



Books For Africa and Barefoot Books work with USAID to send 300,000 books in Portuguese to children in Mozambique

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Maputo, Mozambique—In a major project with USAID and award-winning publisher, Barefoot Books, Books For Africa (BFA) will ship 300,000 books in Portuguese to children in Mozambique this month.

Comprising 30,000 copies of 10 different titles, this shipment is part of a U.S. government-funded project to combat AIDS/HIV in Mozambique. The books will go to children, who are AIDS orphans, and their caregivers throughout the country.

This marks the first time BFA has partnered with a publisher to custom-print local language books. Normally, BFA sends donated used books to students in Africa, usually in English, but also in French, Spanish, and Arabic. This project is part of BFA's new "Books For Africa Publishing" initiative under which it will promote similar projects in other countries to print books in their local languages.

The project is being funded by a major contract from FHI 360, a contractor of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) undertaking work in Mozambique. It is part of a five-year multi-million-dollar effort in Mozambique funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) initiative of USAID and administered in country by COVida – Together For Children. Books For Africa is partnering with children's publisher, Barefoot Books, based in Cambridge, Mass., to publish each of the 10 illustrated picture books in Portuguese. They include bestselling Barefoot titles such as *African Tales*, *Children of the World*, *We All Went on Safari*, *We're Sailing Down the Nile* and *How Loud is a Lion?* The books all have African themes and characters, and also include educational notes and other learning materials.

"We're extremely excited about this project because the books will be meaningful for the kids in Mozambique who have lost loved ones," said Patrick Plonski, Executive Director of BFA. "The project also represents a new way of creating and distributing books, which have been translated from English, custom-printed in Hong Kong and distributed across Mozambique. This new model will enable us to provide even more books for children across Africa."

The books will leave the port of Hong Kong in four containers and are scheduled to arrive in Mozambique later this summer. The retail value of the distribution is approximately \$6 million.

BFA is also donating 22,000 books valued at \$264,000 to the Public Library in the City of Beira, Mozambique as the library was destroyed in the recent cyclone and needs to be re-stocked.

The official announcement of the project will be made on June 18th at the Corporate Council on Africa Summit in Maputo, Mozambique.

Nancy Traversy, Co-founder & CEO of Barefoot Books, will make the announcement at the Summit as a representative of the team that organized the project. She is a member of BFA's Ambassadors Circle (key supporters), and Books For Africa is a member of the Corporate Council on Africa. Corporate Council on Africa Board Chair Jeff Sturchio is also a member of the BFA Ambassadors Circle.

"For 27 years, our mission at Barefoot has been to open children's hearts, minds and worlds through the power of story," Traversy said. "It has been a privilege and an honor to partner with Books for Africa and COVida to get 300,000 books into the hands of orphans and vulnerable children affected by AIDS in Mozambique and to make an impact on so many children's lives."

"These engaging and colorful books will stimulate child development at a young age and open doors to other worlds," said Hayley Bryant, Director of the COVida project with FHI 360.

The project was planned over the past three years and involved meetings in Minnesota and Washington, D.C with the Mozambique Ambassador to the U.S., Carlos dos Santos, meetings with FHI 360 officials in Mozambique and discussions with Barefoot Books.

"This is great and impressive," Ambassador dos Santos said in a message to BFA. "Thank you for all you are doing to make this project a reality."

About Books For Africa: The largest shipper of educational and library books to Africa, BFA has shipped more than 44 million books and served all 55 countries on the African continent since 1988. Over the past 12 months, BFA has shipped over 3.1 million books, 146 computers and e-readers containing 419,000 digital books valued at over \$29 million to 27 African countries. BFA has a simple mission: To end the book famine in Africa.

<https://www.booksforafrica.org/>

About COVida: COVida is a five-year project, funded through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). It is implemented by FHI 360 and consortium partners, including CARE, Palladium and PATH. <https://www.fhi360.org/projects/covida-together-children>

About Barefoot Books: Founded in England in 1992, Barefoot Books is an award-winning publisher based in Cambridge, Mass., with a mission to share stories, connect families and inspire children. Honored by Forbes in 2017 as one of the [25 Best Small Companies in America](#) and "the standard for excellence in children's books," Barefoot is proud to have put over 20 million books into the hands of children. www.barefootbooks.com