Post-Conflict Transition in Angola
Three Years Later

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Displacement

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SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
(SADC)

Development Workshop Angola   Post-Conflict Risk Mapping

Peace & Conflict Risk Mapping Project

- Participatory appraisal of social changes in Angola resulting from conflict in four affected provinces.

- Analyse the post-conflict processes, such as DDR (demobilisation, disarmament, re-integration) and 4Rs (repatriation/return, re-integration, rehabilitation, reconstruction)

- Analyse impact of these on people's poverty vulnerability

- Assess the residual risks for conflict

- Consider implications for post-conflict transition and eventual development programming

Post-War Accomplishments

- Angola the first country to transform the UN's Guiding Principals for IDPs into national legislation in 2001.

- Almost 4 million IDPs were free to move at the end of the war.

- Over 100,000 ex-combatants demobilised by end of 2002.

- UNITA transforms itself into a parliamentary opposition party

- Half a million refugees living in neighbouring countries begin to return

Post-War Challenges

- War has induced the "Urbanisation" of Angola over 40 Years

- The last decade has seen a dramatic increase in urban and rural poverty indicators that continue to worsen in post-war period. (Angola dropped from 164 to 168 of 178 nations in UN Human Development Report).

- 2/3 of families are living below the poverty line.

- The poor denied access to the means, (such as land tenure, credit and basic services) to pull themselves out of poverty
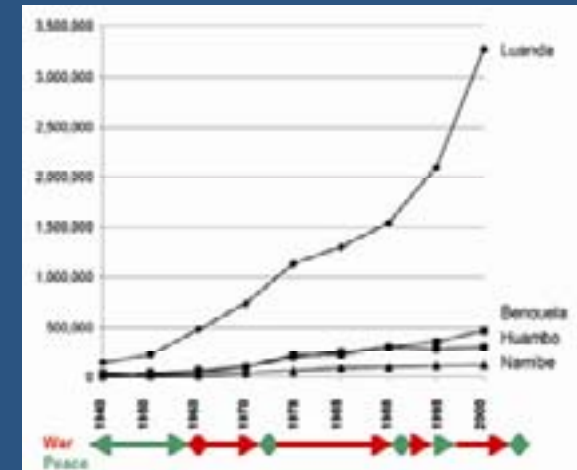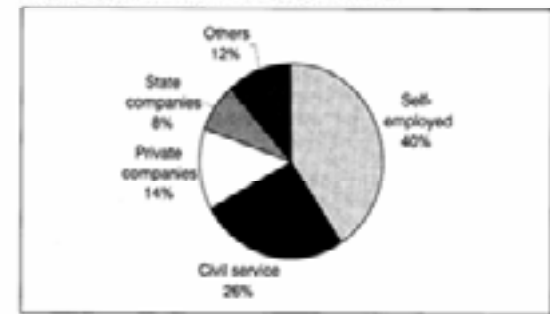

Figure 3.2 Distribution of urban employment, 1995

Source: INE, 1996

Informal Sector Employs over half the workforce

Challenging Assumptions about Re-integration

- Mandate-based agencies of the UN, Government and NGOs often focus on displacement and on refugees and make assumptions that these groups are returning to their homes and therefore that they are managing to re-integrate.

- Both of these assumptions need to be questioned.

- In post-war Angola where physical, social and institutional infrastructure has been largely destroyed there is a very weak framework into which people can re-integrate.

- Agencies have underestimated the complexity, time and resources needed to invest in post-conflict transition.

Challenges of Resettlement

- Only 30% of the areas of return are considered to have achieved the minimum conditions for humanitarian resettlement (Guiding Principals)

- Ex-combatants and IDPs have only acquired on average about 0.75 ha of land, far short of the 2 ha needed for subsistence farming

- Resettlement depended on family and kinship networking and remains largely unassisted by government or any organised planning strategy

Changing Roles of Women

- Women's roles in society changed during conflict. They shoulder a major burden in reconstruction, and need to participate actively in civil society mechanisms.

Return of Refugees and the Displaced

■ Data from Huambo Province suggests that almost half of IDPs in the Province have not returned to their "area of origin" but remain close to municipal towns where they can find occasional employment or engage in informal marketing.

■ Former IDPs claim that despite the end of armed conflict and greater mobility their living conditions and livelihoods remain unchanged from the years of war.

