

Margarida's Story



15-year-old Margarida is a 6th grade student at Primeiro de Junio Primary School in Buzi District, Sofala Province, Mozambique.

This story explains how Margarida's education has been affected by climate change and extreme weather, and what UNICEF has done to support Margarida and other children in Mozambique to access their right to education.



Margarida holds her workbooks on her way home from school.

Margarida's Story



Margarida stopped going to school in 2019 after Cyclone Idai destroyed her old school building.

“When the cyclone hit, we lost everything, our homes, our school. Everything was full of water,” said Margarida, describing the destruction when Cyclone Idai struck her home in Buzi, central Mozambique, in March 2019. *“Cyclone Idai did a lot of damage. The metal sheets from our roofs flew. Everything was destroyed.”*



Margarida rides in a boat on her way home in the afternoon.

Margarida's Story



After Cyclone Idai hit, UNICEF worked with Mozambican partners to set up tents as temporary classrooms and provide school supplies to keep children learning.

“We had to continue with our education. We studied inside the tents at our school,” said Margarida.



June 22 2023, Portrait of Josefa (14) and Margarida (15) in the new facilities of the 1ero de Junio primary school in the Buzi district, Sofala province.

Margarida's Story



UNICEF worked with communities, local partners, and the Government of Mozambique to build climate-resilient schools.

They built classrooms with strong walls and roofs to keep people safe from powerful winds and heavy rains. They also built the school on raised platforms to protect the building from flooding.

Ramps and separate toilets were installed to provide safe and accessible facilities for all students.



An aerial view of Primeiro de Junio Primary School in Buzi District, Sofala Province, Mozambique, photographed on 22 June 2023.

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In the area where Margarida lives, 87 classrooms in 24 schools now stand strong against cyclones providing safe learning for over 11,000 children.

Margarida loves her new school. *“We are happy to be able to go to school. Our school is beautiful. The winds can come and won’t destroy our roof. Me and my friends feel safe, and we don’t fear cyclones.”*



On 22 June 2023 in Mozambique, 15-year-old Margarida Joaquim Oio Oio, a sixth-grade student at Primeiro de Junio Primary School in Buzi District, Sofala Province, holds her workbooks and stands for a portrait on her way home from school.

UNICEF's Climate Resilient Infrastructure Programme



Climate change refers to the long-term warming of Earth's climate system, leading to faster-than-usual changes in temperature, rainfall, and wind patterns. Human activities, such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation, are the primary drivers. This phenomenon has contributed to an increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters like cyclones. Cyclones are powerful rotating storms with strong winds and heavy rain that develop over warm tropical ocean waters.

Mozambique's extensive coastline and river basins make the country particularly susceptible to cyclones, and climate change is exacerbating their impact. In 2019, Mozambique experienced two tropical cyclones within six weeks—Idai on March 14 and Kenneth on April 25—highlighting the growing effects of climate change. These storms severely affected the education system, damaging at least 1,260 classrooms and impacting 376,826 students.

In collaboration with local partners, UNICEF has constructed climate-resilient schools designed to endure extreme weather, ensuring safe and continuous education for more than 55,000 children.

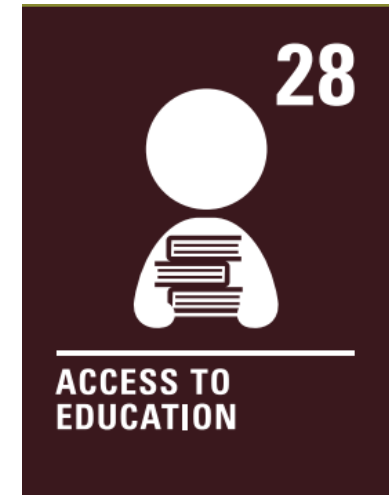
Margarida's Story



We were saved while staying on top
of rooftops of abandoned houses.

The rights link...

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