

[A chat with A Little Gesture - an insight into the impact of resilient infrastructure on the lives of the most vulnerable](#)

We were once told that impact investing does not include infrastructure. Nothing could be further from the truth. Investment in sustainable, resilient infrastructure is one of the areas with the most intensity and broad reach in terms of the impact that money can deliver.

Disadvantaged communities pay a high price every day for the lack of infrastructure. We need to change that.

Infrastructure projects, large and small, have a direct impact in the prospects of every individual. Charities and NGOs can deliver small scale solutions house by house, family by family, but delivering solutions at scale and changing whole communities requires DFIs, ECAs and players like ImpactA.

We spoke to A Little Gesture, a charity operating in the Gaza province in southern Mozambique. This is a region that has been significantly impacted by climate change, with increased droughts and floods. It currently supports over 3,200 children, focusing on food, clothing, transport and healthcare. Education is the main focus, but the charity also provides poverty relief and infrastructure, vocational training and income-generation activities for families.

Lack of infrastructure directly impacts A Little Gesture's ability to care for more children with its limited budget, as well as to focus on avoiding drop-outs.

Our partner, Susan Ward, interviewed Sara Vicente and Patricia Acquaviva. A very compelling story that challenges us all to do more to allow A Little Gesture to focus on its core: providing education.

Some of the challenges Sara and Patricia told us about will be familiar to many, if not most of us. But it is still important to highlight a few:

- Providing a meal a day at school depends on clean water to wash and cook. Pumping the water requires electricity. The food itself depends on a food basket that is very expensive, due to transportation costs, and it sometimes simply does not arrive.
- Heavy rains prevent teachers and pupils reaching schools, absenteeism and lack of progress can become a real problem. Rainstorms also often make it harder for the charity workers to provide key feeding programs.
- Even more tragically, heavy rains have also caused mud slides that have destroyed schools and put many children's lives at risk.
- In contrast, when there is intense heat or droughts, often girls don't go to school because they have further to walk to collect water and are then simply too tired to go to school. Consistently, girls are the first to drop out.
- For those children that do complete Year 7 and want to continue their studies, the next school is simply too far and there is no safe transport without the additional assistance that A Little Gesture and others provide.
- Lack of infrastructure in the home means many children do not have access to decent shelter, clean water and even sanitation is a luxury that few have

at home. The school is often one of the few establishments in the vicinity with sanitation facilities.

A Little Gesture has over the years had to balance their small budget and divert significant resources from education to basic infrastructure. Whether it is water, electricity or sanitation, the charity has spent close to Eur 200,000 over the years on basic infrastructure. This amount would have allowed them to assist another 50 children throughout their formative years.

A Little Gesture is constantly looking for partners and efficient solutions to ensure they can deliver on the hopes of the children they support. They are currently working on building a school canteen with a roof that will cost around Eur 30,000. This will protect around 1,500 children who currently eat on the floor from sun and rain.

The efforts of A Little Gesture highlight the stark need for us all to deliver sustainable, resilient infrastructure to everyone.

As A Little Gesture puts it, *one life at a time*.

To learn more about the work of 'A little Gesture' and how you can support their initiatives, please visit <https://alittlegesture.org/>