

Approximately 1,200 enrolled in classes at USAID-funded women's center

Angolan Women Learn Basic Literacy Skills



Photo: USAID/Angola

43-year-old Aida Dala Bata and 66-year-old Helena Malembe can now read and write for the first time due to their studies at USAID-funded women's literacy center.

In Angola, USAID support has helped in the creation of a community center to train local women who otherwise would have no access to formal education in basic literacy skills. The center was built by the Mississippi Consortium for International Development, as part of a USAID-funded civil society strengthening project. It is a place where women can learn basic literacy skills, and receive education in human rights to help empower them to participate in the political process. The center, inaugurated in July 2003, provides a clean and comfortable environment for volunteer teachers and their students.

Currently about 1,200 women are enrolled in classes at the center, which will eventually be able to accommodate up to 2,500 women. More than 1,500 students have already received basic literacy training. The center plans to begin supplementing these skills with small business management training. This is important given that most of the students are informal sector vendors or operate micro-businesses. The Angolan Ministry of Education, which has promised to provide additional teachers as well as books and materials, has cited the Center as an excellent example of the type of civil society involvement and participation that must be used to meet this pressing need.

Photo & Caption

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