



COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN

Country: Angola

Planning Year: 2004

2004 COUNTRY OPERATION PLAN

ANGOLA

PART 1: Executive Committee Summary

a) Context and Beneficiary Population

Angola has been peaceful since the signature of the 'Cessation of hostilities' agreement between the Government and UNITA on April 4th 2002. Its citizens have started to move freely from one part of the country to the other. According to government sources, by the end of September 2003, an estimated 3.3 million IDPs and 180,000 Angolan refugees have returned back to their places of origin. Road transport to the provinces is gradually improving. The Government has started repairing roads and bridges in phases, priority being given to the roads/bridges connecting the provincial capitals to Luanda. The Government is engaged in the rehabilitation of schools and health facilities as well as other public services infrastructures, but lacks the means to do it alone. The rehabilitation work in a country like Angola that has been through three decades of civil war will require much time, resources and manpower.

The negotiation between the Government and UNITA to implement the remaining tasks of the 'Lusaka Protocol' has been concluded with the support and supervision of the United Nations Mission in Angola (UNMA). The Government of Angola, UNITA and other stakeholders are of the opinion that '**peace in Angola is irreversible.**' UNITA has undergone a full conversion into a political party. According to government sources, over 100,000 UNITA ex-combatants have been demobilised and along some 350,000 family members have returned home.

Security situation

The Security conditions have significantly improved in Angola during the last year and a half. However, presence of landmines has hindered the use of road to access some regions, including the main provinces of return. UNHCR has requested the Government to clear the roads especially within the Moxico province and particularly the roads that connect the reintegration areas, namely, Cazombo, Luau and Lumbala N'Guimbo. Efforts are being made to clear the roads from the entry points to the municipal towns, where the reception centres for returnees are located.

Protection Issues related to IDPs and returnees

UNHCR, in collaboration with other UN agencies, has significantly contributed to the development of a protection strategy for the IDPs. On September 27, 2002, the GoA has adopted a set of regulations to guide the reintegration process of IDPs, returnees and ex-combatants - the Standard Procedures Operational for the Enforcement of the "Norms on the Resettlement of Displaced Populations". These norms and procedures clearly define the minimum criteria to declare an area suitable for return and reintegration. Workshops on issues related to protection, human rights and reception of returnees have been organized in Moxico, Uige and Zaire provinces. Such workshops will be organized in a wider scale in 2004 to ensure understanding of

repatriation related protection issues by all stakeholders. The basic objectives of the protection intervention can be summarized as follows:

- a. Protection of fundamental rights of the returning population through the promotion of legal norms and regulations;
- b. Institutional development and capacity building of the state and the civil society, including returnees and IDP's, and the promotion and training of committees for the protection of human rights;
- c. Dissemination activities aimed at creating awareness among the affected populations of their rights and the mechanisms to defend them.

In 2004, UNHCR will continue to provide inputs for the implementation of the strategy at the national level, along with other agencies. As well, UNHCR will continue to carry out mass information campaigns focusing on dissemination of country of origin information to ensure that voluntary return is based on well-informed individual decisions. These campaigns provide returnees with detailed information on the presence of landmines, and availability of education and health services in their communities of return. Mass information campaigns will also aim at preventing sexual and gender based violence through the wide dissemination of returnee rights and repatriation entitlements.

UNHCR will participate actively at the regular meetings of the Provincial Commissions, which are the Government bodies responsible for assessing which communes meet the minimum criteria for resettlement, in accordance with the pre-established "Norms on the Resettlement of Displaced Populations." Only communes meeting these criteria will be declared open for return.

Protection Issues related to the refugee caseload.

Angola has a refugee and asylum seeker population of nearly 13,200, the majority of whom are from the DRC and have a rural background. Most of them have been in the country for more than 20 years after fleeing the war in their countries of origin. They had reached some degree of local integration but they were subsequently displaced, some of them more than once, as a result of the ongoing internal conflict. The refugees in Viana started arriving in Luanda in 1997 and it was since then that UNHCR started providing assistance based on the needs assessment made. The government of Angola and UNHCR are in agreement on the basic principles of settling these refugees in an area where they can re-establish their self-sufficiency in food production.

