



Corporate
Responsibility
and Sustainability
Report

2021.

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João Vieira de Almeida
Senior Partner



Corporate
Responsibility
and Sustainability
Report

VdA VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA



FUNDAÇÃO
VASCO VIEIRA
DE ALMEIDA

I.	Opening message	5
2.	Community	13
3.	Planet	35
4.	Partnerships	51
5.	With our eyes set on the future	51

1.

Opening Message



Social Responsibility and Sustainability are an integral part of VdA's strategy and have always been a cornerstone of reference in our market positioning.

The year 2021 was, however, particularly striking in this respect. As part of our strategic exercise for the next 5 years, and with the involvement of a large number of our Team Members, we have set our Purpose, defined ambitious targets for Sustainability, created an internal structure that ensures the application of the ESG framework (Environmental, Social & Governance) at VdA, provided ESG training to all VdA Leadership, remained committed to guiding our actions by the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact, and participated in the 1st Edition of the SDG Ambition and Target Gender Equality initiatives, promoted by the Global Compact Network Portugal.

It was also the year in which we announced the release of an integrated ESG service offer to clients and, through our corporate Academy, we launched a wide range of services and training

on sustainability/ESG matters, available to any organisation wishing to increase its level of literacy in these topics.

And, of course, we kept the fulfilment of the United Nations 2030 Agenda as our goal, working to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to the European Green Deal carbon neutrality objectives, promoting projects which are in harmony with these global goals.

The SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Implementation of the SDGs) is one of the projects elected as the focus of our work for quite a long time, and we have once again seen the transformative power of networking, proudly noting that the impact of the initiatives and projects in which we are involved in 2021 are essentially the result of collaborative work between the private sector, the public sector and the social sector.

João Vieira de Almeida
Senior Partner



Facts & Figures 2021

8461

Hours *pro bono* Legal Support

509

Hours Corporate Volunteering

458

Hours 3rd Sector Capacity Building

CRS Awards 2021

The 2021 Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Awards went to Carina Gani and José Melo Ribeiro. These VdA team members played a key role in the SOS Mozambique / SOS Timor-Leste campaigns by making a committed contribution to the success of these campaigns. Congratulations!



