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ANGOLA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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LETTER OF THANKS FROM CICA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT MANUEL LOURENÇO PEDRO

Manuel Lourenço Pedro is a finalist in the Preschool Course at the Pedagogical School in Cuanza Norte province. He was selected for the CICA scholarship by the regional African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

I would like to respectfully thank the Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA), its collaborators, workers and partners for the financial support made available to me. It allowed me to pursue my academic goals from an extremely difficult financial situation. By the grace of God, this scholarship helped me complete the four years of training. It allowed me to pay tuition fees, buy clothes and digital devices and helped me with transport and the acquisition of teaching materials, among other items.

Dear Ones, it is with great joy and satisfaction that I inform you that I received a mark of 17 out of 20 on my monograph (capstone paper) and 17 out of 20 on my oral defense of the monograph. Once again, my many thanks to CICA and partners for the help given, and hoping that this support will extend forever, not only to me but also to those who sorely need it.

The title of the Manuel Lourenço Pedro monograph is **Educational activities for training families with children aged 3 to 4 in traditional games at Daycare Heavenly Brightness, Cazengo Municipality, Cuanza North**. This work has as its premise that the family and first school play an important role in the development of children. The research project subjects included two teachers and 12 families with a total of 12 children, ages 3 and 4, and one director. Challenges identified were that the director and educators do not have training in the specialty of preschool education, nor do they always favor the training process for families with children aged 3 and 4 in traditional games. In meetings with parents, teachers do not explore the knowledge of the family nor do they always consider the



2nd from left, graduate, Manuel Lourenço Pedro; to his right, monograph supervisor, Vilma Ramos Villena, PhD, and other faculty, Cuanza North Pedagogical School, Department of Educational Research

immense possibilities of the family role in the improvement of transfer of traditional games. A proposal of activities was presented with the purpose of contributing to improving the training of families in traditional games.

Note: UNESCO recognizes that intangible cultural heritage is formed in part from traditional sports and games. They preserve culture, promote intercultural dialogue, empower youth and enhance fair play and peace.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, non-contact traditional games were recommended for children to provide opportunities for exercise and socializing. You may view a video of a traditional dance - martial art *African capoeira kids* at <https://www.bbc.com/sport/basketball/videos/c20z85zpnldo>

Glossary >>>

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IECA LANGUAGE INSTITUTE UPDATE - AMSF book donations are in circulation

By Steven Mullins with his wife Amelia Brown, return volunteer EAL Instructors

When we think of our return to the IECA Language Institute in Huambo after a seven-month absence, Thomas Wolfe's oft-quoted phrase from Look Homeward, Angel, "You can't go home again," seems apropos but in a very positive sense. Even a short absence can result in quite a bit of change, and from what we experienced in our month of teaching there in February, all of those changes have been positive.

Before focusing on the changes, two constants at the Language Institute need to be mentioned because they are in no small measure responsible for its ongoing success. The first constant is the excellence of the LI staff whose hard work and local knowledge permit the teachers to concentrate on lesson planning and building a well-rounded instructional environment instead of having to deal with the dozens of tedious administrative tasks that most teachers abhor. Their "can do" attitude fueled a lot of our success from behind the scenes. The second constant, and the driving force behind all that the Institute has recently accomplished, is the leadership of Dr. Coutinho Moma. Director Moma is a man who truly practices what he preaches. The day before our departure, he was out in the rural parts of the province with twenty volunteers planting more than 300 saplings, many of which he grows himself on the breezeway of the LI (Our students take a lot of ownership of the saplings, checking on them and volunteering to help water them). That same day, we went with the Director and planted a few fruit trees in the local neighborhood (including a couple of nonna fruit saplings that we had started from seeds last year). The planting was just another opportunity for growth and service to the local community. More about the leadership of Director Moma when we reflect on the changes that occurred in our absence.



