



LEIGOS PARA O  
DESENVOLVIMENTO



## ► Leigos para o Desenvolvimento<sup>1</sup> ► Intervention

Since 1986, the Development NGO Leigos para o Desenvolvimento has been an organisation of intercultural relation. Based on the respect for and enhancement of different cultures, and on the opportunity for civic-minded participation, Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is present in Portuguese-speaking countries through a network of lay volunteers living in these country's for a period of at least a year.

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento's mission is to foster a thorough and integrated human development of people and communities in developing countries and in Portugal, focusing on capacity building and sustainability, with priority given to the intervention of qualified lay volunteers acting to cooperating with the local communities towards achieving these goals.

The organisation is based on Catholic precepts, inspired by St. Ignatius of Loyola, and shares common principles and a common mission with the Jesuits. Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is a non-profit association recognised as a Development NGO since 1995.

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is currently working on development projects in Angola, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Príncipe. It places an emphasis on education – formal, non-formal and informal, on organising and stimulating community structures, on education and training, on entrepreneurship and employability, on capacity building among local agents, and on the fostering of a voluntary approach within a pastoral framework.

<sup>1</sup> The name of the organisation means "Lay People for Development", as opposed to priests and nuns as missionaries.





## ► Vision and Goals

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento sees itself in the future as a benchmark Development NGO for stimulating human and community development. Inspired by a spirit of gratuity, responsibility, quality and participation, the Leigos para o Desenvolvimento provides the groundwork on which to build a world clearly based on fairness and solidarity.

The main participants will continue to be volunteers, regardless of the fact that the Leigos para o Desenvolvimento may diversify the profile of the agents for development that it currently sends on projects and missions. In this respect, the planning for the number of missions will take into account the projected number of volunteers for each year.

In light of the above, priority must be given to finding a more healthy and sustainable balance between the different categories of financers and donors. Owing to the reduction in public funds, greater diversity in the sourcing of funds has been sought, including an increase in funds stemming from corporations and individual benefactors.

In the next few years, the Leigos para o Desenvolvimento will focus on raising the profile of the “Leigos para o Desenvolvimento brand” in a more consistent and professional manner. This implies setting up a structure for communications abroad based on annual communication plans, and on galvanising foreign partnerships with agencies, companies or individual collaborators.

One of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento's strengths lies in the group of former volunteers, most of whom maintain strong and effective ties with the organisation after their missions. Beyond fostering the participation of this group within the formal dynamics of organisation, conditions are created to make it easier for them to take part, get involved, and make an impact on the life of organisation.





## ► Values

### A CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

This is a Catholic organisation, the foundations of which are Christian values, aiming for the promotion of human dignity. Leigos para o Desenvolvimento volunteers are sent out as lay missionaries, aware of their mission based on Jesuit spirituality and with full support and guidance from the organisations.

### A SPIRIT OF SERVICE AND DEVELOPMENT

Central to the Leigos para o Desenvolvimento mission is the struggle against inequality, poverty and social exclusion. Leigos para o Desenvolvimento puts itself at the service of the weakest communities and peoples in support of their development, with a genuine belief in the enhancement of local resources through the use of the volunteers' skills, talents and creativity.

### BENEVOLENCE AND SIMPLICITY

In order to be closer to communities and people, the volunteers live a simple life in tune with the socio-economic context in which they find themselves.

### SHARING AND LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento works toward a model of development where solidarity is built on the principle of co-responsibility, and social cohesion is based on the capacity to structure a 'community', with the inclusion of all the differences between individuals, cultures and religion.

The work of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento takes into account the specific nature of the area and the local community through a proximity-based approach, highlighting common identities, solidarity and social cohesion.

**AN APPROACH  
BASED ON KNOWING  
THE LOCAL AREA**

**AN INTEGRATED  
PERSPECTIVE**

**PARTNERSHIPS**

The focus on a holistic approach is an attempt to move away from a fragmented view.