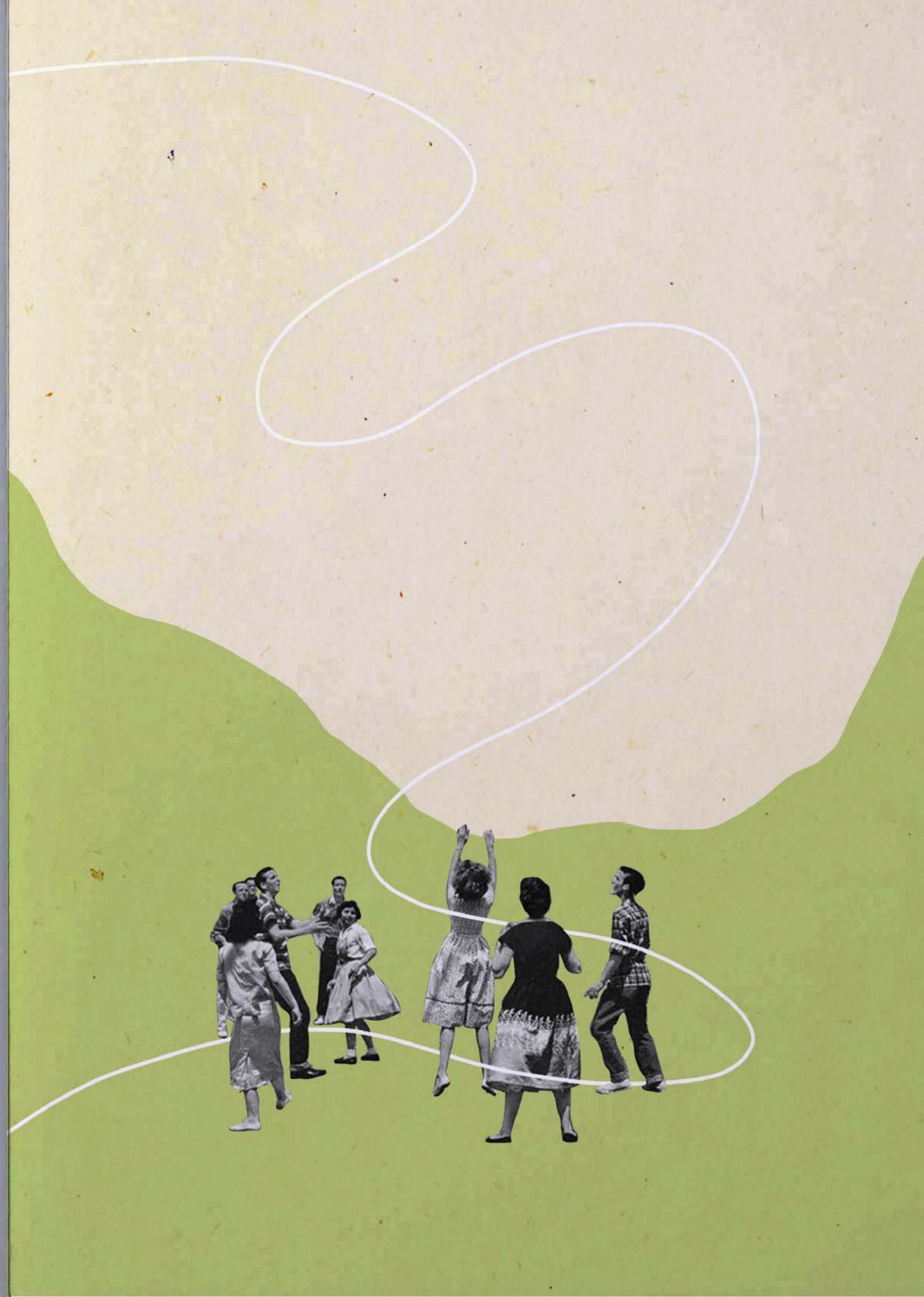


Community

Towards equality: training and employment for people with disabilities

VilacomVida / Café Joyeux

VilacomVida's mission is to reveal the talent of people with intellectual disabilities, through an innovative and inclusive model of training and employability. This was one of the social innovation projects with which we were heavily involved throughout 2021, contributing in various ways (including through training and acquiring products and services) to the development of its relevant mission. Moreover, VilacomVida benefited from the pro bono support of several VdA lawyers, especially the real estate team, whose support in the negotiation of property lease agreements contributed to the successful opening of the first (of many!) Café Joyeux in Portugal.



BIPP - Semear

BIPP — Semear Association aims to train and integrate young people and adults with intellectual and developmental difficulties into society through certified training and experience in organic agricultural production and processing activities.

In 2021, Fundação VVA continued to contribute by investing in an organic vegetable garden with circa 400 m², tended by young people and adults supported by the Association. In addition, in a corporate volunteering initiative, these young people were joined for a day by 28 VdA Team Members who took part in several agricultural activities at the VdA Horta [vegetable garden].

In 2021, BIPP — Semear relied on the pro bono 360° support from VdA's lawyers to ensure its regular operation, with emphasis on the support by the labour practice team in managing the relationship between the Association and its staff and supporting the negotiation of new partnerships.



“ The initiative “Semear na Terra” [“Sow in the Land”] reminded me how much more we receive when we try to give a little of ourselves. I wanted to take part in an inclusive initiative, even if this would be a little more difficult for me than for other colleagues. Yet after we planted and weeding was done, it was my own inclusion that I harvested. It was a fantastic opportunity to prove myself that I am capable of a little bit more than I expected, and as a reward I have been able to bring that confidence into my life, where I feel less and less reliant on the cane despite my condition. I appreciate the constant care and concern of the team from the Fundação, and the safety they provided when I got off balance. But more so, I am grateful for the opportunity to effectively take part in the initiative. In a different context and activity this experience was an extension of what I have been feeling since joining VdA. ”



David Sotto-Mayor Machado
Enterprise Solutions | VdA

Fewer walls, more dignity: Integration and empowerment of migrants



Pão a Pão

Pão a Pão (PaP) develops sustainable responses that contribute to the inclusion of refugees and immigrants in local communities, mainly through cooking and catering. In addition to training on issues relevant to its mission, PaP relied on the support, dedication and pro bono commitment of several VdA lawyers, with emphasis on the support of the labour law team in the launch of the MEZZE Escola [MEZZE School] project, the public law team in the management of the relationship with the responsible bodies and tax law team in the optimisation of their legal and tax framework.



