Food Security Challenges in Post-Conflict Angola[1]

1. Introduction

After four decades of conflict, the cease-fire signed in April 2002 offers Angola the best opportunity in generations to forge a more equitable growth path, and to reformulate a governing apparatus that serves the needs of the population. Given that the balance of power has definitively shifted to the government, the peace is likely to be durable. Unlike other countries in southern Africa however, Angola is not facing an unusual drought year. The Angolan emergency is essentially linked to war and governance. The war destroyed infrastructure throughout the country, forced millions to move, and razed communities through scorched-earth tactics. Human rights were violated, women raped, men abducted. Millions went hungry and died. Entire generations have been pressed-ganged into warfare, killed, or simply disappeared.

Almost 50% of agricultural households in rural Angola are now female headed, with almost no remittance streams. HIV infection, at 5.5%, is comparatively lower than the regional average. With little being done, HIV/AIDS impact is likely to follow patterns now seen in other countries in the region. Urban population growth has been extremely high in Angola in the last 40 years, even by African standards. Urban areas accounted for 15% of the population in 1970, versus an estimated 50% in the 1990s. Luanda alone accounts for over 3 million, or almost 25% of the national population. To a limited extent, clientelist redistribution has benefited a wider layer of the urban population through subsidies for fuel, water, and electricity. During periods of hyperinflation state resources financed imports of food and other commodities at a subsidized exchange rate. But these benefits have been outweighed by a decline in real purchasing power and the decay of social service delivery (Hodges 2001).

Despite these hardships, the people of Angola have shown impressive perseverance and remain hopeful for the future. In the second half of 2002, half of the nearly two million people who had taken refuge in IDP camps returned to their home areas, and seek to revive their livelihoods. But they return to areas that hardly fulfill the basic conditions for a decent life. Most areas have virtually no services, including water, health facilities,

[1] Douglas Steinberg, CARE Angola and Nina Bowen, CARE Southern and West Africa Regional Office.

schools, or civilian administration. Farmers possess few productive resources, including the minimum inputs such as seeds, hand tools and ploughs, or sufficient labor to recuperate land that has lain fallow for years. Due to the pervasive prevalence of land mines, they undertake agriculture literally at the risk of life or limb. The immediate challenges of post war resettlement and rehabilitation center on humanitarian assistance in the short term to ensure adequate access to the most basic assets to reestablish food production, the rehabilitation of roads to facilitate the growth of markets and entry into trade, the construction and staffing of basic social infrastructure, and training of health and education workers.

The oil sector provided 80% of government revenue during the 1990s. Backward and forward linkages to rest of economy are limited, except through the redistributive mechanisms of government revenue and expenditure.[2] However, the government has never had a long term economic and social development strategy which identified and implemented prioritized public expenditure targets, and which could therefore assist in redressing the distortions caused by the structure of oil revenues. In the longer term, reducing high inequality through more equitable and responsive public spending is crucial to avoiding instability in the future. The lack of transparency in public resource management, and the weakness of civil society and mechanisms to link citizens with the government, has made accountability even more difficult to achieve.

Comparatively little social science research has been carried out in the post-independence period, nor was it a priority during the colonial period. More recent scholarly work has focused on the political and military aspects of the war, and the oil and diamond economies (e.g. Aguilar 2001; Cilliers and Dietrich 2000; Hodges 2001; Le Billon 2001). The international community has largely focused on emergency aid, rapid interventions, and identifying gaps in basic needs. Consequently, understanding of social structures and livelihood trends is more cursory than in most countries. As a result of the war and under investment in basic statistical capacity, household data is also very limited and there is no national level poverty data.

With these constraints in mind, this paper first presents a situational analysis of the immediate challenges facing Angola. It then turns to a discussion of trends in the rural

[2] The oil industry is highly capital intensive, with less than 10,000 employees, half of which are employed by the state oil company Sonangol.

areas of the Central Plateau, historically seen as Angola's breadbasket, and follows this with a section on urban livelihoods, where approximately half the population now lives. The lack of both qualitative and quantitative data over time means that the paper does not seek to definitively identify and establish livelihood trends, but rather to raise questions and facilitate future analysis. The final section takes up the policy implications, and argues that reconstruction must be a dialogue that links the center with the grassroots, accompanied by greater governmental transparency. In this context, chronic weaknesses in local government structures is a major constraint to community led development.

Perhaps the biggest challenge is understanding and responding to the reality that post-conflict recovery is not, and cannot be, a simple reconstruction of the past. In the aftermath of conflict many elements may be reconfigured: livelihood strategies, gender relationships, the varying legitimacy accorded to political authorities, social networks and support structures, individual aspirations, and perceptions of valued work. The reconstruction program in Angola must do what they have often failed to do elsewhere. It must look for new solutions, address fundamental issues of what direction development should take, and incorporate institutional reformulation and strengthening as a central organizing principle.

2. A Devastated Country after Decades of Civil War

Following four decades of conflict, Angola has one of the worst humanitarian situations in the world. Despite its vast mineral wealth and agricultural potential, the country ranked 160th out of 174 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index (UNDP, 2000). Not counting international refugees, approximately 1.8 million people currently depend on food assistance. Almost seven out of every ten Angolans lack access to clean water, 60 percent lack access to proper sanitation, and three out of every four Angolans have very limited access to health care.

Insufficient household food resources, poor care practices, and inadequate access to basic health care contribute to some of the worst rates of maternal and child mortality, malnutrition, and life expectancy in the world. Infant mortality is 150 per 1000 live births and the rates of under-five and maternal mortality are 292 per 1000 and 1,854 per 100,000, respectively. A calculated 53% of children under five are stunted (-2z scores ht/age) and

42% are underweight (-2z scores wt/age). Life expectancy at birth is 44 years (UNICEF 1999). Access to prenatal and post-partum care is poor. In many localities, up to 80% of mothers deliver at home without the presence of a skilled assistant. Although caution must be taken in identifying demographic trends due to the lack of reliable data, there is some suggestion that the war has mitigated long term fertility declines seen elsewhere in Africa by keeping childhood mortality high, restricting access to contraception and maternal and child health care, and potentially by causing social and marital disruptions would could have led to an earlier start of childbearing (Agadjanian and Prata 2001).