In order to enable the local integration of the refugees, the GoA has already identified two sites with farmland, one in Kiautapwe, near Luena (Moxico Province), where it is anticipated that some 2,500 refugees will be self-sufficient by the end of 2004. Water supply, health services and educational facilities have been already established in Kiautepwe camp. The second site, identified in November 2002, is located in Bengo province. It is currently being developed for the settlement of some 600 refugees. Settling the rest of the rural refugees in a site with farming land will continue in 2004.

In the meantime, the introduction of micro credit schemes has shown positive results. Over 200 refugee women are engaged in various types of income generating activities. The repayment of loans has been successful with few exceptions. With their profits, some refugee women have improved their living conditions.

The registration and/or verification of the refugee population have been successfully conducted in late 2001 and early 2002. Through capacity building of relevant Government offices, processing of applications for status determination has shown improvement. With the assistance of a resettlement specialist, 24 cases have been submitted for resettlement in 2002. During the second half of 2003 and throughout 2004 profiling and preparation of a group submission for resettlement will be pursued.

Finally, a new registration/verification exercise is planned in 2003 to update the list of refugees willing to repatriate, which is expected to increase with the promising peace process in DRC.

UNHCR's Role

- 1) UNHCR will continue to provide protection assistance to spontaneous/assisted returnees in the provinces of Zaire, Uige, Moxico and Kuando Kubango. UNHCR's presence may be extended to other areas, namely Lunda Norte and Sul, and Huambo. The protection assistance will include training in post conflict resolution and peaceful co-existence. The rights of the returnees to cross the border with their personal belongings exempted from paying tax, civil registration and the right to settle in areas of their preference will be ensured. UNHCR will provide support to the returnees with assistance packages that could help them to start a new life and re-establish themselves. UNHCR will also endeavour to improve the living conditions in the major areas of return through rehabilitation of schools, health facilities, water points, roads and bridges. In addition, UNHCR will actively participate in the Mine Action network in Angola, along with other partners involved in de-mining and mine awareness activities.
- 2) Areas receiving smaller numbers of refugees, UNHCR will endeavour to establish partnerships with UN sister agencies and other partners for the assistance to returnees in the same terms as IDP's.
- 3) UNHCR will continue to provide protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers focusing on the enhancement of prospects for local integration, settlement of refugees in sites with farmland, and related interventions geared toward self-sufficiency and durable solutions. UNHCR will continue building the capacity of the government to speed-up the RSD procedures and issuance of documentation to female and male refugee and asylum seekers. New initiatives to strengthen monitoring of the refugee protection regime will include training of NGOs.

Overview of each beneficiary group

Beneficiary Population # 1: Spontaneous and Organised Returnees

Since April 2002 through the end of September 2003 some 35,000 refugees returned to Angola under the organised voluntary repatriation operation sponsored by UNHCR in co-ordination with the governments of the region. Another 145,000 refugees

returned spontaneously to Zaire, Uige and Moxico provinces, of which 80,000 received basic reintegration assistance. In October 2002, UNHCR re-established and strengthened its presence in M'Banza Congo/ Zaire, Maquela do Zombo/ Uige, Luena, Luau, Cazombo, Lumbala Nguimbo of Moxico Province to monitor the spontaneous return. A Field Office has been also opened in Menongue, in the Province of Kuando Kubango.

Tripartite Agreements were signed between the Government of Angola, UNHCR and the governments of Botswana, DRC, Namibia, RoC and Zambia. The Tripartite Commissions met in March 2003 in Windhoek, Lusaka and Kinshasa and discussed and agreed on operational plans for the organised repatriation operation concerning entry points, customs procedures and other relevant issues.

UNHCR intends to expand its presence to the Malange and Lunda Norte provinces, where some 35,000 refugees are expected to return under the UNHCR organised operation along with a yet to be determined number of spontaneous returnees from the DRC. The situation in Cabinda remains volatile, therefore not yet conducive for return.

A comprehensive approach to tackle the overall problem of protection in the border crossing sites and help the government and local community to build their capacity will be undertaken. Training of officials of the ministries of Justice, Interior and members of the National Police and Armed Forces will remain a priority for UNHCR.