Christmas Campaign

The migration crisis at a global level, to which we have not been indifferent, is one of the major challenges of today. As part of the annual Christmas Campaign, we promoted a fundraising campaign to support Associação EntreMundos, an association whose mission is to support, welcome and integrate refugee, migrant and political and humanitarian asylum-seeker families. Currently the association supports a total of 13 adults and 16 children. The kindness of many VdA employees made it possible to raise 7,500 Euros, which had a direct impact on the lives of these families.



Education and vocational training for all



Paper Wings

Paper Wings is a pioneering project in Portugal, with the motto "Learn, share and build", its aim is to unite people, startups and large companies in financing scholarships for young university students in need. Under its pro bono programme, VdA advised the project through a multidisciplinary team, formed by lawyers from the Corporate & Governance and Social Economy & Human Rights practice areas from the Oporto and Lisbon offices, in the negotiation of strategic partnerships with various stakeholders (namely students, startups and universities) and in the elaboration of the competition rules for the selection of higher education student candidates.



Stand 4 Good

The pandemic brought several social and economic challenges for many families. In this context, many university students faced the risk of not being able to continue with their studies. Stand4Good (S4G) emerged to address this reality, seeking to respond to those who, despite living in a situation of proven economic need, are not covered by social services grants. 2021 marks the start of the collaboration between S4G and VdA, through mentoring sessions between VdA staff and law students over the course of an academic year. Inês Sotto Mayor was a member of the mentoring team under the programme Mentor4Good and accompanied a Criminology first year undergraduate from the Law Faculty of the University of Porto.



“ The day I met Catarina, a criminology student, passionate about criminal investigation and with the dream of joining the Criminal Police, Duarte, a former trainee at VdA, called me to give me the news that he had been admitted, on that very same day, to the Criminal Police, thus fulfilling the dream, which he had once shared with me. Coincidences or omens (whatever it may be), for me it was the sign that, even if I cannot lead Catarina to the ‘Criminal Police’, I can help building a bridge that, who knows one day, will take her there or to a place yet to be discovered. As Catarina's Mentor, I will try to help her find her own skills, develop them and integrate them into what fulfills her. I am grateful for this opportunity to achieve personal fulfilment. Because we, VdA, are much more than just lawyers. ”



Inês Sotto Mayor
Managing Associate | VdA

VdA also supported this initiative through its Pro Bono Programme, in which lawyers from various practice areas ensured the institutional set up of the S4G initiative by creating a non-profit association, assisting in the celebration of partnerships, and providing clarifications regarding its framework and obtaining public utility status.



Girl Move Academy

In 2021 we maintained our collaboration with Girl MOVE Academy, a Leadership academy in Northern Mozambique (Nampula), its mission is to break the cycle of planned poverty in which Mozambican girls and women live by empowering a new generation of *changemakers*.

In 2021, VdA welcomed a Girl Mover for a "life internship" for the sixth consecutive year: Laila Sitole. Laila has a degree in International Relations and Diplomacy and has a special interest in the areas of international cooperation and education, aiming to contribute to the modernisation of Mozambique. The internship plan we prepared for Laila allowed her to have contact with several VdA Team Members and internal projects related to her areas of interest. At the end of the internship, Laila shared her dreams and life story with VdA in a remarkable Impact Talk, in which she challenged all VdAs to get out of their comfort zone, be determined and fight for what they believe in to change (and improve) the world!