During the course of the war, the nation suffered massive population displacement and economic disintegration. Angola has the highest percentage of internally displaced persons (IDPs) of any nation.[3] Following the resumption of the war in 1998, over four million of Angola's 13 million people fled their homes and resettled elsewhere in the country. Seventy percent of these IDPs are women and children. In addition, another 500,000 Angolan refugees, mainly from the border provinces, fled to neighboring countries. Most recently, following the end of hostilities in early April 2002, more than 80,000 destitute UNITA fighters and their families (a total of approximately 430,000 persons) made their way out of isolated rural areas to 34 "gathering" (formerly "quartering") areas (OCHA 2002). This recent wave of displaced persons included many that are acutely ill and malnourished. Finally, Rapid Assessments of Critical Needs (RACN) organized by the United Nations in newly accessible areas have identified large pockets of people who were caught between warring factions and are among the most affected. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that the highly vulnerable population of the newly accessible areas is around 1.2 million people.

The security situation in the countryside has vastly improved since the cease fire. Most municipalities in the interior of the country are now accessible by road, and rural trade and markets are slowly beginning to recover. As conditions improve, large-scale population movements have once again begun to take place. In September 2002, UN-OCHA reported that approximately 35,000 refugees had returned from Zambia and the DRC. UN-OCHA also estimated that at least 700,000 IDPs had returned to their areas of

[3] For most Angolans, displacement is not a single event followed by "resettlement". It has been experienced as consecutive migrations and reverse migrations throughout the course of the war. See, for example, a

origin during the previous five months (OCHA 2002). By mid-September 2002, with the beginning of the main farming season looming, as many as 10,000 IDPs per day were on the move. When the UNITA gathering areas are eventually closed, the relocation of ex-combatants and their families will also accelerate.

In response to the rapid resettlement of IDPs and former UNITA soldiers, the government of Angola and UN agencies have given priority to the transition from a humanitarian crisis to longer term development interventions during 2003. Two-thirds of the $386 million called for in the United Nations' 2003 humanitarian appeal are earmarked for food assistance (not only for those remaining in IDP camps but also to assist people as they resettle and until the re-establish viable livelihoods). Other priorities include the restoration of health services (UNICEF, WHO), including rehabilitation of health posts and provision of essential drugs and equipment; provision of seeds and tools (FAO); emergency survival assistance for the hardest-hit pockets that remain inaccessible by road (WFP); and actions to promote safety through mine awareness, child protection and civic education (OCHA, UNMA). As of mid-February 2003, pledges and contributions to the appeal totaled only 1.1% of the year's requirements, though the WFP food pipeline is sufficient to carry through until the end of May.

The government of Angola has called for a donor conference to begin planning the longer-term development interventions and to generate support for these actions. Neither date nor a consensus on the agenda has been established. The international donor community is committed to the immediate humanitarian crisis, but remains equivocal about long-term commitments until the government of Angola itself demonstrates a real commitment to investing in social development.

Most of the bilateral aid is channeled through UN agencies, as well as the ICRC, but a considerable proportion of the funding goes to support the work of NGOs, with preference given to NGOs based in the donors' respective countries. The emphasis has been on emergency assistance but beginning with the current agricultural season more money has gone into supporting food production particularly through seeds and tools distribution. Increasingly, donors are giving attention to issues surrounding human rights, democracy and governance, youth and child protection (including family reunification), education, and endemic diseases (including HIV/AIDS). Much of the aid goes to the

---

study on four different displaced communities in Malanje and Benguela (Andrade 2001), as well as a more

Planalto provinces, where most of the population (outside Luanda) lives. There are about 60 international NGOs and well over 200 national NGOs working in Angola. The international NGOs are mostly concentrated in Plantalto provinces as well, and they are least active in provinces that have been extremely inaccessible due to war (such as Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul and Kuando Kubango). National NGOs follow a similar pattern, though half of them are only working in Luanda. For many Angolans, both urban and rural, churches are the integral part of their social capital networks. In the absence of any alternative, churches provide a variety of social services, but often their means are limited. Indeed, there are remote areas – much of the countryside – where virtually no agency has any presence whatsoever. These areas remain under-served.

The fact that many thousands of war-affected people have begun to return home to rebuild their lives is promising. However, as populations leave camps where they had been provided with food and non-food assistance, they face a more precarious situation. Among returning IDPs, food insecurity is likely to become more widespread, and many returnees will have difficulty establishing viable livelihoods. The population currently on the move is abjectly poor. Almost without exception, returnees lack sufficient food stocks, seeds, tools, and livestock to return to anything that remotely resembles normal agricultural production. Without assistance, most returnees will lack sufficient productive capacity to meet even their most basic household food needs. Furthermore, many IDPs will arrive too late to take full advantage of the current agricultural season. Those who do return in time are faced with irrigation systems in disrepair and land that has not been cultivated in years. Field preparation is especially laborious, often prohibitively so for vulnerable female-headed households and those with high dependency ratios.

IDPs are returning to areas where the economy is moribund. Due to war and government negligence, farm-to-market roads and other infrastructure are in a deplorable state. The threat of land mines obstructs access to markets, services or productive assets. Food availability in these areas is insufficient to meet the basic needs of the influx of returning families. Although it is expected that rural markets will gradually reach many isolated areas, it is unlikely that commercially traded, low unit value basic staples will reach those areas in the near future. Moreover, because most families are returning to isolated localities with severely depressed, war-affected economies, most returnees will have little opportunity to develop complementary or alternative sources of income to

---

general account of migration patterns in Robson and Roque (2001).

offset production deficits. Thus, even if food becomes available on local markets, most households will have insufficient buying power to acquire it. Food security will continue to be a serious concern through 2003.