We got our first glance at a recent change on our second day back in Angola when we flew out of the new airport in the capital city of Luanda, Dr. António Agostinho Neto International Airport, to get to Huambo. By the time this article goes to print, the new airport is scheduled to be handling both domestic and international flights. It is definitely a modern and welcome upgrade to the Angolan transportation infrastructure.

We had to wait for the second day of our return before we got to see the second, and probably the most important change at the Language Institute since we departed seven months ago: the completion of the repairs to the water pipes above the library. The library was unusable when we were present there last April-June. It is now a vibrant place of learning where students are excited to have access to so many English language books at so many different language levels. Every week has a designated library day where instruction can take place for the entire class (as we did for the entire advanced class when we read and discussed Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*) or on a small group or an individual scale, depending upon student needs. At least half of the library time is dedicated to independent reading which is definitely a student favorite.



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LANGUAGE INSTITUTE DIRECTOR REV MOMA EMAILS AMSF ON FEB 1, 2025

Hi everyone! While we were waiting for the returning English teachers, Mrs. Amelia Brown and Mr. Steve Mullins in February, and Ms. Catherine Ramey in March, the Language Institute members kept active with a set of tree planting campaigns in Yava - Longonjo, in Dondi (Cachiungo) and in Elende mission station (Ukuma).

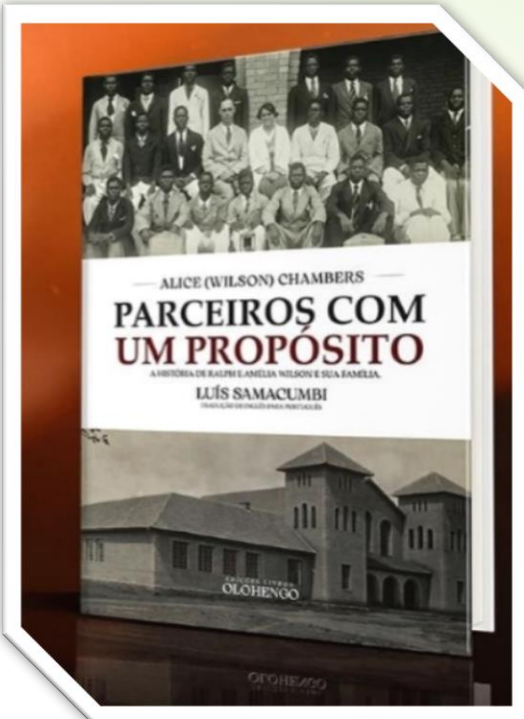


On one of the trips, we invited Abrantes, the gentleman who is pursuing agronomist studies on a scholarship offered by AMSF. He instructed the seminarians from the Dondi Seminary and all of us attending the campaign on the care of saplings. His expertise was remarkable. On our way to Elende in mid-January, we saw trucks carrying tree trunks for wood. Ongoing deforestation is being carried out by a Chinese company. We reminded people of the Umbundu proverb that states, "Nda ofa ku kame ondalú: va sala va yota" (If you are dying, don't extinguish the fire. Those who are left need to warm themselves). The lesson of the proverb is that we are neither the first nor the last ones. As we cut trees, we need to replenish nature.



Rev Moma and Abrantes at the Institute with bird book and binoculars, a designated AMSF donation presented to Abrantes to serve as an agroforestry outreach education tool.

AMSF is Grateful for Donations in Memory of: All who have served in Angola, Tom & Bev Brown, Rev José Chipenda, Ralph & Amelia Wilson and son Arthur Wilson



Donations in Honour of:

Rev Joyce Myers-Brown, Alice Chambers née Wilson, author of *Partners with One Purpose*, a memoir of her parents' life and work in Dondi Mission, Janice Johnson, daughter of Alice, Annick Chartier, niece of Alice, and friends Dorothy & Del Fizzell for their contributions to the photo section of the Portuguese version, *Parceiros Com Um Propósito*; Luis Samacumbi, its publisher.