Junior Achievement Portugal

Junior Achievement Portugal (JAP) contributes to the empowerment of children and young people through the implementation of entrepreneurship education programmes. VdA has worked with this organisation since its creation, with which it has collaborated in a close partnership and is also a member of its governing bodies. In 2021, in addition to various Team Members having volunteered in JAP school programmes, we once again took part in the Braço Direito [Right Arm] Programme, aimed at encouraging contact between young people from secondary school and the business world, enabling them to learn about the routines and challenges of the profession they will be working in.



Teach for Portugal

Teach for Portugal seeks to promote the training of children and young people in leadership, management and entrepreneurial skills through the implementation of educational programmes of two-year duration, in a classroom context, coordinated by mentors with high leadership potential. This is an groundbreaking project that continued to benefit from VdA's pro bono legal support in 2021. This project promotes social integration through education, significantly transforming the life paths of children from underprivileged backgrounds.



Fighting poverty



ACA

"Bringing to life innovative projects emerging from chats" is the mission embraced by Associação Conversa Amiga (ACA). At ACA the belief is that it is by talking to people in situations of loneliness and social exclusion that ideas for socially innovative and impactful projects arise, which in turn contribute to a truly non-discriminatory treatment of people, regardless of their origins and socio-economic background. As part of its Pro Bono Programme, VdA advised ACA, namely in the drafting and negotiation of a "social franchising" contract that allowed ACA to take a fresh look at and review its model of intervention and social innovation, replicating it in other countries and scaling up impact. Besides this legal advice, VdA supported ACA in its domestic operations, namely in the review of its staff's employment contracts and in the provision of legal advice to the Association.



Junt@s – Cidadania & direitos humanos

SOS Moçambique / SOS Timor-Leste Campaign

Because we believe we could not possibly remain indifferent to the humanitarian crisis in Mozambique/ Cabo Delgado and the floods in Timor, we launched a campaign, in partnership with GDA Advogados, with the support of VdA's Team Members, through which almost 15,000 Euros were raised for those two charitable causes. This amount allowed the purchase of basic goods to support displaced people in Cabo Delgado and flood victims in Timor, and the initiative had the fundamental support of Carina Gani and Guilherme Daniel (in Mozambique) and of José Melo Ribeiro, Alzira and Teófilo (in Timor-Leste).



Access to education: gender (in)justice

Support to Malala Fund Foundation in a research project on girls' rights in Mozambique



In addition to providing regular legal support to non-profit organisations operating in Portugal under its Pro Bono Programme, VdA also contributes to international research and advocacy projects, particularly those focusing on socially relevant themes such as human rights and women's empowerment.

In this context, VdA, in close coordination with the GDA Advogados team in Mozambique, accepted the challenge made by the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice to develop, in cooperation with law Firms from around the world, legal research for the Malala Fund (founded by Malala Yousafzai — a Pakistani activist and the youngest Nobel Prize winner) on the access of young women and girls to education in Mozambique, including the mapping of fundamental rights and the profiling of government policies in force.

The compilation of the different national researches, obtained through this legal networking, will allow the Malala Fund to identify global weaknesses and enhance solutions for the realisation of the right to education for women and girls around the world, including in Mozambique, a jurisdiction in which VdA operates.

Culture and arts for inclusion

VdA Theatre Group

In 2021, VdA, VdA Academia and Fundação VVA launched, in partnership, the first Theatre Group in a Law Firm in Portugal!

A challenge was launched to VdA Team members to be part of this innovative initiative, aimed at developing new skills and know-how in the area of theatre and the art of public speaking. This first group had 22 members and rehearsals took place at the Gaivotas Cultural Centre under the partnership that has existed for several years between this institution and VdA.

Luís Moreira, who is a professional actor who trained with ACT and is the Artistic Director of the collective Filho do Meio, has taken over the artistic direction of this project, which will lead to a presentation before the entire Firm.



MANICÓMIO
BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Manicómio

Manicómio promotes the psychosocial and professional empowerment and reintegration of people with mental illness through the production and sale of art. It aims to make society aware of issues related to mental illness, fighting prejudice and promoting the social integration of its beneficiaries.

