

Católica Way Project:

Microcredit creates 22 companies in Mozambique

FCEE-Católica students are supporting the management and financing of 22 businesses on Ilha de Moçambique through the Católica Way Project. The social responsibility initiative is designed to fight poverty, stimulating the creation of small businesses through microcredit.

Launched in July, the Católica Way project attracted 461 applicants from the Ilha de Moçambique population, from which 22 projects from five different business sectors were chosen by the students. The selection featured six entrepreneurial projects linked to restaurants, services and tourism, six in fishing, four in carpentry and metalwork, three in poultry farming and three in distribution.

According to António dos Santos Nunes, one of the project organizers and an FCEE-Católica student, “It was quite tough evaluating and choosing the projects, not only because we received a lot of interesting applications, but also because we faced certain communication and bureaucratic challenges.”

Each entrepreneur will receive around EUR 400 to implement the business. Through this financial support, the Católica Way Project aims to create sustainable companies, which will create revenue streams for local families and will develop the island economically.

From this month, the chosen entrepreneurs will also receive management and entrepreneurialism training from the Católica Way Project volunteer team. The first explanatory session will tackle management control techniques, business accounting and personal accounting.

The Católica Way Project team sees microcredit as the ideal way for poorer people to manage their own professional activity and to fight poverty. Rita Ribeiro da Silva, another project organizer, explains that, “As this project is already successful, we are analyzing the possibility of running training events on managing companies for the community in general. We want the community to gain the knowledge that can bring them benefits from microcredit.”

Católica’s initiative is partnered by the Millennium BIM Bank, which offers the lowest microcredit interest rate in Mozambique and neighboring countries (base rate + 3%), and TESE – the development non-governmental organization, as part of the University Volunteering Programs, which runs the implementation.