Beneficiary Population # 2: Refugees

As at 31 December 2002, the refugee population in Angola was 13,178, out of which 11,390 came from the DRC. Another 928 are asylum seekers, mostly from the DRC. The remaining 2.6 % originate in various countries including Algeria (1), Burundi (18), Chad (29), Congo Brazzaville (53), Guinea Bissau (3), Guinea (2), Iraq (1), Liberia (6), Mauritania (2), Rwanda (176), Sierra Leone (15), Somalia (4), Sudan (4), Tanzania (3), Uganda (1) and Zambia (7).

Women represent 52 % of this population, while 63 % are children. The majority of the DRC refugees are settled in two camps at the outskirts of the city and in the provinces, while 562 are living in Luanda as urban refugees. 6,559 are living in Viana, 476 in Kifangondo (out of 545 prior to their displacement) and 2,496 in Moxico province. The Congolese refugees who were living in Boa Esperanca, in Bengo province were displaced after the Caxito attack in May 2001 and were relocated to Kifandongo, Luanda Province. The rest of the refugees are scattered in five provinces namely, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, and Malange.

Asylum seekers have been waiting for their refugee status determination by COREDA for a prolonged period due to the slow and lengthy process. Lack of standards to regulate the appeals process has also delayed the RSD process.

Policy issues

Spontaneous and Organised Returnees

The organised repatriation was launched in June 2003. Surveys on the Angolan refugees' intentions and preferred places of reintegration were carried out in the countries of asylum. This enabled UNHCR and the government of Angola to determine the major return locations and to establish rehabilitation priorities. At the same time, refugees who plan to return to areas where the reception capacity is yet to be developed or where access is difficult have been alerted and encouraged to wait. UNHCR has been carrying out its protection monitoring tasks, ensuring early intervention when returnees are found to face specific problems. Otherwise, UNHCR staff in the provinces adopts a community based approach to address general reintegration problems, equally affecting IDP's and returnees, in co-operation with the local authorities, communities, other UN agencies and NGOs.

The following are the remaining concerns a) refugees wishing to return to 'no-go' areas and who could become stranded in reception areas; b) returnees, especially spontaneous ones, returned to areas where UNHCR has no access due to security concerns;. c) Rehabilitation of roads/bridges as well as the de-mining of arable land remains a high priority in the main areas of return.

Refugee Caseload

The issue of settling the refugees has been under continuous discussion with the Government whose wish is to see refugees locally integrated and reach self-sufficiency through local settlement. The Government has identified a settlement site in Bengo province for the refugees staying in Kifangondo. The preparation of the site is underway with minimum conditions to be put into place before the transfer of the 545 refugees takes place during 2003. It is anticipated that these refugees will reach food self-sufficiency in 2004. Other income generating projects, as well as access to permanent residence and/or naturalisation will be promoted in 2004. At the same time, the discussions with the Government to find a suitable site to settle the 6,559 refugees from the other camp (Viana) will continue in consultation with MINARS.

Resettlement will continue to be envisaged for those refugees who cannot integrate into the settlement sites and do not see repatriation as a durable solution. UNCHR will request for a resettlement consultant to be deployed for the identification and preparation of a group submission in the second half of 2003 and throughout 2004. UNHCR may have to apply a cessation clause to Rwandans refugees (176 in Angola, with a large majority living in the province of Luanda Norte) in 2004.

UNHCR will continue to follow-up on the High Commissioner's five commitments to refugee women, in particular to ensure that sanitary material is available for women and that SGBV awareness-raising sessions are organised for UNHCR staff, implementing partners and local authorities as well as refugee communities.

Linkages to other countries within a defined “situation”

In addition to the tri-partite agreements mentioned above, sharing of information between countries of asylum and country of origin has been going on through various means, including cross border meetings. The implementation of the plan of action prepared jointly between the respective countries of asylum, country of origin and UNHCR stipulates the role and responsibility of the stakeholders. This arrangement has established the basis for the co-ordinated situational approach and linkage between UNHCR offices under the Regional Repatriation co-ordination office in Pretoria, South Africa. Co-operation with the UNHCR offices in DRC, Zambia and Namibia will continue for an effective response.

Capacity and presence of IPs

UNHCR is working with several national and international NGOs. These have been selected as implementing partners based on their presence in the locations where the projects are implemented, taking into consideration their expertise and experience in the sectoral activities as well as their financial/material contribution to the projects. During 2003, UNHCR is working with 16 NGOs and one Government commission.