Fundação VVA is a social investor in this project under Partnerships for Impact, given the proven impact on the supported communities and the innovation of social integration through art. Moreover, Fundação VVA supported Manicómio by promoting this project among VdA's staff and partners, with a view to publicising its merits and its profoundly transformative role in society.

As part of the corporate social responsibility project, VdA lawyers have also provided pro bono legal advice to Manicómio, supporting the planning and management of specific initiatives and permanently monitoring the project's legal structure, namely by promoting compliance with applicable legal obligations and regarding corporate governance matters.



Social and community inclusion: leaving no-one behind



55+

55+ is an association that values the knowledge of people over 55, believing that transforming this knowledge into useful experiences and services to the community is the way to fight isolation, promote active ageing and contribute to financial independence in senior years. 55+ is a pro bono client of VdA which, through a multidisciplinary team of lawyers, has supported this organisation since its inception, in the fulfilment of its regulatory obligations (in particular, and due to the electronic platform involved, in relation to data protection), in the relationship with its staff and in its associative day-to-day life.



Vencer Autismo

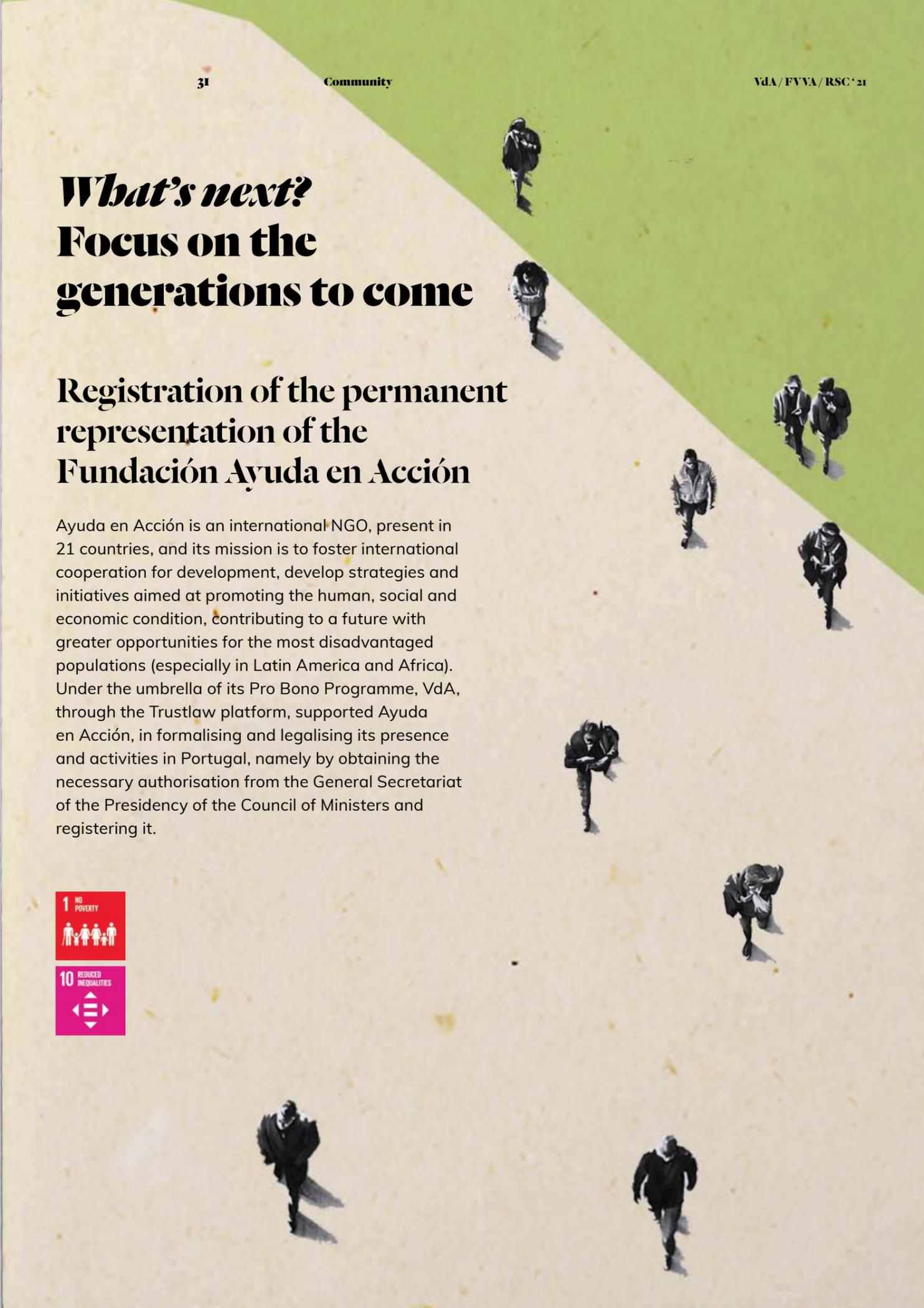
The opportunities to directly support the beneficiaries of non-profit organisations that VdA's Pro Bono Programme works with are very rare, as most of these support needs require specific skills that VdA, as a Firm, has chosen not to develop. Which is why we were delighted to welcome the opportunity to support a mother of two twins on the autism spectrum, from the beneficiary network of Vencer Autismo - a Non-Governmental Organisation of People with Disabilities, with a mission to reduce the negative stigma associated with this condition. The support of Vencer Autismo in collaboration with VdA allowed this mother to advocate before the school an interpretation of the (new) legal regime of Inclusive Education, which ensured an educational solution for her twin sons that was more beneficial than the one proposed by the school, thus contributing to the good development and inclusion of these children.



