

PROJECTO OCEANO – MARCH 2013 REPORT



And so, one year later, to the day, I find myself back in London writing my final report for AZLera. It's mad to think that a year has gone by, but I also can't seem to recollect any kind of existence pre-Mozambique.

What a year it's been. Apart from the daily joys of working with an inspirational bunch of kids, I can pick out a few specific highlights of my year at the project. These include seeing Zito in his element as a kids' literacy teacher, involving songs, dancing and even aerobics to engage the kids and observing them making real progress. Naiza leading her debates each month with all the intellect and pizzazz of a seasoned journalist or chairperson. Daniela Lima proving that science IS cool and sparking new interest and enthusiasm amongst our budding young scientists. The moment I told Firoza and Mingos that they had won this year's university scholarships, and seeing them off on their new adventures. Receiving phone calls from Gito who, having started his teacher training at the fantastic and innovative ADPP institution, is ecstatic about his training and enthused about returning to the island during the holidays to pass on everything he is learning to our young teachers at the project. Seeing all our past project members move on to new and exciting ventures, and recruiting the next cohort who have already done us proud and are keeping up the great momentum that the project has at the moment, as well as putting their own spin on things. The creation of the new children's library and making it a welcoming, comfortable and creative learning space. I could go on...

I leave the project and Mozambique with a really positive outlook on the future of the country if kids like these have anything to do with it. And I leave with real faith in the core values of the project and of AZLera, based around the undeniable positive effects of youth empowerment, of giving young people the chance to have their own ideas, develop their own projects and thus develop their own leadership skills, confidence and creativity and cultivate the general amazingness that they all have inside of them.

I now leave the project in the very capable hands of Miss Denny Newhouse. I wish her all the luck in the world and can't wait to see how the project continues to progress over the coming years. The only way is up, of course. I will miss the project, the kids, the island (not to mention the sunshine) like crazy, but feel very privileged to have had the chance to contribute to the project's work over the last year and will always continue to contribute in any way that I can.

All that's left to say now is congratulations and good luck to all the past, present and future project members, volunteers, staff, contributors and students. You're doing an amazing job... Long may it continue!