Challenges for Returnees

- Landmines and destroyed infrastructure make it extremely difficult for refugees to return to "areas of origin"
- They are still in temporary settlements around towns (such as Mbanza Kongo, Luena, Luau)

- There is now very little aid (food and "non-food items), and little opportunity for developing a livelihoods

- Conditions of refugees much below what they had in camps in exile, and what they were led to expect when they were persuaded to return

"We are no longer IDPs but we are still living like displaced people"

Demobilisation, Disarmament & Reintegration (DDR)

- The re-integration programmes took more than two years to get underway

- Data collected on demobilised indicates that many have not gone to their "areas of origin" and remain in peri-urban and municipal areas.

- Special challenges for those forcibly recruited as underage soldiers and for females and for the large numbers of handicapped ex-combatants.

- Social stigma as a barrier to reintegration of ex-combatants into communities that they traumatised.

Deterrents to Reintegration

- Community members interviewed indicated some of the following reasons preventing their reintegration:

    - Lack of minimal conditions for resettlement due to level of destruction & lack of infrastructure

    - Poverty; do not have assets, tools or capital needed to rebuild livelihoods

    - Fear that elections will provoke renewed conflict

    - No longer have family or kinship network or no knowledge of area of origin

    - Fear of Land-mines

Loss of Assets

- For most people, the most important impact of war has been loss of assets, rather than displacement

- There are significant numbers whose assets were looted but were unable to flee and therefore remain highly vulnerable.

- There are some, who managed to flee before direct impact of conflict and who managed to keep some of their assets and have a stronger base for rebuilding their livelihoods.

Economic Re-integration

- For many people with no assets the family is main source of assistance (for credit and/or land)

- Aid organisations, the State and NGOs have become less important (especially in a context of dramatically decreasing aid)

- But families are also poor and have few assets to share.

- The most vulnerable are those who have lost contact with family and therefore little social capital to build on.

Re-establishing Livelihoods

- Those who have returned to rural areas have experienced great difficulty in re-establishing a rural livelihood, especially if they have no family linkages.

- Very few programmes exist to assist such people with allocation of land or accessing credit or vocational training.

- Alternative low-paid jobs in the peri-urban informal sector such as stevedores in marketplaces often pay less than one dollar per day.

- Barely sufficient to survive, often eat only one meal per day, does not allow any accumulation of assets

Risk of Land Conflict

- Weakness of the official institutions that manage land allocation among communities and between informal and formal sectors.

- Most land occupation by IDPs is informal or customary. There is a very low level of capacity to register land titles.

- Customary institutions have survived and manage local level conflict over land successfully within communities

- Access to rural land is a potential but not yet a widespread area of conflict.

- It is feared that conflict may increase when the commercial demand for land in proximity to urban or municipal markets clashes with peasant and small scale untitled users of land.

Institutional Risks

- War has weakened traditional leadership, encouraged mistrust and eroded social capital

- Research indicates that where customary rural institutions have survived they still play a role in IDP and returning communities.

- The state has often reinforced individual leadership (usually the *soba*) rather than more accountable and democratic local councils (*Njango*).

- Customary rural institutions tend to exclude women, young people, and outsiders (IDP & urban communities are increasingly heterogeneous). Institutions need to reform to become more inclusive.

Key Findings & Lessons

- Loss of "assets" has more impact than "displacement" for war affected communities.

- Many "return" to cities and municipalities rather than to "areas of origin"

- The most vulnerable are those who have been displaced for many years and consequently may no longer have family ties in their areas of origin.

- Low levels of trust in institutions (as evidenced by people retaining arms as an insurance policy)

- Competition between vulnerable groups for access to aid, jobs, training courses, land and water points, polarises and divides refugees, IDPs and demobilised soldiers who may receive different levels of assistance at different times, exacerbating other potential conflicts (ethnic, political, rural versus urban).

Recommendations

- International humanitarian assistance should not cease when conflict ends;

- need for strong donor coordination in post-conflict transitions and commitment for the medium term.

- to ensure that there is national, political and civil society participation in the process.

- A post-conflict transition programme needs to focus on reducing communities vulnerabilities, building household's assets and individual's skills.

- Rebuilding of institutions is a long-term and difficult task, but essential.

- Community reconstruction requires gaining knowledge through pilot projects linked to information gathering, analysis and monitoring of risks.

Social & Economic Inclusion

- Government policies should assist vulnerable groups to regularise their informal land occupancy and transform their household survival strategies into sustainable enterprises.