Priority is given to work that is done jointly, shared and networked, and grounded in collaborative and cooperative strategies.

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is dedicated to fostering participation as an exercise in citizenship and as a process for activating and connecting skills and opportunities.

**PARTICIPATION**

**BRINGING SKILLS  
AND LOCAL RESOURCES  
INTO PLAY**

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The aim of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is to make it more practical for local groups and communities to use local resources, thus stimulating creativity and innovation.

## ► Principles

Intervention is geared to the time needed to empower local players, the aim of which is to become independent of the irregular cycles of financing and of the rotation of the volunteers acting as development agents.

**A LONG-TERM  
APPROACH**

**CULTURE OF  
ASSESSMENT**

**A RESEARCH-ACTION  
METHODOLOGY**

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is central to the process of keeping track of results, impacts and quality of intervention of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento.

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento's aim is to combine action and critical reflection in order to learn from procedures, from successes and from mistakes, and to systematise experiences with a view to producing and disseminating knowledge.

From the start, in an attempt to define a viable strategy, Leigos para o Desenvolvimento has put together projects as social/educational responses to communities and peoples. The viability of these projects is secured, ranging from financial to technical issues, environmental issues, as well as procedural and coordination issues.



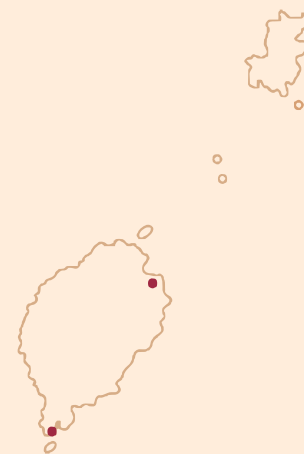


## ► Intervention

### SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento came into being as an organisation following a journey made to the São Tomé and Príncipe islands by the priest António Vaz Pinto, the founder of the Centro Universitário Padre António Vieira (CUPAV) in Lisbon. A group of recently graduated young people from CUPAV got together with the dream and the will to place their talents at the service of communities with ties to Portugal. The preparation of the first group was a pioneering operation. It lasted for just over two years, after which came the invitation from the Bishop of São Tomé, D. Abílio Ribas. The journey undertaken by the first community of six volunteers was finally on its way, where in October 1988, they settled at the farm of Vista Alegre.

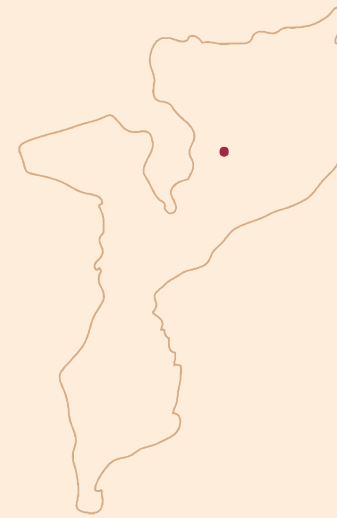
Being close to the local people was recognised as fundamental to the success of the mission in the São Tomé and Príncipe. This was the only way to discovery and understanding; to form ties of respect and mutual appreciation; to share and to build positive relations in terms of both personal and working relationships. There is a popular saying on the islands – *ninguê qui guinhá dimifá sêbê minda tochi qui-ê tóxifá* – “only if you live alongside someone do you appreciate their value”.



The main areas for the activities of the volunteers in São Tomé has been defined in terms of the local needs and the basic training of each volunteer, namely education, social action, entrepreneurship, gender issues and professional training. In 1989 the need for human resources for education and training, along with the creation of the IDF – the John Paul II Diocesan Training Institute, led to a community being set up in the Madre de Deus neighbourhood where Leigos para o Desenvolvimento made its home. Since October 1989, two new communities were set up, Madre de Deus and Água Izé.