How to Donate:

Donate online at www.angolamsf.org or mail to your AMSF Regional Representative (addresses are on the AMSF website), or directly to AMSF Treasurer, Eleanor Ellins, at: 2016-1333 Bloor St., Mississauga, ON L4Y 3T6. Cheques should be made out to AMSF.



IT TAKES A VILLAGE - the right to a life and a personal ID document

By Ruthie Schaad, Coordinator of Quessua Literacy Outreach Program

Meet Nelson 17, Laura 12, and Zézinho 10, proudly showing their new Bilhetes/ID cards. They are in 6th, 3rd and 2nd grades at the Quessua Mission School.

Mostly raised by their grandmother Julietta, they came from Luanda to Terra Nova village with their grandmother two and a half years ago. Their mother had a violent death, killed by her second husband a few years earlier. The children's father had abandoned the mother and family for another woman when Zézinho was two years old. The father has had nothing to do with his children since then and now has three other children. Abandoned by the rest of the extended family as well, the only stability remaining in their lives was Avó Julietta. This scene plays out over and over in the Quessua villages, such that many children are raised in dire poverty by their grandmothers. School, church activities and afternoon classes in the chapel/school help provide stability and structure for these children. Friends become like family, each giving support to one another when family leaves a void.

Of all the tragic inconsistencies of life, Avó Julietta was tragically killed in a road accident in August of 2024, leaving Nelson, Laura and Zézinho on their own. United Methodist Church agricultural missionary Kutela Katembo graciously allowed the children to occupy one of the rooms in the small farm workers' community that years ago served as tuberculosis wards. Ever since, the farm community and others have helped guide these children and assist them with their basic needs. Nelson, as head of the household now, should be in 8th grade but for lack of a school transfer certificate and a government ID card he was put back, a cruel reality at the school.

Not having any ID for the father or anyone from his side of the family, we worked on Nelson's ID first. Since he was over 14, he was allowed to apply with only a copy of one parent's ID. This was not easy but with well-established relations with a few of the government ID agents, we were able to use Avó Julietta's ID. This enabled us to use Nelson's ID to obtain Laura and Zézinho's. Achieving these 3 IDs was the usual tedious process fraught with impediments and "multas" (fines) for various avoidable and minor correctable errors mostly created by the agents themselves. We are grateful for the few empathetic agents who try to help, but obtaining these IDs remains a constant challenge. Around every corner is a new



challenge or rule at the agency. I smile when I see the picture of the three children with their bilhetes, thinking of all the other children who now have theirs as well. We recently reached a milestone of 100 bilhetes obtained since we started this campaign in October of 2021. This has required lots of funds that thankfully AMSF and The Florida Conference of the UMC have provided, as we continue to help needy Quessua children seek their constitutional right to possess an ID, in spite of agents mostly desensitized to helping achieve this right.

Pictured below are brothers Marcelo 10, and Paulino 7. Marcelo is the song leader of his village Mufongo. The boys arrived early in the morning to go to the ID agency to introduce their application for bilhetes, take their digital pictures and make fingerprints. Quessua is 13 km from Malange so one has to leave at 6:30 to arrive early enough to get in line. Caring facilitator Sebastião, who understands well the plight of these children, carefully chooses which motorbike taxi driver will transport children to town safely. Still, I worry! These boys, abandoned by their father, and their mother no longer living, live with their grandmother who is a widow. They arrived shivering, wrapped in their grandmother's pano/sarong. Luckily there was a jacket and long-sleeved shirt in the clothes trunk



that fit them perfectly. And we found the last two pairs of sweatpants for them. This was the second day they had come. The day before, both wore long shorts, but the agency doesn't accept children in shorts and we had forgotten to tell them. As it was, they were wearing tennis shoes too small for their feet. As we wait for their IDs to be ready, we worry about impediments cropping up.



Sani on the left is 17 and the oldest of the five siblings. She is in 7th grade and has her bilhete but asked for help for her siblings. They live with their grandparents. Their father is dead and their mother has severe mental illness. We are waiting for their IDs to be ready as well.