With a large portion of the population on the move and with government services only now being re-established, it is impossible to establish with any certainty precise measures of conditions in much of the hinterland. Where limited data exist, malnutrition rates vary from just "under alarming" to "emergency levels" (as classified under the SPHERE protocol). At present, humanitarian assistance remains concentrated in IDP camps in and around larger towns in the municipalities. Thus far, the overwhelming majority of those who are leaving the population centers have done so with little or no humanitarian assistance.

The numbers are in fact difficult to ascertain with any precision, but this does not change the point that Angola has long been -- and will continue to be for the foreseeable future -- a country on the move. The population flux has made planning and assistance difficult as much as any other factor.

Looming on the horizon is the threat of HIV/AIDS. The rate of HIV sero-prevalence at is 5.5% -- up from 3% in 1999.[4] Other sexually transmitted diseases are common and survey research reveals that only 17% of women of reproductive age know how to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS (UNICEF 2001). Angola has all the structural vulnerabilities to facilitate a rapid increase in the HIV/AIDS epidemic: a breakdown in health services and access to STI treatment and care, social and economic disruption, large numbers of uniformed and demobilized soldiers, and a highly mobile population. Although the epidemic is at an earlier stage than neighboring countries, prevention programs are timid, and mitigation and care interventions almost entirely absent. There are insufficient resources in place to prevent the epidemic from rapidly escalating to comparable regional levels.

Discussion about mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in emergency and development programming is at its most nascent stages. Fluidity in the immediate post conflict period adds another methodological challenge to the complexity of assessing how the AIDS pandemic is playing itself out. AIDS mortality elsewhere is manifesting itself in

[4] However, recent data from antenatal surveillance sites in Luanda only show 8.6% sero-prevalence.

educational declines, health care stresses, and weakened government capacity and private sector skills. It will be the same in Angola, with the potential to cancel out gains made possible with the end of war. While at present the underlying causal factors that give rise to a "new variant famine" are not descriptive of Angola's current food security crisis, future analytical approaches must incorporate these questions in the years to come.

The legacy of war, poor governance, and the structure of revenue flows pose daunting obstacles to addressing these challenges. Among other factors, the initial causes of the war were grounded in the inequitable social and geographical distribution of resources, exacerbated by the use of identity politics by political factions to deploy and justify violence. Eventually the war seemed to become a pretext for something even more insidious. As time passed, it became driven more by personal ambition, mutual suspicion, and the enticing possibilities of winning or retaining control of the state and the resources it affords access to. Under the guise of war, resources derived from the vast petroleum and diamond industries have disappeared into an obscure network of patronage and corruption. Resources have been used to shore up political support, and little has been invested in the social or physical capital development of Angola. The needs of people have been largely ignored, and they have remained voiceless in decision-making processes. Foreign governments and multinational corporations have certainly been complicit, but the Government of Angola must bear its share of responsibility for the negligence of its own people.

There has been increasing pressure on the government to disclose revenue from oil production and to ensure more funds are devoted towards rehabilitation and social sectors. The oil diagnostic, along with an audit of diamond revenues and improvements in accounting procedures at the Ministry of Finance, are core demands of the International Monetary Fund. International NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Global Witness have also put pressure on the government, and Angolan civil society organizations have pursued a similar agenda. So far, the government has proven to be frustratingly unresponsive to pressure due to the ready availability of cash and credit lines directly secured by the government from the oil industry and its financial partners (see Global Witness 1999, 2002).

The oil diagnostic is also an important tool in its own right, revealing whether resources belonging to the people are being spent legally on their behalf. A rigorous

analysis of public expenditure is challenged by the lack of adequate budget execution data and the fact that substantial extra budgetary expenditures are not recorded, although some progress has been made.[5] The allocation of expenditure on basic social services was only 3.2% between 1997-2001. Angola devotes less than half the SADC average to health and less than one-third the SADC average to education (UNDP et. al. 2002). During 1997-2001, expenditure on overseas medical evacuation was equivalent to 13% of the total health expenditure, merely four percentage points less than the expenditure on primary health care. Overseas scholarships accounted for the largest component after primary education and administration, equivalent to 18% of total education expenditure (UNDP et. al. 2002). Public sector expenditure patterns is therefore a significant contributory cause to social indicators that are among the worst in the world. Provinces with the lowest per capita expenditure on education and health were the several highly populated provinces of the interior, also the region most directly affected by the war. Higher allocations to basic social services, as well much greater attention to ensuring equitable geographical distribution, must take priority in the post-conflict period.

Ultimately, the most difficult obstacles to reform are political. The current system privileges a small number of groups, and the unwillingness of these groups to lose their advantageous position has blocked past reform attempts. One estimate suggests levels of income inequality approaching that of Brazil and South Africa (Adauta de Sousa et. al. 2001). This reinforces the point that the reconstruction process cannot simply replicate pre-existing structures, as previous inequities have contributed to the conflict. High inequality and poverty are also related to the way liberalization of the economy has been carried out. Private economic activity expanded after the liberalization measures of the 1990s, but large companies with close connections to government have been favored to the detriment of smaller enterprises (Aguilar 2001).