What's next? Focus on the generations to come

Registration of the permanent representation of the Fundación Ayuda en Acción

Ayuda en Acción is an international NGO, present in 21 countries, and its mission is to foster international cooperation for development, develop strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting the human, social and economic condition, contributing to a future with greater opportunities for the most disadvantaged populations (especially in Latin America and Africa). Under the umbrella of its Pro Bono Programme, VdA, through the Trustlaw platform, supported Ayuda en Acción, in formalising and legalising its presence and activities in Portugal, namely by obtaining the necessary authorisation from the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and registering it.





Planet

Green Project



Sustainability starts at home

The Carbon Footprint Report is published every year as part of VdA's Green Project (the Firm's environmental sustainability project). The Carbon Footprint Report acts as the main annual assessment tool of VdA's Green Project and also aims to report these results to the Legal Sustainability Alliance (LSA), which VdA is a member of. The values presented in the report were calculated based on the methodology of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, applied to the legal sector, and using conversion factors adapted to the Portuguese reality. VdA's Carbon Footprint Report can be found on the VdA's website (www.vda.pt).

Did you know that...

In 2021, we reinforced our commitment to spreading the "Sabia que..." newsletter, which aims to raise Team Members' awareness of environmental sustainability topics. Here are some examples of news that have been released: the new package of measures adopted by the European Commission to improve the flow of funds for sustainable activities throughout the European Union; small steps to make homes more sustainable; eco-friendly tourist accommodation in Portugal; "greener" cities of the future.





Mafra National Park

Tapada Nacional de Mafra is managed primarily with the aim of researching and preserving the fauna and flora, environmental education, hunting and the provision of rural tourism services. We support the Tapada in the management of an area of 31 hectares, with an estimated capacity to capture 60t of CO2 (called "Zona de Carbono Zero VdA") and organise, together with VdA Team Members, forestry and forest fire defence operations, as well as planting and cleaning the forest.



Green Cork

An initiative of Quercus — National Association for Nature Conservation, the Green Cork Project — Cork Stoppers Recycling is aimed at connecting recycling to nature conservation and promoting the circular economy. As was the case in previous years, in 2021 we collected a large quantity of cork stoppers, mainly through VdA Team Members, and the proceeds will be used in reforestation with original species of Portuguese flora through the project Floresta Comum [Common Forest].



