the death and resurrection of Isa, she understood what it meant to be his follower, and eagerly decided to take his pathway for herself.

This presented our YWAMers with a dilemma: in many ways Fatu was the exact opposite of what they wanted. They had hoped to interest respectable, male heads of households because of the strong influence they have on others. Instead they got Fatu; a woman of dubious reputation; perceived to be a loudmouth and a rebel... ouch! And then someone reminded the team of a word they had received from a prayer supporter on their very first contact with the village: "One of the first believers here will be a woman of no reputation, like the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter four, but like that woman she will have a strong influence on drawing others to Jesus."

Sure enough Fatu's infectious zeal is now influencing many people, from her own children to the village chief. She delights in telling all and sundry "I was lost in the deep, dark bush, but now I can see clearly!"

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Written by Bill Robertson

ILHA DE CARAVELLA

"Maria brought light into our darkness"

Isolation, that's all we knew for generations. It was pure accident that the Portuguese landed on our island during their explorations of the West African coast. They gave our island its name: Ilha de Caravella. After they left there was a long silence, until the property developers came and explored our island for their own profit. But few ever visited to see the people or cared about the way they lived. Nobody dared take the risk to cross the 600 kilometres of rough sea and bring light into our darkness.

Until one day, towards the end of the dry season. A few men went out to catch some fish and on their way to the beach they met a foreign woman. She said she wanted to come and visit us. They saw no boat and learned that she came with one of the fishing boats that pass our island. Her name was Maria.

When Maria met the chief and the elders of our village, she started telling them about Jesus. Lately we've been talking a lot about ways to find God. We have our ancestral spirits and worship them but they weren't helpful. Our children were still dying. We wanted to know if there were

other gods out there who would help us. One day we called a conference together and invited different people to tell us how they had found God. An Islamic leader came, an orthodox Christian, and a pastor and we listened to them. After much discussion we concluded that the God of Christianity was the one worthy to be worshipped but we didn't know who He was.

And now this woman, Maria, seemed to know everything about Him! We offered her the only place we had, a night club, and came there to meet with her and listen to what she had to say. She spoke about this God who so loved the world and our little island that He sent His only Son and that whoever believed in Him would have eternal life. We wanted to hear more and so she stayed and taught us all about this God. Now we meet regularly to worship the God of heaven and earth. He so loved us that He not only sent his Son but also Maria to tell us about Him!

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SUDAN

"God wanted us to move forward so we did"

We have many heroines in YWAM Africa. One of the stories that inspires me most is of Josephine Oketta. Josephine grew up in the instability of northern Uganda - an area racked by civil war and bloodshed for the last 30 years. For 18 years now the Lord's Resistance Army have wreaked havoc on the area: abducting some 20,000 children, forcing them into a hideous life as child soldiers or sex slaves. I have visited camps for children rescued from LRA captivity and heard some of their tragic stories. Josephine witnessed this first hand. She was one of ten children and grew up with war and abduction all around her.

When Josephine joined YWAM out of this demanding environment in the early 1990s, anyone would have excused her if she saw YWAM as a ticket to an easier life. Amazingly 10 years on, she is pioneering YWAM in an even more desperate area - southern Sudan, from where the dreaded LRA are operating. It is an area where rape is a weapon of war, a place of insecurity that people long to escape from. God has redeemed Josephine's early years and has prepared her for an even more challenging task - and she has obeyed.



Photo: WFP/Nancy Palus

Josephine was one of several working with YWAM Uganda in the 1990s that felt a burden for Sudan. In 1999 they entered for the first time whilst war was still raging. They met with a group of senior pastors to discuss the possibility of starting YWAM in southern Sudan. One pastor stood up and said, "We'll build you seven huts, one for each of you. And you can come and live with us and minister with us." Mike, one of Josephine's co-workers says, "There were seven of us visiting, it was symbolic of our brothers and sisters in Christ reaching out for us to be there. At that point there were just two of us committed long-term. It was dangerous, we didn't have the money, and we didn't feel qualified. We didn't even really have a team. But we felt like God wanted us to move forward. So we did."

In 2001 they registered YWAM with the rebel army that controls much of the south. In early 2002, Josephine and an American woman began to clear the land for the YWAM base by hand. Eighteen months later they led the first DTS in a group of mud huts that they had built. Josephine now leads a small team of six full-time staff and is overseeing the second DTS in southern Sudan.

They have dreams to see YWAM multiplied in Sudan and impacting the entire region... with a few more people with Josephine's heart and boldness, this may not take as long as one might think.

*Written by Tim Heathcote.
With thanks to Josephine Oketta and Mike Wentzel.*

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Josephine Oketta

FACTS

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1995 DTS
2000 YWAM Guinea Bissau
2004 Move to Ilha de Caravella