The immediate humanitarian needs must focus on resettlement and rehabilitation of livelihoods. Food assistance continues to be an urgent need, particularly in the more remote areas. Material and technical inputs are required to revive agricultural production. Mid-term investments in human capital and infrastructure will require development strategies that rehabilitate transport and market infrastructure, commercial agriculture,

[5] In late 2002 a leaked IMF report alleged that US$ 900 million in annual revenues were not reflected in Treasury accounts over a five year period. This figure represents approximately one third of state income.

schools, health services and water facilities, while ensuring active involvement of communities and efforts to strengthen management capacities. The Government of Angola must assume a significant role in this process, and must be more open to cooperating with foreign entities and civil society. An activist international civil society, pushing an essentially international agenda for transparency, will probably have much less impact on the government than local voices. Yet these are still relatively unassertive. Investment in national civil society, such as efforts to build commitment, constituencies and capacity, may prove to be the best strategy for influencing the government policy agenda in the long run.

3. Livelihood Trends on the *Planalto*

This section discusses the situation on the Central Plateau, or *Planalto,* region of Angola, with a focus on Bié Province. Bié is one of the most devastated regions of the country, especially since the two-year period of 1998-1999, when the war escalated to affect in some way an overwhelming majority of communities and households in the province. Most of the buildings in the municipal towns were either partially or fully destroyed. Kuito, the capital of Bié, is purportedly the most destroyed city in the country. The economy of Bié is extremely insular. The war disrupted trade, migrant labor, and petty commerce, stripping farms and communities of assets, and turning many villages and small towns into virtual ghost towns.

As a result, small-holder farming systems and marketing channels virtually stopped functioning. Farmers now barely eke out a subsistence farming small patches of exhausted *lavras* (rain-fed plots) without the benefit of inputs such as draft animals, tools, farm equipment, or adequate seeds. Commodity production for export out of the province is no longer significant, although there are signs of rejuvenation in neighboring Huila and Huambo Provinces. Maize production, largely relying on the matuba variety, which requires better soil fertility and additional inputs lacking throughout Bié, has been particularly dismal. Most of the maize harvest in 2002 was consumed early as green maize. Food shortages forced many households to consume seed instead of planting it. The FAO and WFP crop assessment projected that household maize stocks would be depleted in July and August in Bié, only two or three months after the harvest in May (FAO/WFP 2002).

The peace has brought the relaxing of three central constraints: the lack of free circulation of goods and people, the inability to exploit fertile areas due to physical insecurity, and the disruption caused by consecutive displacement and migration. Recent CARE surveys and participatory rural assessments have identified continued access to poor agricultural land and the lack of quality seeds and tools as the two most significant constraints to agricultural production. Farmers no longer attempt to cultivate the traditionally high value crops such as peanuts, once an integral part of the diet, or soya and Irish potatoes. Other underlying factors of livelihood insecurity include: loss of livestock assets for traction and income diversification; insufficient labor for land cultivation due to labor intensity of cultivation techniques associated with the loss of productive assets, especially in female headed households; little or no access to off-farm income; and poor to non-existent access to markets and transportation systems. Few children attend school due to lack of functioning schools and a reluctance of parents to send their children to schools that do exist because of the acute need for agricultural labor, and a lack of confidence in the educational system. The quality of teaching is poor due to the lack of teachers, training, and materials. Morbidity and mortality are high due to poor availability of health infrastructure, medicines, and trained personnel at health facilities. At the community level, there is inadequate access to safe water, and a lack of transport and communication which prohibit emergency referrals.[6]

Those who are particularly vulnerable, with comparatively less access to assets and health services, include female headed households, the elderly and war disabled without family support, non-registered IDPs, and the families of demobilized soldiers. Female-headed households now account for approximately half of all rural households in Bié. They are disproportionately vulnerable to chronic, and at times acute, food insecurity. CARE surveys have shown female-headed households to be particularly bereft of productive assets, including access to fertile land, seeds, tools, and livestock, as well as sufficient labor from within the household to fully participate in the cultivation cycle. Non farming income generating strategies are limited. Around IDP camps, virtually the only activity is to market charcoal or basic food items, such as drinks. Lack of access to primary materials makes it impossible to produce and market other handicrafts. Women are paid approximately half the wage rates paid to men for piecework. Programming

[6] Information is drawn from a participatory rural appraisal conducted by CARE in September 2002 to analyze the livelihood security obstacles in five rural municipalities of Bié Province (Andulo, Camacupa,

activities throughout Bié have not paid enough attention to the results of these discrepancies.

Projecting the future is fraught with uncertainty, but the form and flexibility of future livelihood security strategies will likely be structured by demographic and associated social changes, access to off-farm income, land tenure, soil quality, commercial networks, and the interplay of these issues with local power structures.

Throughout the most intense periods of war, men in disproportionate numbers sought refuge in urban areas, such as Luanda and Benguela, which were outside the war zone. Those who remained were often recruited into one army or the other. Many men simply disappeared. Male absence and the restriction of the movement of men, who were more likely to be at risk if encountered by troops, have contributed to shift in gender roles. This presents both challenges and opportunities. The absence of men places additional labor burdens on rural households, by necessity influencing the way in which farming systems re-establish themselves. Land preparation is of particular concern, as is women's access to animal traction, traditionally under male purview. On the other hand, women have increasingly taken up responsibility for long distance marketing products, not a role held in the past (Pacheco 2001, McCaston 1996). During the period of relative peace after the Lusaka Accords in 1994, women in Bié took on greater migratory agricultural labor activities by traveling to UNITA areas and earning goods that would then be traded in their communities and local markets (McCaston 1996).

Tens of thousands of people are on the move, and many will return to the communities they left, sometimes moving back and forth. But how many will decide to stay? In the *Planalto,* household livelihood systems have long relied on cash income to capitalize rural agriculture, often obtained through migrant and casual labor. Such employment is no longer available, suggesting livelihood diversification strategies will need to adjust in the post conflict period. Youth in particular may be drawn to the larger towns, as occurred immediately after independence and during the periodically more stable windows since then (Pacheco 2001; Robson and Roque 2001), potentially accentuating the gendered demographic trends noted above.

Catabola, Chinguar, and Chitembo).

