



Joaquina (right) has been a CARE volunteer for the past two years (2016).  
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## Volunteering during times of drought

At the end of last year, Mozambique was hit by its worst drought in 35 years, and a local volunteer took part in several workshops to deal with the current emergency. Workshops instruct volunteers on how to detect malnourishment in children. Even before the drought, over 40 percent of children under five in Mozambique were too short for their age and chronically malnourished. According to UNICEF, around 100,000 children will suffer acute malnutrition over the next six months because of the current drought.

Many families in a little village close to Funhalouro in the southeast of Mozambique are receiving food assistance that is helping them to survive.

“We have lived through many dry periods, but a drought like this one I cannot remember. I have not

seen a single drop of rain for months,”

“

says Joaquina, who does not know her age, but estimates she is in her late 40s.

The drought affected Joaquina’s personal life, and her job as a volunteer became more difficult as well. In the last two years of volunteering with [CARE International](#), she has learnt about hygiene, maternal health, nutrition, and child development through different workshops. Ever since, she has visited families in her village on a weekly basis to pass on her knowledge. Neither she nor any of the other women can read or write, but she uses a book with pictures to explain the different topics.

“ *Volunteering is like a calling for me. It was rewarding to see how, step by step, life in our community improved.*”

“I have helped many families set up a latrine for the first time, and many are now using mosquito nets to protect themselves and their children from malaria. In the past two years parents were increasingly sending their children to school. Seeing this change and knowing that people trust me is a true gift. Right now, though, I am very worried that many of these achievements risk being unraveled in the current drought,” explains Joaquina.

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This story is published as part of the campaign for [International Volunteer Day 2017: Volunteers Act First. Here. Everywhere.](#)

 <https://www.care.org/impact/stories/volunteering-during-times-drought>



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