

Echoes of the Schools for the Teachers of the Future

August 2009

For the 15th year ADPP is opening the doors of the Schools for the Teachers of the Future. The schools, run in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, are called *Escolas de Professores do Futuro* in Portuguese, or EPF for short. There are now schools in 10 different provinces. 840 students are enrolled to start in the pre-service primary school teaching course. In January 2012 they will graduate, specially trained to work in rural communities across the country. The 840 new students will become part of a group of approximately 2,200 students currently undergoing training at an EPF.

The schools, which have opened over the course of the last 14 years, have together trained around 2,600 teachers. Of these, 90% are still working in education, contributing to improving the quality of primary education in rural areas.

The training prepares future teachers not only for education challenges, but also to tackle major issues such as conflict, HIV/AIDS, gender, global warming and climate change, water and sanitation etc.

Theory and practice go hand in hand at EPF schools, on the principle that “knowledge without action is futile”. The course, for example, includes 1,000 hours of teaching practice, making solid professional practice a major part of the teacher training experience.



In this bulletin you can learn a little about the EPF schools through articles written by students and teachers, and learn more about some of the schools, such as those in Cabinda, Uíge, Benguela and Huambo. The bulletin will put events at the EPF schools in a national perspective, and sometimes in a wider southern African context.

In-service Teacher Training

The program of '40 Pedagogical Sessions' is part of an ADPP / Ministry of Education initiative, implemented by, among others, the School for the Teachers of the Future in Uige. The program aims to build the capacity of those working as primary teachers in Angola with little or no teacher training.

The program consists of 40 pedagogical sessions which provide innovative, high-quality educational input. The sessions are 8 hours per week, with 4 hours in plenum with a tutor and another 4 hours of practical tasks over the following week. The pedagogical sessions cover a broad range of subjects related directly or indirectly to education. Examples of pedagogical sessions include:

"What is a Child?"

"What is Learning?"

"Teaching Methods"

"Learning Can Be Measured!"
"The Art of Giving a Good Lesson"
"The School as a Cultural Institution"

"Reward and Punishment"

The Provincial Director of Education in Uige, Dr. Antonio Mucanzo Cangudi, decided to train 50 teachers from Uige district and 50 teachers from the district of



Negage through 40 Pedagogical Sessions under the leadership of EPF Uige.

The first 100 teachers completed their 40 Pedagogical Sessions on the 18th October 2008.

The program in Negage greatly influenced two students from EPF Uige's 2007 team. Students Bethuel Nelito and Izau Sebastian Garcia are now leading this year's 40 Pedagogical Sessions in their respective municipalities. Through this training of teachers, they are working to transform the educational situation.

The 40 Pedagogical sessions are particularly relevant in Uige Province given that many teachers are not familiar with or don't make use of satisfactory methods to ensure effective teaching and quality education. Now they have been provided with the knowledge to effect educational changes and improvements.

Students from EPF Huambo prepare to be tested for HIV



In July 2009, the vast majority of students in Team 2008 and those in the preparatory period for Team 2009, declared themselves ready to be tested for HIV / AIDS. This was something they would not have been prepared to do a month earlier. The Team 2008 students have a thorough knowledge of HIV / AIDS through various courses and clubs at the school, but they had not reflected on the need to take the test

themselves.

We ran a course on the question of whether students should decide to be tested for HIV.

The biggest obstacle was that students thought that, due to the stigma surrounding HIV-positive people, it was better not to know. We discussed the fact that although HIV+ people clearly need to exercise caution and follow special treatment programs, there are today effective medications which can hinder the onset of full blown AIDS. It is important to know ones HIV status in order not to transmit the virus to others. We also discussed the fact that EPF students and coming teachers of the future must always work to mobilize people to take HIV tests.

The conclusion we reached together after the discussions was that Team 2008 is now ready to take the test. The same conclusion was reached by the students in the 2009 Preparatory Period after discussing the matter. We contacted the Voluntary Testing and Counseling Service in Huambo to ask that the center carries out the tests at EPF in September.