Access to land continues to follow indigenous systems of allocation, although we have little detailed knowledge of how land tenure systems have changed over time. Few have formal title to land, while absentee landlords who are well connected at the highest levels of government are appropriating the best land. The lack of secure tenure for small holders restricts investments to improve farm production in the longer term. The directions of change in local land tenure systems will need to be better understood, although it is already clear that the potential concentration of land ownership poses a significant threat. The new draft land law does not protect customary tenure, and has been presented in the absence of a clear policy regarding land usage and development. It also recognizes the 1975 cadastre, thus preventing the resolution of disputes from the colonial period when land was systematically alienated. The consultation process has been cursory, at best. Although the government has backed off the three-month deadline for public review, no time frame has been set for the consultation process. A recent threat to shut down the consultative process (managed by NGOs), and simply move to approve the draft law in the National Assembly is further source for concern.

While there are localized land conflicts already manifesting themselves in the *Planalto,* the land question is not yet widely seen as a problem by farmers. In part this may be because the area under cultivation has significantly decreased, and pressures from the new land allocations have not yet been felt. Most of the former state farms were divested and converted into private commercial operations under a program begun at the end of the 1980s, although in many cases the title holders have not yet enforced these rights due to political uncertainty and a lack of capital for investment. There is also no clear picture of the number of land concessions awarded.[7]

The *Planalto* has historically long been seen as Angola's breadbasket, despite the fact that many areas of the *Planalto* have only moderately productive soils and low per hectare productivity areas. This was evident by the late 1960s, although animal traction extended labor inputs over a greater land area to produce surpluses and exports, particularly of maize (Rask and Tinne 2000). The widespread use of animal traction, along with other domestic livestock, provided additions to soil fertility and conservation. Extended fallow rotations and shifting cultivation also allowed for periodic soil

[7] An analysis of three municipalities in Huambo suggests that if the allocations took effect, the concentration of land ownership would approximate the colonial period (Pacheco 2001).

recuperation. In areas around secure cities and where IDPs are congregated there has been strong pressure on accessible land, resulting in loss of fertility and soil degradation. Because of IDP resettlement, cropping also occurs in some areas that are not naturally suited for intensive cultivation, and soil degradation in those areas is severe. A return to land which has not been under cultivation for several years will ease some of the current pressure, but soil degradation will continue to prove a long term challenge in some zones. Seed multiplication and crop plant genetic resources also need to be addressed, especially with introduction of foreign seed material, a great many of which are hybrid varieties. There is still a substantial amount of locally adapted seed material available. Research and multiplication, although being done, will need to be expanded.

Central to reconstruction and more secure livelihoods is the assurance of viable outlets and distribution systems for surplus production, and of a reliable supply system for consumer goods and inputs. This will also take on forms different from what previously existed. Shifts in gender roles at more local levels have been suggested above. In addition, the colonial bush trader system is dismantled, and the post-independence period of controlled markets has been progressively liberalized. In Huila and Huambo Provinces, trade outside the province is largely the purview of young men, traveling to Benguela, Luanda, Lubango, and Namibia. The same trend is likely to emerge in Bié. Changing trade practices involve the disempowerment of particular trading groups. The most visible of these are the old licensed commercial elite, who in some cases are attempting to organize political conditions to revive their privileged position in relation to commerce, often following colonial templates. The recent relocation of the central market in Kuito, the capital of Bié Province, to five kilometers out of town was intended to reduce competition with the few local shops and is suggestive of such pressure. How this develops over time will depend on both the regulatory environment and the extent to which these players are able to influence provincial and municipal administrations.

Working in areas with large concentrations of displaced people, CARE, as well as other NGOs, have taken every advantage possible to combine interventions in order to achieve synergies and respond to multiple aspects of livelihood security. This has often involved cooperation with other agencies to provide food and agricultural inputs along with health services and basic material assistance, as well as mine awareness and mine

clearance interventions, which ensure that the land attributed to IDPs was mine free. The resettlement process, however, has raised the complexity of such coordinated interventions to another level. Aside from the logistical challenge, the dispersed population has also resulted in limited resources being spread thinly over a large area -- and involving a larger population that now includes people who remained in the previously inaccessible areas and demobilized soldiers.

Farmers return to communities where local power structures are in a state of flux, and often in conflict. Indigenous, colonial and post-independence party power structures overlay one another to create complex hierarchies of those who are connected and those who are marginalized. The combined influences of colonialism, competing political factions and the violence of the war has created a mosaic of power and authority structures that can vary from community to community. Access to the limited resources, such as humanitarian assistance, often depends on relations with the community elite. The ability of traditional authorities, or *sobas*, to retain allegiance of community members was sometimes undermined, or reinforced, by their individual actions during times of turmoil. In other areas, church leaders and political party members are more influential. As aid agencies move into the rural communities, a much more subtle understanding of social organization and political dynamics is called for. This requires increasingly more attention to consequences of our work, particularly in terms of how it may benefit some and unwittingly harm others.

A recent review of CARE's seed and tool distributions, using standard relief distribution methodologies, highlighted the reality that the interests of traditional authorities, or *sobas*, do not always coincide with those of their communities, or with broad representation of its members (Archibald and Kauck 2002). Fluid population movements and logistical hurdles have meant that the quantity of inputs available is frequently insufficient for all community members in need. Relief distribution methodologies have relied too heavily on simplified assumptions of how distribution lists are drawn up, and the role of *sobas* and their auxiliaries in this process. To inform everyone, and then select only a percentage for registration, "brings much trouble." Anticipating this, the *sobas* choose first to meet their social responsibility**.** Those who do not receive inputs perceive the process as based on favoritism and not, as the *sobas* perceive it, on "duty", resulting in feelings of exclusion and helplessness underpinned by a general discontent with the traditional authority and the humanitarian agency. These

perceptions, created in part by the project approach, generate conflict and undermine social cohesion.

