Innovative approaches to basic academic and vocational education

Background
The Angolan government has pivoted vocational training as a key activity to promote economic development in the country. This training equips young people with practical skills to enter the labor market. Currently, the existing 165 vocational training schools are unable to meet the country’s demanding educational needs. Most schools are located in urban centers, with rural areas remaining under-served.

Project focus
This project offers innovative basic academic and vocational education. The Escolas Polivalentes Profissionais (EPP, or Polyvalent Professional Schools) run by Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP) combines basic education from seventh to ninth grade with vocational training.

Students graduate with job-ready skills in a wide range of occupations such as community health agents, energy assistants, agricultural and environment agents, preschool assistants, and information and communication assistants. The schools engage an innovative approach combining micro-study groups, highly interactive classes, community projects and internships at partnering companies and institutions.

Purpose
The purpose of the project is to build a qualified workforce through supporting vocational training schools that provide young people with technical skills for productive employment. The project also seeks to improve facilities at nine schools through provision of improved equipment and educational material for professional classes.

Key activities
A number of key activities are offered as follows:

- Improving teachers’ skills through on-the-job training
- Providing support that matches professional education for private sector needs
- Preparing a business expansion strategy for 36 schools.

The aim of this project is to reduce the number of school dropouts by 20 per cent and double the business contact network for internships for graduates.

Location and target group
The project targets seven provinces as follows: Bengo: Caxito; Benguela: Vale de Cavaco; Cabinda: Lândana and Cacondo (expansion); Kwanza Norte: Lucala; Luanda: Cazenga, Zango II and Ramiros; Huambo: Quissala; and Namibe: Tômbwa (new school)

The project is supported by 40 teachers and has 1 500 students lined up for graduation in 2016. The target group also includes families and communities.
Project duration
The project was established in March 2015 and ended in June 2017.

Implementing partners and stakeholders
Ajuda ao Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo (ADPP) working closely with the Ministry of Education.

Results and Impact
About 1 300 students benefitted from on-the-job training and improved their skills.

The project's Social Return on Investment (SRoI) was US$ 3.90 for every US$1.00 invested; this is considered an excellent return ratio by Social Value International.

At least eight ADPP schools in seven provinces were supported, and eight thematic innovation-based professional training courses (urban agriculture, ICTs, alternative energy, Entrepreneurship and Innovation) were introduced in the curriculum.