Currently, Leigos para o Desenvolvimento has two missions in the country, one in Porto Alegre in the south of the island, and the other in São Tomé in the Boa Morte neighbourhood.





## ► Intervention

### MOZAMBIQUE

The history of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento in Mozambique begins in the neighbouring country of Malawi during the Mozambican civil war that split the country for more than 15 years. Forced to run from the violence of this conflict, the rural population, specifically the people of the Niassa and Tete provinces, fled en masse to Malawi, a country with which they shared a history, a language and traditions, and where many of them had family. Malawi, however, was ill-equipped to welcome them.

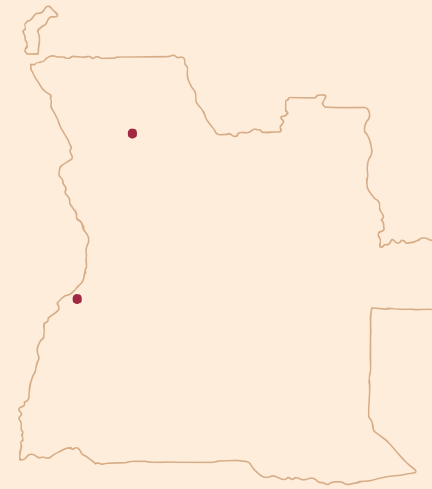
The refugee numbers rose in the camps, and although some international aid reached them, it was never enough to provide for all their needs. There was, for instance, no system of formal education, and parents with schooling gave lessons to their own children and others who were nearby. In response to this need, the Jesuits set up a system known as ESAM (Ensino Secundário Aberto Moçambicano – Mozambican Open Second Level Teaching). This was a flexible teaching and assessment method which enabled those taking part to reach equivalence (following protocols with the authorities) in the Mozambique school system.

As this was unfolding, Leigos para o Desenvolvimento volunteers arrived at the Mankhokwe refugee camp in 1991. With the two sides in the war declaring an interest in peace, confirmed by the multi-party elections of 1994, the refugee camps housing Mozambicans were dismantled and the families began the trek home. The Jesuits then invited the volunteers to help rebuild the country, and Leigos para o Desenvolvimento found itself a permanent fixture in the country.

In 1993 Leigos para o Desenvolvimento arrived in Lichinga, capital of the Niassa province, and in 1994 it started work in Angónia in the Tete province, settling in the Lifidzi and Fonte Boa missions. Three years later, in 1997, Leigos para o Desenvolvimento opened the Cuamba Mission. This is the only remaining mission after the closure of Lifidzi, Fonte Boa and Lichinga.

Even though education is still a priority, the target population has broadened, and now ranges from pre-school to preparation for university entrance. In addition, other areas have come into focus, among them health, social development, learning through play activities, photography and sport, including an array of projects aiming to overcome various shortages, identified through contact with the local people (gender issues, renovation of buildings, rural/agricultural development, alternative economy/microcredit).





## ► Intervention

### ANGOLA

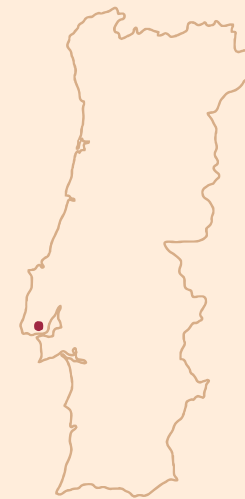
From 1992 Leigos para o Desenvolvimento have been in Angola. Here they have been involved in projects involving individuals and their communities, focusing on both individual and community needs and skills.

The history of Leigos para o Desenvolvimento in Angola began in 1992 with the opening of their first mission in Uíge following an appeal by the Bishop of the Diocese, D. Francisco da Mata Mourisca. The following year saw an escalation in the armed conflict, and the mission was forced to leave the region. At the invitation of the Bishop of Benguela, D. Óscar Braga, in 1996 Leigos para o Desenvolvimento took up its work in the country again, this time in Benguela. It was only with peace coming to Angola in 2003 that Leigos para o Desenvolvimento returned to Uíge.