People in Bié face enormous problems: food and livelihood insecurity, material deprivation, lack of access to essential public services and uncertainty about the future. The challenges are daunting, perhaps nowhere more so than in the newly accessible areas, many of which have long been under the control of UNITA. Here, in areas long-isolated from humanitarian assistance, material deprivation and extreme vulnerability combine with fear and uncertainty about the future as the MPLA administration registers its presence in towns and villages.

People here live on the margins of the state; suspicious of its intentions and wary of its representatives. For example, the people in these areas report of government army (FAA) troops rounding-up male civilians on suspicion of being UNITA (or rather, ex-UNITA) soldiers and transporting them to gathering areas. Suspicion runs high, making establishment of strong working relationships with communities and their leaders more difficult, and more important. NGOs, with little experience of working in these areas, are not exempt from this suspicion. NGOs constitute an unknown entity, regarded at best with suspicion, or as associated with the government. In addition to the problems related to seed and tool distribution, described above, a key problem in registering people in former UNITA areas is that they simply do not want to give their names for registration, particularly to strangers collecting names for something they do not understand. Thus, the registration for seeds and tools distribution in this area presented similar problems of process, but very different issues relating to the context in which the registration was being done.

Currently, people in the former UNITA areas know little, if anything, about NGOs and, in the present climate, they are reluctant to offer their names for registration. It appears that, regardless of levels of need in such areas, NGOs should not expect to find people eagerly waiting to participate in projects. Consequently, NGOs must commit to develop as much as possible relationships based on mutual understanding and trust. This, however, will take a great deal of effort and focus.

4. Urban Livelihoods

Livelihood security in urban areas is structured by access to social networks, especially extended family, point of entry into the labor market, access to and cost of basic services, and security of housing. Urban-rural remittances and transfers have been highly restricted due to inaccessibility, although this has varied by city and the surrounding security situation. Urban agriculture is insignificant in Luanda, but more important in other provincial capitals. A household survey of Luanda and five provincial capitals in 1995 indicated that 70% of households are below the poverty line, with 12% in extreme poverty (INE 1996). Poverty rates increase consistently with household size. The evidence also suggests that more female-headed households are below the poverty line than male headed households (Grave, Ribeiro and Ceita 1997 cited in SCF (UK) Angola 2000). Twenty three percent of urban households in 1995 were female headed (INE 1996). The situation is likely to have further deteriorated in subsequent years.

Contrary to common belief, on an aggregate level it appears displacement has been predominately on an individual or household, rather than community basis. The existence of extended family, based either on kinship or shared place of origin, is important for income and transfers, the pooling of housing, and especially access to the labor market (Robson and Roque 2001).

The type of work to which one has access is also a differentiating factor. Informal trade, despite its unpredictability, is considered to be more reliable and profitable than casual wage labor, and yet the poorest find it difficult to secure the capital necessary to enter it. The informal sector grew rapidly in 1990s to account for the largest share of the urban workforce. The contraction of agriculture, massive internal migration, military demobilization, and post-1990 liberalization also contributed. In Luanda, it has been estimated that 54% of all households are linked to the informal economy, and is of disproportionate importance for female headed households (Adauta de Sousa 1998).[8]

Women and girls are increasingly the primary income earners, and work longer hours compared to men (SCF UK Angola 2000). Increasingly high levels of female entry

[8] A survey of one Luanda community found that 80% of women work in the informal economy, versus 7% who were in formal employment. Men were more evenly employed between informal and formal sectors (45 and 42% respectively) (SCF UK Angola 2000).

into trade should not be confused with high levels of opportunities. The majority depends on informal markets and petty trading, which translates into long hours of work for women, in turn contingent on extended social networks for child care. Women are comparatively more involved in home based businesses, petty trade in neighborhood markets, and door to door retail. Larger businesses in major city markets are more male dominated, and of higher value. Formal employment is mostly performed by men. Among the self employed, women's profits are only 39% of men's (Adauta de Sousa et. al. 2001), implying women are less able to take advantage of the most profitable opportunities.

A small number of large scale private enterprises have emerged from clientelist privatization, preferential business licenses, import contracts, and a history of privileged access to foreign exchange (Aguilar 2001). These enterprises dominate the wholesale market, dictate prices, and limit informal sector growth. The volatile macro-economic environment and an uncertain legal environment also restrict upward mobility. Ameliorating such constraints will contribute towards ensuring the informal sector can serve as a more reliable income source, and potentially even a source of employment growth.

All areas of urban Angola have suffered from underinvestment in services in recent years, but the peri-urban areas have received little or none. As an example, regressive public expenditure patterns provide water virtually free of charge in the central urban area of Luanda, where the wealthiest strata lives. Household water expenditures in peri-urban areas, by contrast, are estimated at an average of US$ 21 per month (INE 2000 quoted in Robson and Roque 2001). Many parents send their children to informal schools that offer no qualifications but are less expensive and offer flexibility in fee payments and attendance. Similarly, the majority also rely on private informal health practitioners. Increasing public expenditure on basic service delivery, and expanding those services to peri-urban areas, must take center stage in the post-war period. Physical infrastructure is only one aspect of this, as the exceptionally poor quality of existing educational services suggests. Schooling currently provides very low returns, implying investment in recurrent costs (materials, staffing, and training) are potentially even more important (see Adauta de Sousa et. al 2001).

The ability to integrate into existing settlements is one of the more significant factors influencing the ability to secure a way of life. Housing is by far the most decisive hurdle, and provides a sense of security as well a source of income diversification through renting out (SCF UK Angola 2000). Securing access to land for residence may be obtained through a relative, purchase, or occupation. In Luanda particularly, obtaining land from the authorities for residence is expensive, complicated, and ultimately insecure. Given the importance of secure housing, more attention must be paid to zoning issues, and ensuring that residential areas previously allocated to the "displaced" and in-coming migrants are not now reallocated to commercial developers, as has happened in Luanda recently.

