



Main contributor and related people

ALINA (8), EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES, MOZAMBIQUE

- Silvie, (38), mother
- Dorca, (9 months), sister

Link to story package on Content Hub: www.contenthubsavethechildren.org/Package/2O4C2SW7NJXO

Story summary:

Alina (8) and her family – including her mother Silvie (38) and baby sister Dorca (9 months) – live close to the Limpopo River in southern Mozambique. In January 2026, after weeks of torrential rain, the river burst its banks, forcing Alina and her family to flee their home and take refuge in her school, which was turned into an evacuation centre.

After living at the school in cramped conditions for a month, the floods started to recede and Alina and her family returned home to find it had been devastated. Silvie says the floods have broken their hearts and made it hard for her to return to work due to the damage to the roads. There's also the ongoing threat that the river will flood again as the rains continue and water is released from reservoirs in neighbouring countries.

Alina missed school and learning during the floods, but she attended one of Save the Children's Temporary Learning Spaces and received a back-to-school kit so she could continue to study and find a sense of safety amid the chaos of the crisis (see below for more information on how Save the Children supported Alina). Now back at home and school, Alina says she loves studying and playing with her baby sister Dorca.

Strong quotes – Alina (quotes):

"[When the schools were closed], I missed my friends and learning."

"[At the temporary learning space] we studied vowels 'A, E, I, O, U' and then they asked us to read. And we opened the maths book to learn how to count. We counted and then we wrote."

"We (her and Dorca) like to play with toys. We like to tap the table. I play with her. I carry her so she can sleep... I love to go to school and play with my sister."

Strong quotes – Silvie (quotes):

"The floods broke our hearts because I moved some things, but other items were taken by the water. When I arrived at my home, I found it devastated. I tried to fix it so we could have a place to sleep."

"She was very behind in her education due to the floods because they're only starting the lessons now, but in previous years they started in the first week of February. (At the Temporary Learning Space), she learnt about counting from 1 to 10 and learnt how to write A, B, C."



Save the Children's support:

As the flooding crisis continues to impact families, Save the Children is supporting local authorities in Mozambique to keep children safe and to get them back to school as soon as possible. Save the Children has established Temporary Learning Spaces and Child Friendly Spaces to give children the opportunity to keep learning in a safe environment. We have also provided training for teachers to deliver structured, play-based learning, and back-to-school kits for students.

Alina attended a Save the Children Temporary Learning Space in the evacuation centre where she lived for a month during the worst of the floods. The learning space was a safe place she could go to continue her learning and to connect with other children. Now she is back at school, Save the Children has provided Alina and her classmates with back-to-school kits, which contain coloured pencils, erasers, sharpeners and books to help children – many who have lost their belongings in the floods – to return to school.

Context

Torrential rainfall caused widespread, severe flooding across southern and central Mozambique in late December 2025 and January 2026 – the worst flooding the country has seen in decades. Homes, schools and healthcare centres have been destroyed and public infrastructure – such as roads and bridges – have been damaged, cutting off entire communities.

The devastation deepened in mid-February when Tropical Cyclone Gezani brought more rainfall and winds of up to 215 km/h. Flooding continues to impact families, especially in Gaza Province, where rivers are bursting their banks again and farmland is still submerged. These extreme weather events have affected at least 720,000 people, more than half of them children (National Institute for Disaster Management).

More than 430 schools have been affected by the flooding, while damage to roads has prevented teachers and students from reaching classrooms. Other schools have been used to shelter displaced families. Many people who were already struggling now face increased economic hardship due to the flooding, leaving many unable to afford school, increasing the risk of long-term learning loss for students and permanent dropout.

Alina's story in her own words (quotes):

School

[I like school] because I have a friend who lends me everything. We play together and we share lunch. [We play a lot of things like] chasing each other and clapping hands. [At school] I'm learning about syllables and the alphabet. We learnt to copy a text. I like to study. I like to study Portuguese. We also learn how to draw and paint and how to colour in the uncoloured images. [My] teacher is a good teacher. She gave us nice activities. She likes us. [Going to school is important] so you can pass from one class to another and to be intelligent.



Temporary Learning Space

[When the schools were closed], I missed my friends and learning. [At the temporary learning space] we studied vowels “A, E, I, O, U” and then they asked us to read. And we opened the maths book to learn how to count. We counted and then we wrote.