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In the first image below, Amelia is working with a small group of beginning EAL (English as an additional language) students who are writing and illustrating an ABC book. She is also multi-tasking with a student who is our youngest at just under three years old.

For anyone who doubts the efficacy of students being able to see themselves in the books that they read, we present Magui who pointed and exclaimed "Me" when she found a picture in her book of a mermaid with dark hair and skin tone. Updating the library with books in which students can see themselves has been an ongoing effort which is definitely bearing fruit. The parent of a prospective advanced level student commented that the library at the Language Institute "had the best, and most diverse, collection of English language books and teaching materials suitable for all levels" that she had seen anywhere in Angola. Did we mention that this parent is also an English teacher at the local teachers's college? There are two interconnected reasons that our library has changed so dramatically: donations from the AMSF and other organizations that have increased the size and scope of our library and the willingness of our volunteer teachers to give up half (or more) of their allotted baggage allowance to maximize the number of books that can be brought in.

Related to the library is one of the changes in policy initiated by Director Moma who was mentioned earlier. For the adult advanced and intermediate classes, adult students will now be permitted to check out one book per week. We piloted this

program during the month of February and it was an extremely popular program. Director Moma's reasoning that the best place for the books was in the hands of the readers and not on the shelves in the library is very well founded. This type of forward-looking approach is an example of what makes the Institute a special place to work and to learn.

Another change that we feel it is important to mention is the addition of Umbundu to the list of languages in which students can receive instruction. We attended an introductory lesson on formal and informal greetings which we enjoyed immensely and can see why the Director wants to make Umbundu a regular offering at the Institute.

As a bridge that supports the passage of both language and culture between Angolan generations, especially in rural areas, a knowledge of Umbundu is irreplaceable. We feel certain that his dreams for the Language Institute reach well beyond English and Umbundu, but they are a good place to start. It is through these types of dreams for better communication that we build a foundation for the future.



NOTE: The Language Institute is a social mission project of IECA and they have asked the Angola Partnership Team (APT) of the Illinois Conference for visiting English teachers. We are grateful for contributions of time, talent, and financial support!

Contact: Rev Mike Solberg, jmichaelsolberg@gmail.com or Rev Dr Coutinho Moma, IECA Language Institute Director, couthommoma@gmail.com

ABRANTES CHINGALULU REPORTS ON HIS FIFTH SEMESTER OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING



With immense pride and gratitude, I come to share the experiences and achievements of my fifth semester studies in the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at the University of José Eduardo dos Santos in Huambo. This period was extraordinary in terms of academic and personal growth. I was especially pleased to maintain an 80% performance without facing any major difficulties.

One of the most rewarding experiences was participating in a field visit to a farm located in the Municipality of Bailundo, Province of Huambo. There, practices were developed to calculate localized and continuous losses in the irrigation and drainage chain and to create an ideal system for irrigating that farm. I also appreciated theoretical and practical classes on general agriculture and agricultural mechanization, for example

the various cultivation practices carried out in the soil before and after sowing. This initiative not only expanded my practical and theoretical knowledge but also allowed me to collaborate with talented colleagues and inspiring mentors.

The difficulties faced in previous semesters contributed to strengthening my resilience and commitment to my academic and professional development. I am deeply grateful for the continued support I receive through the scholarship which has been crucial to my development, allowing me to dedicate more time to studying and getting involved in enriching extracurricular activities. I am immensely grateful for the trust you have placed in me. I am determined to repay this support with my continued effort and dedication. With every day that passes, I feel closer to realizing my dreams and achieving my goals. May our good God in His infinite Grace and mercy bless you all abundantly. Amen!



Augering a soil sample

IECA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH TO 400 RURAL WOMEN Looking at life differently.