An effective pro-poor policy framework will need to re-examine the assumption that urban growth will be significantly reversed with the end of the war. Anecdotal evidence suggests that reverse migration is occurring as urban areas become more accessible. During previous periods of peace, enhanced freedom of movement led large numbers to migrate to urban areas, rather than facilitating a return to rural areas. For those populations that have been long established in the cities, and for those who have been born in the towns, a return to "areas of origin" may hold little attraction. High birth rates also mean that a large proportion of the urban population is made up of young people, who do not consider themselves displaced and have no plans to "return" to rural areas. In Angola, there is no evidence that urban conditions have pushed down fertility rates, in contrast to other countries (Agadjanian and Prata 2001).[9] The implication is that post conflict reconstruction cannot be modeled on an outdated perception of Angola as primarily a rural society.

There are few structures for ensuring dialogue between urban residents and the state, an ineffective budgeting process, and little transparency in the expenditure of public resources. Efforts to build transparency and accountability, as well as trust, must be accompanied by attention to improve the efficiency and capacity of state entities. Resources for local authorities at municipal and *comuna* levels are controlled by the provincial or central government and are irregular, so local authorities have limited

[9] In a comparison of six African countries, Angola, along with Mozambique, has the highest levels of adolescent fertility. However, Angola was the only country where levels of adolescent fertility in urban areas are slightly higher than in rural areas. In other countries, the reverse is true and the gap is quite wide. In addition to Angola and Mozambique, the other countries in the study were Kenya, Benin, Ghana, and Zimbabwe.

capacity to plan for or deliver services. There has been some effort at reform however, and plans for municipal elections may work towards strengthening these. Urban areas may prove the most fertile ground for experimentation in new forms of governance.

Churches and religious organizations are the single most important form of collective social organization, although it has proven difficult to expand these networks into wider community collective action. Kinship and relations based on areas of origin appear to be more important for collective action than neighbors (Robson and Roque 2001), except in the case of long established neighborhoods. Building on forms of social organization that have developed in urban areas and linking these with government structures requires a redefinition of the state's role, and substantial mobilization work at the local level given the relative lack of community-based organizations.

5. Linking Communities and Central Government in a Common Development Process.

For the immediate future, the humanitarian work is very much focused at the community levels, with central government largely circumvented. Resource flows provided by the international donor agencies have been uncertain, but generous enough to mount meaningful humanitarian operations. The UN consolidated appeal for 2002 targeted the needs at $292 million dollars, and it raised about 54% of this need. Most of the resources ($124 million) were devoted to emergency feeding through the World Food Program, meeting over 80% of the food assistance called for. In addition, donors and NGOs mobilized resources outside the framework of the consolidated appeal. While the response has been impressive, it is still barely adequate, and there is no reason for complaisance now.

Until now, most of the resources have been channeled through UN agencies or implementing partners such as NGOs, and both UN agencies and NGOs operate on the ground. Very little of the international assistance has supported the government. Efforts to negotiate agreements with the IMF and World Bank have been met with principled intransigence on the part of the Government of Angola. Principles aside, government capacity to implement at the field level is limited. For example, government management of the demobilization program has been characterized by fits and starts, and the results

have been quite variable across gathering areas. Suspicions over the government's commitment to really fulfill its promises must be balanced by a more mundane assessment of the government's capacity to organize an operation of this scale. Efforts to serve the 400,000 former UNITA combatants and their families have encountered obstacles related to poor planning and capacity for implementation. It is a stretch to imagine the government successfully serving the needs of a million IDPs, another million resettlers, and some half-million returning refugees -- spread over a million square kilometers.

At another level, donors and multilateral lending agencies resist supporting a government that will not adequately account for the uses of its own ample resources. But the corruption debate is only one aspect of a complex set of issues. Were the government to fully account for its resources and allocate them to meet Angola's humanitarian and development needs, the Angolan people would face a radically different future. Until the government assumes its responsibility, few are willing to fill the gap. In either case, external funding is likely to diminish over time, particularly as Angola transitions from an emergency to a development context. This will require UN agencies and the non-governmental sector to rethink they way they do business. Throughout this transition, the needs and interests at local levels will need to be promoted, but there are few advocates.

It would be irresponsible and naïve to ignore the burden corruption and mismanagement of public resources places on the Angolan people. Who gets what, public employment, public spending, and who pays for it are questions that raise fundamental issues about the distribution of society's resources. Nonetheless, the emphasis on this aspect of governance does not do justice to the many government workers who are in fact quite committed to their work. The focus on corruption diverts attention from other problems that limit the effectiveness of those in the government who are committed. The people throughout the various ministries are hampered in pursuit of their work by limited resources, particularly human resources. The government's best intentions to provide assistance at the grassroots level would be frustrated simply by a lack of personnel. In many *comunas* (provincial sub-districts) the only government agent is the lone *comuna* administrator. Particularly in ex-UNITA areas, this government agent may be regarded with suspicion, and he possesses limited resources to provide basic civil services, let alone undertake a consultative process for providing humanitarian and development assistance. Throughout Angola, it is the community of international agencies and NGOs that provide

social services at the community level. In the absence of these organizations, the rural communities would soon find themselves obliged to fend for themselves.