As in 2003, UNHCR intends to organise in 2004 protection workshops targeting government authorities in the bordering provinces, covering the repatriation plan and cross border related issues.

Presence and roles of other UN agencies:

Since the launching of the IDP assistance programme in mid 2000, UNHCR has been working within the framework of the UN Country Team approach. UNHCR has also participated in the assessment missions organised by OCHA and the Resident co-ordinator. Consultations were undertaken with relevant UN agencies, ICRC and NGOs to identify areas of complementarily and co-operation to avoid overlapping or duplications of activities.

The UN agencies have shown interest to take part and contribute to the repatriation operation. In this connection, UNDP and OCHA have been playing a major role in building government's capacity in terms of de-mining areas of return and reintegration, as well as roads leading to those areas. UNICEF is an active partner in fields such as child protection, mine awareness, rehabilitation of schools, vaccination and water points rehabilitation/construction. WHO has also drafted HIV/AIDS intervention project in the returnee reintegration provinces, namely, Uige, Zaire, Moxico and Kuando Kubango. FAO has been and will continue to be responsible for the implementation and technical supervision of agricultural activities. WFP has signed a MoU with UNHCR for the provision of food rations to the returnees. As well, WFP is providing air service to the humanitarian agencies. UNHCR operations depend on these flights. UNHCR has also rented its own aeroplane, which is managed by WFP.

(b) Selected Programme Goals and Objectives

Name of Beneficiary population: Angola returnees	
Main Goal(s): (1) To facilitate an organised repatriation in safety and dignity of the Angola refugees living in the neighbouring countries (2) To facilitate the sustainable reintegration of Angolan returnees through the rehabilitation of the basic social services infrastructures	
Principal Objective	Related Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide protection to Angolan returnees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returnees under the organised repatriation will arrive with VRFs and will be registered upon arrival in the reception centres. GoA will start issuance of proper Angolan ID cards. • Due attention and support will be provided to vulnerable groups. • Capacity building of the Government counterpart will be provided.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide transportation and logistics assistance to the returnees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returnees will be transported to their villages of final destination. • Medical team escort will be provided to all repatriation convoys.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue operating reception centres inside Angola. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation and maintenance of reception centres to provide health services, registration facilities, and shelter for a maximum of 7 days, until the returnees move to their places of origin or reintegration areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide reintegration support for Angolan returnees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction tool kits including; half kilo of nails, hammer, saw for wood and one pickaxe will be delivered to the returnee families • Seeds and agricultural tools will be distributed to the returnee families to assist them reach self-sufficiency in food production. • Non food items will be distributed to the returnee families.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A) Provide health services to the returnees • B) Rehabilitate health and school facilities, as well as water points, roads and bridges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A) Health services, supply of drugs and capacity building of the government health staff will continue to be provided. • B) Additional health and education facilities will be rehabilitated in 2004. • Water points will be rehabilitated as per needs-assessment to ensure the supply

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> of potable water to the returnees. Additional rehabilitation of roads and bridges will be considered in consultation with the government.
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Name of Beneficiaries population: Refugees of various origin living in Angola	
Main Goals: to achieve a durable solution through local settlement and self sufficiency, voluntary repatriation, and resettlement, whenever feasible.	
Principal Objectives	Related Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settle refugees in a site with farm land pending their local integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 170 refugee families settled in the Kifangondo site in 2003 may reach a level self-sufficiency in by 2004. Vocational training and income generating activities will be encouraged in the area. Consultations with the GoA for identifying a site for settling the refugees in Viana will continue. The settling the refugees will be carried in late 2003 and early 2004. The DRC refugees settled in Kiautepwe site, in Luena, Moxico province may reach food production self-sufficiency by Dec. 2004. Health services, water supply and primary education will be provided by the project. ID cards and related documentation will be distributed to all the refugees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support voluntary repatriation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNHCR will process with the DRC the return of 200 Congolese refugees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish self-sufficiency and resettlement opportunities for urban-based refugees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various income generating activities will be supported for urban based refugees. Refugees who fulfil relevant criteria will be resettled in third countries.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the RSD and enhance the capacity of COREDA to handle asylum applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional capacity building of SME and COREDA will be carried out as required to shorten the RSD process and to ensure that asylum applications are attended in time.