Introduction

Transforming communities includes introducing new opportunities. The empowerment of women through opportunities is the best way to ensure the strengthening of the whole family's access to information and new tools. Greater knowledge provided to rural girls and women means more resources created in isolated, often economically marginalized communities for village-wide education, entrepreneurship and other activities. Through the transformation of girls and women, the rural population can drive economic growth, combat hunger and lift their own communities out of poverty.

Outreach Project

During the 2024/2025 period, the IECA Women's Association Education Outreach project served women and girls at a higher level of vulnerability, empowering them so that they can create small businesses independently, expand and help other families and communities. So far, 300 women

have been trained in the areas of Entrepreneurship, Financial Education (in 2024) and Confectionery, Decoration and Cooking. In a new initiative, about 100 girls and women received Pastry Kits to start their micro businesses. Each kit contains cake pans, trays, spoons, spatulas, measuring cups and spoons, a rolling pin, a dough scraper and a whisk.

Workshop Participants Response

Women are clearly pleased to participate and benefit from the Outreach project. Their faces and words show joy and hope in seeing their lives take a positive direction. We pray to God that the project will continue. that donors will continue to



Pastry Kit Initiative

look upon the aspirations of Angolan girls and women of IECA and its communities. With a smile on their faces, the girls and women broadcast *Ebenezer!* on the loudspeaker (*Ebenezer* because the Lord has helped us thus far). May donors not tire of doing good, for they will reap if they do not grow weary. Angolan families, particularly IECA women, are looking forward to receiving visits from our donors to witness the work that has been done with your support. May God abundantly bless your Ministry and your good work. *Note: Ebenezer, a Hebrew phrase that means "stone of help", from Samuel 1, in which the prophet Samuel sets up a stone to commemorate the help that God had given the Israelites.*

Workshop Themes, Locations and Class Sizes

Entrepreneurship Training:

- The headquarters of the municipality of Namibe, Namibe Province, hosted the training that will allow the development of small businesses by participants and contribute to the development of their families.
- More than 10 women participated in the training in Luanda
- More than 30 women participated in the training in Benguela. At the end of the training, the women divided into groups and presented business projects as a way of applying the knowledge learned.

Pastry and cooking course and Arts and Crafts training:

- In Lunda-Norte, trainers conducted a pastry and cooking course. The Outreach project has supported new micro businesses by awarding pastry kits to successful students. About 100 girls and women received Pastry kits to start their micro businesses.
- Trainers also offered an arts and crafts course.

Literacy teacher training:

- In Cassongue, Cuanza Sul, 15 women successfully completed a literacy teacher training.



Women Association General Director, Reverend Celeste Luciano, and Entrepreneurship students in Bengo.



A pastry graduate receiving a pastry making tools kit



Students of the literacy teacher training course in Cuanza Sul

Soapmaking training:

- In Bie, 13 women participated in a soap making course. They used leftover cooking oil from their home kitchens as the main raw material. More women are likely to attend the next training and one of their exercises will be to approach local restaurants for used cooking oil. Future courses will provide some materials that they need for soap making at home, such as molds. Soapmaking can contribute to household savings. (During the COVID-19 crisis, commercial soap more than tripled in price). Another benefit is that recycling cooking oil is a recognized anti-pollution strategy.

<https://research.biust.ac.bw/en/publications/utilization-of-waste-cooking-oil-and-tallow-for-production-of-toi>



A teacher cuts freshly made soap

Debriefing-Conclusion

After the trainings offered, it is clear to instructors that the beneficiaries of the training increase their self-esteem and social affirmation in addition to acquiring new knowledge. They become more useful to their families in decision making, exercising autonomy in taking initiatives, and increasing their access to decent work and resources. Educated girls are more likely to delay marriage, to be successful in finding work and to raise healthier children. When we carry out these trainings through the Outreach project, we are helping women look at life differently. This will contribute to more and better development of themselves, their families and communities.



Students of the literacy teacher course in Namibe and their teacher (centre)

Entrepreneurship training in Benguela