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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Working Together to Expand Energy Access



An EDEL agent explains how to a customer how to read the new electric meter that was recently installed.

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In late 2005, the USAID Mission in Angola and Banco de Fomento Angola (BFA) began to discuss how they could work together to improve the everyday lives of the Angolan people. In 2006, BFA and USAID agreed to jointly fund a project to increase electricity access in select neighborhoods in Luanda. The project is designed to expand economic opportunities for the neighborhoods and improve government services provided to the communities.

The Angola Electricity Support Program (AESP) is working with communities in Kilamba Kiaxi and Viana on the edges of Luanda, the capital city of Angola. BFA is a key partner in this effort, providing funds for community work and municipal capacity building. BFA is a Portuguese-owned commercial bank, based in Luanda. BFA is providing \$400,000 each year over a period of three years for the electricity project. According to BFA, the bank benefits from the USAID partnership by increasing its visibility in these growing neighborhoods and by cultivating neighborhood ties. BFA is providing the funds directly to USAID for the program because USAID staff has the experience and know-how to manage the activities.

Of the funds contributed by BFA, AESP has earmarked funds for the electrification of Subzona 18 in Kilamba Kiaxi and a pilot area in Viana, which will provide seed money for a community electrification fund. BFA funds have also been used for refurbishment of the technical department and computers for Kilamba Kiaxi and Viana municipalities. BFA has been very visible in the neighborhoods and with the municipal governments as a sponsor of the electrification activities.

AESP introduced Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to develop accurate, up-to-date maps of the area. The most recent cadastral maps in Angola date back to 1989. Up-to-date maps are essential for planning and managing municipal infrastructure. AESP is working with Angola's national electricity distribution company and the two municipal governments to fill the information gaps and plan for urban infrastructure. The financial support provided by BFA was used to conduct detailed household and SME surveys that complement and inform BFA market expansion plans.

The partnership with BFA has allowed AESP to expand its activities with the municipalities and the local communities beyond what USAID funding would allow. In return, BFA is gaining visibility and making deeper connections in these two communities as well as learning more about its customer base. AESP is being implemented by the Academy for Educational Development.