The Sea in Sight



There is no "planet B": protecting ecosystems

Parley Foundation - Support in the registration of the permanent representation in Portugal

The Parley Foundation is an international organisation that aims to raise awareness of the beauty and fragility of the oceans and the biodiversity within them. It was in 2021 that the Parley Foundation obtained the necessary authorisation from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to establish itself in Portugal and, through the opening of a permanent representation of a foreign foundation, completed the formalisation of its presence in Portugal, being now able to develop its activity in Portuguese territory, with its own legal framework. It took a long and bureaucratic process to achieve this, which was made possible by VdA's legal support.





Partnerships



Digital with Purpose Movement

In 2021 VdA joined a group of more than 40 entities that reinforced their commitment to the fulfilment of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, by subscribing to the Digital with Purpose Movement, promoted by the Global Enabling Sustainability Initiative (GeSI).

Joining this network translates the Firm's ambition to leverage on the potential of digital technology to accelerate the agenda for sustainability. At the kick-off event VdA contributed to the discussion on the theme "Digital Democracy for the public good: Data security and privacy, who controls, who decides?", together with ETNO - European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association and Arabesque.

In this context and in line with its membership of this movement, VdA also publicly subscribed, at the Portugal Smart Cities Summit, to the "Digital with Purpose — Commitment CEOs", an initiative that aims to join efforts aligned with other private sector leaders, to contribute through digital tools to the main social and environmental challenges of today.





SDG Ambition

VdA participated in the 1st Edition of SDG Ambition, an accelerator programme promoted by the United Nations Global Compact for the integration of SDGs in the core business of companies. By joining this programme, VdA has strengthened its commitment to defining ambitious goals and prioritising actions with a direct impact on compliance with the 2030 Agenda, consolidating its global sustainability strategy. Over the course of 6 months, and through specific benchmarks, VdA developed the main objectives, identifying priority actions for the integration of 4 selected Sustainable Development Goals into the Firm's strategy and business:

SDG 5

Gender Equality at all levels of management



SDG 8

100% of Employees in the organisation earn a reasonable wage



SDG 13

Science-based emission reduction targets in line with strategy 1.5



SDG 16

Zero incidences of bribery



Training Programme ENTRAJUDA

ENTRAJUDA's mission is to strengthen the non-profit sector, namely social solidarity private institutions (IPSS – Instituições Particulares de Solidariedade Social), enabling them to access the necessary means and resources to play a (more) decisive role in social inclusion and the fight against poverty.

As a result of a long-standing partnership and as in previous years, VdA lawyers organised a series of training sessions in which various social economy organisations associated with ENTRAJUDA took part. The topics covered were: "Legal Framework of Social Organisations", "Personal Data Protection: Legal Obligations and Risks", "Taxation and Patronage" and "Labour Legislation". e Mecenato", "Legislação Laboral".



Leadership for Impact Knowledge Center / Social Leadership for Managers (SLM)

In 2021 VdA continued its collaboration with Leadership for Impact (LFI) Knowledge Center of Nova SBE, focused on boosting and strengthening the ecosystem of innovation and social entrepreneurship.

In this context, VdA maintained its collaboration under the long term training programme Social Leapfrog, and was responsible for the legal module of the 3rd edition of the executive course "Social Leadership for Managers", which aims to train professionals from different areas who wish to join social organisations professionally or as volunteers.

VdA lawyers who took part in **ENTRAJUDA** actions in 2021.



FUNDAÇÕES CENTRO PORTUGUÊS DE FUNDAÇÕES

Centro Português de Fundações (CPF) – Advocacy & Capacity Building

2021 was marked by a legislative reform of the legal regime of foundations and legal persons with public utility status, which led to the third amendment of the Framework Law on Foundations and the approval of a new Framework Law on Public Utility Status. In the scope of the partnership established with CPF, VdA provided support in the dialogue with the Government and Parliament in this context, having also provided clarification sessions to CPF's associates and to all entities affected by the new legislation on the main changes to this legal framework.



