



## **AFRICA/MOZAMBIQUE – Health care and schooling to combat poverty and neglect in the area of Beira**

Beira (Agenzia Fides) – In Mozambique emergencies and conflicts persist following the decision by the opposition Resistencia Nacional Mozambiqueña (Renamo) to end a peace agreement with the governing Mozambique Liberation Front (Frelimo). To assist the people in difficulty, some time ago the archdiocese of Beira embraced a project named ESMABAMA, started by Comboni missionary Fr Ottorino Poletto who, since, 1995 has worked to promote, for rural people in the area, services of schooling and health care adapted to a situation of poverty, neglect and all manner of deficiencies (see Agenzia Fides 24/5/2012).

Esmabama takes its name from the missions of Estaquinha, Mangunde, Barada and Machanga, in the archdiocese Beira. Regarding schooling, the four missions provide schooling for a total of almost 7,000 pupils, of which over 1,700 are borders. The school children are taught by 177 teachers mostly resident around the missions. Regarding health care, the project's dispensaries and mother-infant care centres assist about 60,000 patients a year. The project has at disposal some machines for agricultural production, farming being the only source of mission self-funding, to promote sustainability in the economy and management of the healthcare and schooling services by means of immediate help which guarantees food security for patients and school children. The Esmabama project was born from the Peace Agreements made in 1992 as a response by the local Catholic Church to urgent needs in the field of healthcare and schooling for the local people. These services are provided for some 300,000 living in the districts of Buzi, Chibabava and Machanga, south of Sofala province, promoting in a concrete way reconstruction and reconciliation in the country. (AP) (28/2/2014 Agenzia Fides)