In both Benguela and Uíge, the close ties between the volunteers and the dioceses meant that the organisation was integrated into the cities and neighbourhoods on the outskirts. This led to a deeper and more solid understanding of the complex local reality. Leigos para o Desenvolvimento worked hand in hand with these dioceses, and also very closely with local people and organisations. At that time this included partnerships with other international organisations headquartered in Angola.

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento carried out projects that stimulated and organized community action, and now have intervention in education and training: entrepreneurship and employability; health and gender issues.





## ► Intervention

### PORTUGAL

Work in Portugal began in 1993, the year when the Centro São Pedro Claver (CSPC) was set up. Many students were arriving in Portugal from the countries in Africa where Portuguese is the official language, and indeed they continue to arrive. They came with or without scholarships, their aim being to study in higher education. They were far from their own countries, and almost always lived in precarious conditions. Three years after the first group of volunteers had left the São Tomé e Príncipe Islands, the urge to continue the mission served as the basis on which the CSPC was set up, providing support for the students to continue with their studies. In addition there was a need to bring down the drop-out rate among students that continued to arrive in Portugal.

The aim, therefore, was to create a structure in Portuguese society that would simplify the integration of this group into school, into society and into a profession, thereby playing a part in their future entry into the world of work in Portugal or their own home countries. From the start, the numbers requesting support with schooling were beyond expectation. And along the way, voluntary teachers turned up – from all age groups and a wide range of professions – trained as teachers or having done a university course.

And so it started: the space was cramped and the means scarce, but there was an enormous amount of good will and confidence. The work not only covered specific school subjects, but also the teaching of how to write and speak Portuguese correctly.

Currently, there is a coordinator at the Centre, along with two teachers on secondment from the Ministry of Education, and around 45 volunteers. An average of 150 students, many of them descendants of immigrants, are given support every year during their secondary education, most of them in the last year of schooling (the Portuguese 12th year). Over and above this, the students attend intensive courses in Portuguese, English or IT studies, as well as other subjects, and there are two offices providing vocational guidance and psychological support.

The dedication of all those who work in this Centre must be highlighted, and due reference must also be made to the teachers – over 300 of them – who have given and continue to give support in their own specialist areas without regard for anything in return.





## ► Networks

### THE PORTUGUESE PLATFORM FOR DEVELOPMENT NGOS

This is a private, non-profit association representing a group of 65 Portuguese NGOs registered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### THE VOLUNTARY MISSIONARY PLATFORM

Leigos para o Desenvolvimento is one of the groups that makes up the platform of organisations in the field of voluntary missionary network (Plataforma das Entidades de Voluntariado Missionário), coordinated by the Faith and Cooperation Foundation (Fundação Fé e Cooperação).

### XAVIER NETWORK

The Xavier Network is made up of organisations closely related to the Society of Jesus, which work in International Cooperation for Development. These organisations share the same identity and approach in the understanding of solidarity and promotion of justice in the world.

### FONG

FONG gathers ONGs in Sao Tome and Principe. Currently it has a universe of 85 partner organizations, promoting capacity building activities for its members contributing to a more equitable and sustainable development of the country.

### CAS

CAS – Social Apostolate Comission - is the platform that gathers the social institutions of the Portuguese Jesuits. There are 5 NGOs, 6 social parish centres, and the social department of 3 schools, which employ 361 people and have 278 volunteers. There are other volunteer associations that do not formally belong to CAS, but participate in its initiatives.