European Investment Bank Institute (IBEI)

IBEI dedicates part of its activity to the capacity building of social innovation and entrepreneurship projects, and the Social Economy & Human Rights practice area promoted three webinars in 2021, on corporate sustainability:

“Communicate your impact – the role of certificates”, on sustainability certifications in companies and the importance of tangible and reliable communication to *stakeholders*;

“Business and Human Rights – From Theory to Practice”, where we tried to deconstruct some myths that have been created around the responsibility of companies in terms of human rights and their due diligence process;

“The gender dimensions of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”, on the disproportionate impact of business activities on the human rights of women and girls, the importance of developing policies and the benefits on the gender dividend in business.

In addition to these initiatives, VdA also co-hosted the 3rd edition of the annual meeting of SIT ALUMNI, promoted by IBEI, in Lisbon, which brought together the alumni of the Social Innovation Tournament, organising a Masterclass on "Business and Human Rights: putting the 'S' in ESG".



GRACE — Training & Awareness

In the context of our collaboration with GRACE — Responsible Companies, an organisation which VdA has chaired since 2018, with the participation of lawyers from the Social Economy & Human Rights practice area we streamlined six training sessions on business and human rights for GRACE members, the aim was to alert companies both to the international regulatory framework in force and to the new rules to be implemented by the European Union in the context of the European Green Deal.

ESG (Legal) Services & Training: VdA's offer for the sustainability journey of its clients and business partners

Aware that the three elements characterising the ESG framework are determining factors to assess the degree of sustainability of an organisation, we want to contribute to the construction of a more responsible and sustainable business ecosystem, providing our stakeholders with tools that prepare them for the environmental, social and governance challenges they will increasingly have to face. We have therefore announced in 2021 the roll-out of an integrated ESG service offer, designed to keep pace with the rapid change affecting these topics and support our clients on their sustainability journey. It is our belief the incorporation of ESG metrics into the strategy, business and daily operation of companies is a determining factor for their long-term success and we feel it is our responsibility to stand alongside our clients in addressing the multiple challenges of a sustainable future.

Being aware that many of the issues related to sustainability in general and the ESG framework in particular are new and complex, we consider the development of new skills by various stakeholders — starting with our own Team Members — to be critical. We also consider important to raise the level of literacy of companies' executives on these ever more unavoidable matters, enabling them to accompany the sustainability journey of their organisations. Therefore, in 2021, not only did we invest heavily, through the VdA Corporate Academy, in the training of our Team Members in leadership positions, we also launched an ESG training offer available to all stakeholders, which seeks to cover all topics relating to each of the three factors of this new referential framework.



**With our eyes
set on the future**

As we publish this report, we already know the year 2022 will be irreversibly marked by a tragic war, which is not only against Ukraine, but against the basic values of humanity for which at VdA we feel it is incumbent on all of us to fight.

This war comes after two years of pandemic, which required each of us, as a society, to respond to challenges for which we did not believe to be prepared. Yet, this was an experience that not only brought upon us a great deal of change but also offered us some lessons.

One of them was certainly the importance of leading with empathy and developing a new paradigm in the relationship between companies and their people. As an example, we now see issues such as the mental health of staff, which had been somehow overlooked in the past, turned into a concern of top management in companies. And it was also evidenced that it is in times of crisis that the character and core values of leadership are truly put to the test and that the companies that emerge stronger from crises are those that are able to show that they have always known the difference between "actually being" and (merely) "appear to be".

Moreover, today it is even clearer that, in the future, responsible companies will have to continue to keep an eye on the planet's health, feel urged to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals and to the fulfilment of the Paris Agreement and European Green Deal objectives, as well as to take a new look at the protection of human rights. The latter is a subject that, while not new, will necessarily warrant more attention from companies, mainly due to the European legislative requirements that are imminent. The tragic war we are living through is compelling us to realise how fragile are the rights we took for granted, such as the right to life itself.

At VdA, there is a growing conviction that the future belongs to Responsible (and Purpose Driven) Businesses. And that never has that future depended as much as it does now on our ability to organise collectively, cooperate and network, build trust on one another, and create shared value for all our *stakeholders*.



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