Theater Contest between Primary Schools in Lândana, Cabinda.

On the 1st of June, International Children's Day, and the 16th of June, African Children's Day, the students in their 4th period at EPF Cabinda held the annual theater competition for primary schools in Lândana. There are 8 primary schools in the area and there are groups of 4th period students in teaching practice in each of them. The trainee teachers prepared

theater and other cultural activities with their classes in preparation for the competition. The pupils learned to perform plays, poems, dance and parade. They also encouraged the other teachers at the schools to participate in the competition with their classes. In addition, together with the headmasters at their practice schools, they planned,

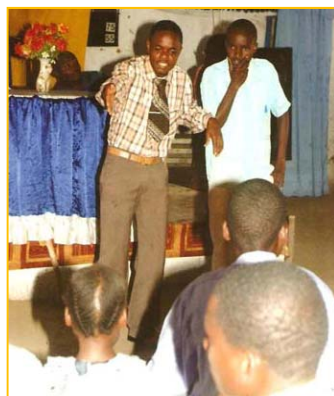
prepared and ensured the successful implementation of activities on the day of the finals. The big day, on the 16th, was a great challenge. The trainee teachers had to ensure that all the pupils were ready; they had to prepare EPF to receive 2.000 children, who they had to keep well organized and disciplined throughout the program. They had to carry out the competition between 8 schools, keep everybody's attention and find the winning school. They also had to provide a snack for all the children, ensure that none of them got upset. They also found partners to sponsor the prizes and lunch. All in all, the month of June was a great learning experience for the teacher trainees.



Trainees at EPF Benguela

Watchful eyes followed every movement of the characters. In the audience, children, their carers and the rest of the community watched the dramatization of a common problem in many Angolan families: alcoholism. On the stage, while the teacher of the future Nelson Gouveia played an alcoholic father, the other teacher-actor, Nzuzi Kiala, played his son. A kid who, as a consequence of his father's addiction, is having a difficult time both in school and socially. The actors' intention was to stimulate reflection on the consequences of alcoholism and how it affects the development of the country. The pair joined a group of four interns working in the community of Chongoroi, Benguela province. The group discussed not only alcoholism but issues such as sanitation, cholera, drugs and sex

education were all tackled through the arts. Moreover, during their training period, the teachers established two theater groups. One at Malongo, with 16 students and the other in the town, with about 35 participants consisting of teachers and community members. The trainees also used choir, poetry, sports and even a folk music band to disseminate knowledge. Inspired by everyday life, the teachers used playful didactic techniques to educate



the entire population. "Through the arts, children can see beyond the theory and imagine the reality. In this process, art stimulates and facilitates learning," says Nelson. For him, art also improves the relationship between student and teacher. "One of the main advantages of using the arts is the motivation of children. Their association with us and our characters brings us closer to them, their lives, fears and dreams. It becomes easier to share our knowledge with stronger, more motivated students."

Through the arts, the micro group of trainees in Chongoroi encourage reading, concentration, determination and respect among students, as well as their families and neighbors. Again, the EPF trainees demonstrate that creativity and persistence can transform lives.

Women's Club at EPF Benguela

"Women should be educated not only in science but in housekeeping, arts and culture so that they can help the community to develop in these areas", says student Bernardina Joana

According to the student Felisberto Suende "These activities are of great importance, since from ancient times women were viewed as people who could not occupy positions of leadership, or be academically equal to men. With this club, our school is helping women to value their own activities and realize the value of their varied knowledge and skills". Many women have been discriminated against in society at large, in the scientific world, have been victims of domestic violence etc. For them, it is necessary to further develop gender-related activities, and the development of women's clubs in government schools has helped many women in the pursuit of equality.



Women's Art Clubs at the EPF Schools

The women in the 'Introduction to the Arts' club at EPF Benguela, led by Professor Marta (under the guidance of Mr. Abijah, an experienced artist) are already harvesting the first fruits. The first module had a duration of 2 months and the students were very enthusiastic. In the opinion of Professor Martha, the girls got a great deal out of the activities, particularly since they had never tried anything similar before.



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