



Investing in rural people

ANGOLA

Agriculture and fisheries
transforming rural lives
and livelihoods

Angola has a wealth of natural resources, including water, forests, wildlife and fisheries. Despite the country's rich mineral resources – it is the second-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa, and among the world's top producers of diamonds – the country has experienced negative economic growth since 2016. This has been worsened by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

But IFAD and the Government of Angola are working together to promote better and more diverse livelihoods for Angolans through rural and agricultural development. These projects and programmes create job opportunities, improve food and nutrition security, increase market access, build capacity, empower women and build rural people's resilience.





Artisanal fishing provides an alternative for rural communities

The Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture Project, supported by IFAD and its partners, aimed to improve food and nutrition security, promote inclusive and sustainable development, and support the management of inland fishing and small-scale aquaculture.

Over the past seven years, the project has made significant progress in improving food and nutrition security and quality of life. Rural fishers have seen their incomes rise by 28 per cent, and the project has helped diversify economic activities and improve nutrition levels in the target area by promoting community vegetable gardens and nutri-ponds. In addition, artisanal fishers can now access markets more easily, and sell more due to the reduced post-catch losses.

Empowering youth to engage in agribusiness

Though Angola's economy may not create enough jobs for the young and increasing workforce, Jaime João Cunda has a different story to tell.

Jaime was once a teacher for the project's literacy programme, teaching members of the Binzole Cooperative how to read and write. The Binzole Cooperative brings small-scale farmers together and is one of the cooperatives that the project is working with.

While interacting with project participants, Jaime had a chance to see first-hand how the project was impacting their lives. Like most young people, he had never considered farming as an option, but working with the cooperative members inspired him to find out more and pursue an entrepreneurship training offered by the project. Armed with the right skills and the savings from his teaching job, he decided to diversify his income by opening a small shop and establishing a fish pond.

Today, Jaime is the vice-president of the cooperative.



“The project has impacted my life by providing classes and training on entrepreneurship, which has led to an increase in income which now allows me to cover school fees for my children as well as medical bills for my family.”

Jaime João Cunda



Creating jobs and generating income for thriving rural economies

In Angola, 53 per cent of the population lives on less than US\$2.15 per day, with a majority relying on subsistence farming. Those in the south have experienced a severe multi-year drought. Most rural families depend on informal work, with 80 per cent of these workers in self-employment, unpaid family enterprises or subsistence agriculture.

João Cesar Binzole is a farmer and founding member of the Binzole Cooperative and responsible for the coordination of the community, field work and sales from the fish ponds. The project has had a big effect on his livelihood. He says: “Before, we worked to survive and we didn’t always have income.” For a father with 12 children and 9 grandchildren who look up to him, this is a big deal.

Like other members of the cooperative, João benefited from training that equipped him with the necessary skills and tools to start new enterprises alongside his fishing and farming activities.

The rural economy has the potential to create decent and productive jobs, reducing poverty and ensuring food security. For João, the ability to earn an income from his farming and other economic activities has made a difference for his family. Not only is he able to meet his basic needs, but he now has money to spend elsewhere, enabling him to contribute to the transformation of the rural economy.

“Before, we worked to survive and we didn’t always have income.”

João Cesar Binzole





Reducing post-harvest losses to increase produce for markets

Angola's artisanal fisheries lack access to storage facilities, paved roads and cold chain transport to reach lucrative markets. Spoilage and losses are high. Unhygienic practices that pose food safety and quality risks are also common, which is a major hindrance to accessing export markets.

As a result, there is very little processing of fish products. Fish are often gutted in poor conditions, then salted for drying or smoked in simple drum kilns. Smaller species and sizes are simply dried without salt. Only a small proportion of the catch is sold fresh, as fresh fish sales depend on adequate storage and transportation so the fish can reach cities without spoilage or deterioration.

With support from the project, Branca received training on the right way to clean and dry fish to meet the standards required for the market. This training has increased not only the quality of the fish she now sells in the market, but also her income, as she is able to sell more fish.

“We didn't know how to scale fish, but through the project we learned how to prepare dried fish properly for the market.”

Branca Felipe

President of Kudikuatekessa Cooperative

Better food and nutrition security for families and communities

Angola is ranked 97 out of 116 in the 2021 Global Hunger Index, an indication of the levels of food insecurity, malnourishment and undernutrition in the country. This ranking is driven by poverty, limited dietary diversification, gender inequality, and poor sanitation and hygiene conditions.

Increasing household knowledge and improving feeding practices is critical to tackling and reversing this trend. Most farmers in the project area keep fish and also grow crops. The project provides holistic training that looks at food and nutrition security and equips them with the skills needed for their different activities.

The project has also introduced “nutri-ponds”. These are small ponds established by the community and stocked with diverse, local, nutrient-rich fish species for household consumption. Establishing the nutri-ponds has not only improved nutrition at the household level, but has also helped safeguard the commercial ponds each household manages.

Domingas Viera Binzole, a mother of two and a member of the Binzole Cooperative, has made good use of this knowledge.



“We used to harvest and sell all our produce in the market. We did not keep any for our homes. After being trained on nutrition, we now know that we must first ensure food security in our homes before we take the food to the market. We also know the different benefits of the different foods and are now diversifying our diets to also include fish.”






Domingas Viera Binzole



Lucinda Magalhães, a 29-year-old mother of five children aged between 6 months and 12 years, has also improved her family's nutritional status. With the training she received from the project, she has diversified the crops that she grows in her garden, in addition to the fish she gets from the nutri-pond.



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