



### **Our mission**

RISE builds primary schools in rural Angola to educate children, empower communities and contribute to the rebuilding of the country. Every child has the right to education, and RISE works to give children the chance to go to school in areas where accessibility is limited or non-existent. We target vulnerable and marginalized children who have been impacted by years of war and its aftermath, those living in poverty that face multiple barriers to education. Since 2003, RISE has built 194 schools, providing 1013 classrooms, giving over 140,000 children access to education each year.

### **Brief history**

A Portuguese colony for nearly 500 years, Angola endured a war for independence followed by a brutal 27-year civil war, which ended in 2002. The conflict left its cities, buildings, and infrastructure decimated; its people displaced and suffering, most without access to clean water, healthcare, and education.

RISE International, originally the African Refugee Committee (ARC), was founded in 2001 in response to the overwhelming needs among Angolan refugees in Namibia and Zambia. Through ARC's efforts, refugees received shipments of blankets, food, clothing, and supplies, as well as small business loans and college scholarships. With the arrival of peace in Angola, ARC changed its name to RISE International in 2003 and began to operate within Angola, focused on giving children access to education. Some children attend in makeshift classrooms; some meet under trees. Without a building, children learn in the hot sun, and if there is rain, cold or wind, there is no class. Many walk long distances to attend. More than 2 million children do not have access to primary education.

The government concentrated their efforts in urban areas. RISE responded to an emergency need, building simple, mud-block schools in rural villages, bringing the opportunity for education to thousands of children who would not otherwise have the chance for years to come. At the request of those in Angola, the school design was changed in 2007 to a larger, permanent structure. The building is foundational, providing safety and access, a key variable affecting student morale and learning.

### **Our work**

We build critical infrastructure, a fundamental starting point, in order to give children access to education. Schools get built through the generosity of many in the US, local Administrations, parents and communities in Angola, and solid partnerships. RISE delegates decision-making and authority to RISE Angola, our implementing partner. The approach is one of mutuality, and we rely on their wisdom and insight. School sites are identified in collaboration with the local government and Ministry of Education – they provide desks, chalkboards, textbooks, set the curriculum, and hire and pay the teachers. The local community participates, establishing a sense of ownership, commitment to the process and to the education of their children.

RISE measures results, quantifying our work and impact. We have implemented a substantial Monitoring and Evaluation component to collect, track, analyze, and assess both student and school data; we continue to build and expand our database. RISE has a solid reputation, established network, relationships, track record, and experience in a difficult place. Additional benefits include the provision of wells and clean water, the establishment of libraries in 5 RISE-built schools, and jobs, for our leadership and building teams, teachers and principals, which serve as a stimulus to the local economy. We have successfully implemented our Schools for Angola program since 2003. The schools are turned over to the community and Ministry of Education upon completion and belong to them – they are responsible for ongoing oversight and maintenance and are empowered to carry the process forward.

### **Cost**

The school cost varies depending on the number of classrooms, generally 6 to 8, based on the number of out-of-school children and the needs of the community. The budget is established per site, with a current cost of \$400 - \$500 per student to get the school built. Children will be in those classrooms for the next 25 or 30 years – an amazing return on investment.