Among the committed in government, many retain the ideology that drove the original movement for independence. The Marxist revolutionary movement was to a large extent a movement of urban intellectuals, with little connection with the poor, particularly the rural poor. A tendency to dictate from the center may be partly based on conviction, but the entire colonial and post-independence experience has not been rich in examples of democratic governance. Certainly the Portuguese administration did not provide models for inclusive consultation in decision-making. While efforts towards transparency in the management of financial resources will be most welcome, they will not be sufficient if there is no structure for ensuring consultation on how the abundant resources are used. A telling example was the first draft of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The plan essentially focused on big infrastructure projects, with little attention to the needs of the rural poor. It was developed by technocrats, without consulting those who are impoverished. Even at this level, the absence of middle management personnel with high technical competencies in government ministries is also a serious constraint. Reliable information and analysis on poverty, if it were to exist, is useless without the capacity to make use of those inputs. Given the extent of change in Angola (with regard to the role of women in the household economy, the patterns of control and access of land, market networks and demographics), there is an urgent need for more research to inform policy.

Furthermore, a process of dialogue must accompany the opening of the central government to greater scrutiny. Progress towards the development of more democratic institutions has been made, but the National Assembly does not yet reflect an effective system of parliamentary accountability, and the democratization of local and provincial government has been consistently postponed. The reforms of 1991-92 lifted previous restrictions on NGOs as well as, with exceptions, the private media. The associations, NGOs, trade unions and media that emerged in the early 1990s are still extremely weak, particularly outside Luanda.

For a new spirit of dialogue to have any impact on the rural and urban poor, it must link with diverse groups in these communities. The development of community structures and forums for consultation will require personnel who are adequately trained in participatory planning, as well as the instruction of communities as to their role and civic

obligations. Grassroots civil society, such as farmer associations, community based organizations, churches and secular NGOs play a crucial role in this process: as representatives for a local constituency, they are more likely than the international community to influence the political priorities of a fundamentally nationalistic government. As the example of seed distribution demonstrated above, the risks of doing it wrong are significant -- the people we most aim to help may be left behind. Government, local authorities, civil society and citizens need capacity building in many aspects of organizational development: governance, particularly mechanisms to ensure inclusion, conflict resolution, and management skills such as project design, implementation and accounting.

Unless the government is more forthcoming in allocating the resources, it is difficult to imagine sustained development assistance from outside. The combined resources of the nation's wealth, foreign assistance and foreign direct investment could transform Angola into a stable regional power. But unless a process of dialogue that links the center with the grassroots accompanies a trend toward more transparency, the gains that Angola may make will not address the livelihood constraints of the poor.

References

Adauta de Sousa, M. 1998. O Sector Informal em Luanda: Contribuçao para um Melhor Conhecimento. Luanda: European Union and National Bank of Angola.

Adauta de Sousa, M., T. Addison, B. Ekman, & A. Stenman. 2001. *Discussion Paper No. 2001/22. From Humanitarian Assistance to Poverty Reduction in Angola*. Helsinki: United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research.

Agadjanian, V. & N. Prata. 2001. War and Reproduction: Angola's Fertility in Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Southern African Studies* **27:2**.

Aguilar, R. 2001. *Discussion Paper No. 2001/47. Angola's Incomplete Transition*. Helsinki: United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research.

Andrade, F. 2001. Displaced people in Malanje and Benguela. In *Communities and Reconstruction in Angola* (ed.) P. Robson. Guelph: Development Workshop.

Archibald, S. & D. Kauck. 2002. *CARE Kuito's Farmer Project: Supporting the Transition from Conflict to Peace.* Luanda: CARE International Angola.

Cilliers, J. & C. Dietrich (eds). 2000. *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP). 2002. FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Angola. Rome: FAO/WFP.

Global Witness. 1999. *A Crude Awakening – the role of the Oil and Banking Industries in Angola's Civil War and the Plunder of State Assets.* London: Global Witness.

Global Witness. 2002. *All the President's Men: The Devastating Story of Oil and Banking in Angola's Privatised War*. London: Global Witness.

Grave, M., G. Ribeiro, & C. Ceita. 1997. *A Pobreza Urbana e Peri Urbana. Estudo sobre Comunidades e Instituiçoes Comunitarias Angolanas na Perspectiva do Pos Guerra.* Luanda.

Hodges, T. 2001. *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism*. Oxford and Bloomington: The International African Institute and the Fridtjof Nansen Institute in association with James Currey and the Indiana University Press.

Instituto Nacional de Estatistica (INE). 1996. *Perfil da Pobreza em Angola*. Luanda: INE

INE. 2000. *Inquerito sobre a Disposiçao e Capacidade no Pagamento dos Services Sociais Basicos.* Luanda: INE.

Le Billon, P. 2001. Angola's Political Economy of War: the Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000. *African Affairs* **100**.

McCaston. K. 1996. *Poverty and Livelihood Insecurity in War Torn Angola: A rapid food and livelihood security assessment of MPLA and UNITA areas in the provinces of Bie and Kuando Kubango.* Luanda: CARE International Angola.

Pacheco, F. 2001. Rural Communities in Huambo. In *Communities and Reconstruction in Angola* (ed.) P. Robson. Guelph: Development Workshop.

Rask, N. and M. Tinne. 2000. *Angola Agricultural Sector Assessment Final Report.* Report Prepared for USAID Angola by Chemonics International Inc. Contract No. PCE-I-00-99-00003-00. Luanda: USAID Angola.

Robson, P. (ed) 2001. *Communities and Reconstruction in Angola.* Guelph: Development Workshop.

Robson, P. and S. Roque. 2001. *Here in the City There is Nothing Left Over for Lending a Hand.* Guelph: Development Workshop.

Save the Children (UK) Angola. 2000. *Luanda Urban Child Welfare Project (LUCWP). Analysis of Poverty in Peri-Urban Luanda*: *Baseline for Hojy-Ya-Henda*. Luanda: Save the Children (UK) Angola.

UNICEF. 1999. *Progress of Nation Report*. Luanda: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2001. *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Angola Report*. Luanda: UNICEF.

UNDP, IOM, UNICEF, & WHO, in partnership with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health. 2002. *Public Financing of Social Sectors in Angola*. August 2002.

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). 2002. *Update on Humanitarian Activities*. September 2002. Luanda: OCHA.