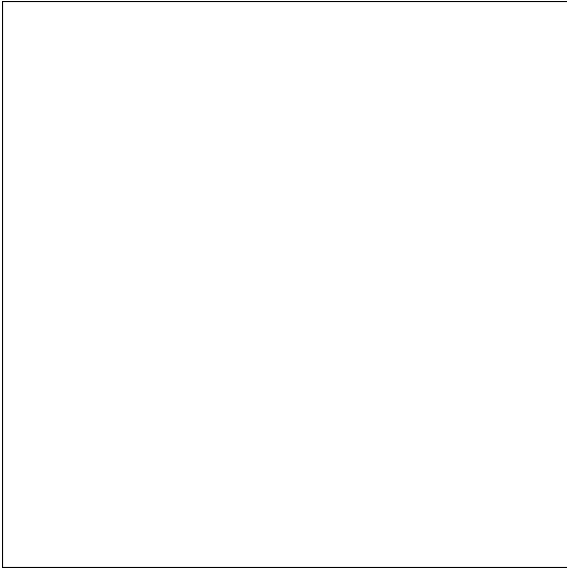


# Standing out for the right reason



 LIDA Portugal

 Sunniva Høiby-Øiset

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Edson was born in Angola, just after the country became independent. He was a very tall boy. Because of his height he stood out. The people who were giving weapons to children to fight as soldiers in the civil war wanted boys like him.



His mother was afraid they would take him, so she decided to send him to live in Portugal with an aunt. She thought he would be safe there.



It was very difficult to begin with, as Edson missed the warm weather, the traditional food and, most of all, his mother's hugs and kisses.



He did not speak Portuguese well and found it very hard to follow his classes and the conversations of his classmates. He wondered if it was a good idea to come to Portugal after all.



One day a teacher noticed how good he was at basketball. He joined a basketball team and was very successful. He became popular at school and made friends. He also became more confident.





Now that he is an adult, Edson trains refugee children and others at risk of being excluded from society. Once, his height put him in danger of becoming a child soldier. Now, his height gives him strength to help others feel safe.



# LIDA Stories

[lidastories.net](http://lidastories.net)

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