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| <b>SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE</b>                           |  |  |
| Associação de Moradores do Bairro da Boa Morte         | Direção Provincial da Família e Promoção da Mulher                                       | Direção Distrital da Educação, Tecnologia e Cultura de Cuamba - Departamento de Alfabetização  |
| Associação Comunitária de Porto Alegre                 | Diocese de Benguela - Paróquia N. Senhora da Graça                                       | Direção Distrital da Saúde, Mulher e Ação Social de Cuamba – Departamento da Primeira Infância |
| Câmara Distrital de Caué                               | Graal  |  |
| Católica - MOVE  | Grão – Grupo de Voluntariado   | Escola Superior de Educação Paula Frassinetti  |
| Centro de Formação de Budo Budo                        | Grupo Comunitário da Graça   | Fundação Fé e Cooperação   |
| Comissão de Pais da Escola Básica da Boa Morte         | Igreja Tocoísta do Bairro da Graça   | Paróquia de São Miguel - Diocese de Lichinga   |
| Comissão de Pais do Jardim de Infância de Vila Malanza | Instituto Nacional de Emprego e Formação Profissional                                    | Sociedade Algodoeira do Niassa JFS, SA   |
| Diocese de S. Tomé e Príncipe                          |  | Universidade Católica de Moçambique – Faculdade de Agricultura de Cuamba                       |
| Escola Básica da Boa Morte                             | Instituto Nacional de Apoio às Micro, Pequenas e Médias Empresas                         |  |
| Escola Básica Integrada de Porto Alegre                | Instituto Superior Politécnico Católico de Benguela                                      | <b>PORTUGAL</b>  |
| Grupo Comunitário de Porto Alegre                      | Instituto Superior Politécnico Jean Piaget de Benguela                                   | AESE <i>Business School</i>  |
| Grupo Comunitário da Boa Morte                         | MOSAICO  | Câmara Municipal de Lisboa – Banco de Voluntariado   |
| Jardim-de-infância de Porto Alegre                     | Projeto de Alfabetização e Formação de Jovens e Adultos do Bairro de N. Senhora da Graça | Centro Nacional de Apoio ao Imigrante  |
| Jardim-de-infância de Vila Malanza                     |  | KPMG Portugal & Associados   |
| Ministério da Educação, Cultura e Formação             | PROMAICA da Graça  | McCann Portugal – Agência de Publicidade   |
|  | <b>MOZAMBIQUE</b>  | Ministério da Educação   |
| <b>ANGOLA</b>  | Diocese Católica de Lichinga-Niassa  | Morais Leitão Galvão Teles Soares da Silva & Associados  |
| Associação de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo        | Direção Distrital da Agricultura e Economia de Cuamba                                    | Vieira de Almeida & Associados   |
| Associação <i>Elavoko Lyomalã</i>                      |  |  |
| Associação Mulher Raiz da Vida                         | Direção Provincial da Criança, Género e Ação Social                                      |  |
| Centro Local de Empreendedorismo e Serviços de Emprego | Direção Provincial da Educação e Desenvolvimento Humano                                  |  |

## ► Local Partners

In places where the missions operate, the relationships with the dioceses, parishes and religious congregations are seen as priority partnerships. However other organisations are also found and integrated, providing added value as projects unfold. Special attention is given to local organisations and local partners as a way to bolster civil society in the countries where the missions are set up. Universities and research centres are also important partners for involvement in the near future, with a view to providing a systematic structure covering practices and the advancement of knowledge.



## ► Donors

Alto Comissariado para as Migrações  
- Fundo Europeu para a Integração de  
Nacionais de Países Terceiros

Alves Ribeiro, SA

Banco de Fomento de Angola

*Bischofliches Hilfserk Miserior*

Camões - Instituto da Cooperação e da Língua

Conferência Episcopal Italiana

Infância Missionária

*Kindermisionswerk*

Listas Telefónicas de Moçambique

*Rotary Club* de Vila Real

*Weshare*, Serviços de Gestão SA



## ► Contacts

[www.leigos.org](http://www.leigos.org)  
[www.facebook.com/leigosparaodesenvolvimento](https://www.facebook.com/leigosparaodesenvolvimento)

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