Family

When my mother was in South Africa, she didn't have a baby. But then, I spoke to my father, and he said mum had gone to the hospital and got a baby. Her name is Dorca. When my mother came back with the baby, I didn't believe it was a girl. I liked the baby because she was beautiful. We (her and Dorca) like to play with toys. We like to tap the table. I play with her. I carry her so she can sleep. When she wakes up, I carry her.

My mum and dad [are my favourite people]. I like when I miss them, because they come back and see me. My favourite thing is to dance. And I like to be happy. I don't like to stay angry. My dream is to be a worker and to make money so I can build a house in another world for my family.

Daily routine

In the morning, first of all, I brush my teeth. Then I prepare water, my uniform, then I take a bath. I put on my uniform, then I say goodbye to mum, and then she gives me money for a snack. My mum also makes juice for me to take to school. After we finish the lesson, the teacher tells us to leave. When I come back home, I have my lunch and tea. Then I play with my little sister. When she sleeps, I sleep too. I love to go to school and play with my sister.

Opening her back-to-school kit

My coloured pencils, my pencil, my sharpener, my eraser, my pens, my exercise book, another exercise book. That's all. It (back-to-school kit) is for studying, to learn and not to lose my things. [I like] the pencils, exercise book and eraser.

Silvie's story in her own words (quotes):

Family & Alina

I live with my husband and my sons, we're six [people]. My husband is Jose, I'm Silvia, the first born is Julio, second is Ronaldo, third is Alina and the fourth is Dorca. Alina is a good girl with a good education. Whatever we teach her, she understands. She likes to study. She also likes to play, but if we ask her to do something, she does it immediately.



Floods

In December [2025], it was raining heavily. In January it was also raining, and in January the situation started. The floods broke our hearts because I moved some things, but other items were taken by the water. Our life is not easy. We managed to move with our kids, no one was injured and everyone is fine. An accommodation centre was established, and we stayed there. And then on 13 or 14 February, we were asked to move to another school, another centre, but I came back home with my belongings since the water had reduced.

When I arrived at my home, I found it devastated. I tried to fix it so we could have a place to sleep. I cleaned the house and I bought one pack of cement to fix the house so we could live [in it]. Yesterday, we were asked to move again, because we were warned more floods were coming. I didn't move, not because I don't want to, but because I don't have the resources to move. Because we'd need to hire a car to carry our things to another place. I won't remove anything right now. If the water arrives, I'll just take my children and leave. I don't know what to do with my belongings. Since this is what life has given us, this is just how we live. Everyone lives this way. We accept the conditions. There are many people in a bad situation.

The work has stopped because we work in South Africa and the roads were affected [by the floods], so we had to wait until they were fixed. If it's possible, I would like to ask for these floods not to return because they devastated a lot. We were left with nothing because of the floods, not only here, but all over the country. Even those people who live higher up [in the centre of Mozambique], their farms were consumed by water, so we have no place to buy food. At the moment, there is nothing, so I would like to ask for the floods to stop.

School

From the beginning until now, she (Alina) has liked school. Since her birthday is on 10th of October, she didn't go to school when she was six, she was asked to go to kindergarten. And then when she was 7, she started going to school. And this year, she's attending grade 2. She likes to study. But given she's young, she hasn't chosen what she'd like to do in the future.

She was very behind in her education [due to the floods] because they're only starting the lessons now, but in previous years they started in the first week of February. [At the Temporary Learning Space], she learnt about counting from 1 to 10 and learnt how to write A, B, C.

For me, taking her to school is important because she'll improve. I don't know if God will help her one day to be someone. It is important to see her grow with education. My hope for her is to grow up, study, get better and change our situation here at home. Maybe something will change.

Background:

Mozambique faces multiple crises that continue to disrupt and devastate children's lives. Conflict, recurrent climate shocks – including severe droughts, cyclones and flooding – and chronic under-investment in essential services mean children struggle to survive and access adequate nutritious food, healthcare and education.



In 2026, extensive flooding in southern Mozambique submerged vast areas, destroying homes, schools, farms and critical infrastructure, while the northern province of Cabo Delgado remains one of the most complex humanitarian crises globally with protracted conflict, large-scale displacement and increasing protection risks for children, including recruitment into armed groups, child labour and child marriage.

Save the Children works in partnership with local organisations and authorities in Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Manica, Maputo, Niassa, Nampula, Tete and Zambezia provinces to support the most vulnerable children with life-saving health and nutrition programming, emergency education and child protection and mental health and psychosocial services. During emergencies, we also provide families with cash and support to improve their livelihoods and food security.

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