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When the displaced return: challenges to 'reintegration' in Angola

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Introduction

The village lies 40 kilometres from the nearest peri-urban 'town' on a dirt path, one which often becomes impassable during the rainy season. Like most villages in this region of the country, it was heavily affected by the civil war. Its current residents have experienced various tapestries of displacement. Some spent most of the twenty-seven year civil war in neighbouring Zambia, where they either integrated with local communities or settled in one of the three UNHCR-run refugee camps. Others spent shorter periods of time across the border, or became internally displaced. Still others remained close to their homes, experiencing waves of internal displacement and violence as troops from both sides of the conflict took control of the area. Prior to the war, the village had a health post and school, the two pillars of community life, but they were burned to the ground during one of the many attacks, along with houses and farms. What remained was looted.

Peace arrived in 2002, and soon after the village saw a population influx as internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees began to repatriate over the next two years. Families reunited, neighbours reacquainted and even new faces appeared, as people from other regions sought out new places in which to settle. Humanitarian agencies appeared in the nearest town, offering returned refugees food and other assistance, but excluding others. Their white land cruisers rarely stopped in the village and when they did, the aid workers only spoke to the local chief and promised assistance, which they never delivered. Today, most residents rely on subsistence agriculture, but the returned refugees also have some education and skills training which they received in the refugee camps. Despite this influx of human capital, language and the lack of proper certification prevent them from making use of it. Hunger is a concern to villagers, who are still waiting for their first cassava harvest, long after the official cut-off period of World Food Programme (WFP) rations. To most in the village, post-war reintegration has been a disappointment.

Although this description refers to a typical rural village in eastern Angola, similarities can be found in other post-conflict countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa and the world. In such difficult contexts, what does the concept of 'reintegration' mean and how can it best be supported by national and international actors? While the reconstruction of schools and clinics is easy to quantify, reintegration of the displaced is more complex, as it includes both tangible and intangible indicators. Is it possible to measure a process like reintegration while at the same time recognizing its complexity?

The case

Soon after the signing of the peace accords in 2002, Angola transformed from a country previously associated with *de*struction and *dis*placement to one associated with *re*construction and *re*integration. An estimated 400,000 refugees (UNHCRa 2007) and four million IDPs (IDMC 2007) have returned 'home' since the end of the war. Yet peace accords do not necessarily translate into reconstruction, nor does return translate into reintegration. Based on research conducted in eastern Angola in 2006, this paper places the challenges of reintegration in eastern Angola into a larger

theoretical framework, arguing that the process is contingent upon both institutional and individual factors. Without both dimensions, reintegration cannot occur, regardless of the official strategies supported by governments and international organizations. The objective of this analysis is to shed light on how governments, donors, international agencies and, ultimately, displacement-affected persons themselves can better facilitate post-war reintegration not only in Angola, but in other countries emerging from years of conflict. This paper begins by briefly laying out some terminology, followed by an introduction of a new reintegration theory. Reintegration in eastern Angola will be examined using this theory. The article ends with some reflections on the actors involved in reintegration, and suggests how the process can be better supported.

The theory

In the midst of practitioner and academic dialogue on reintegration, it is easy to ignore the perceptions of those actually experiencing it. How do war-affected persons define reintegration? Is there a word for it in the local language? If not, what can this tell us about the way in which people perceive displacement and emplacement? Through a series of focus group discussions, returnees, former IDPs and stayees were asked to define reintegration. Revealingly, there were problems translating the word 'reintegration' in the local language if Portuguese was not used. When explained in more detail, respondents came up with the following definitions of reintegration:

Institutional aspects	**Individual aspects**
• meeting one's basic needs • regaining one's livelihood (cultivating, fishing, etc.) • physical reconstruction • schools • a good house • living without fear and harassment • freedom to travel • communication access	• good relationships with neighbours • peace (living together without problems) • uniting with family members • language

This is not meant to be a laundry list of all responses, but rather an articulation of some of the specific perceptions of reintegration. Institutional-related definitions such as 'regaining one's livelihood' or 'freedom of travel' are mentioned alongside responses focused on individual relationships, such as 'uniting with family members' or 'language'. The fact that respondents place greater emphasis on institutional factors is only to be expected, given the importance of basic survival needs and perhaps a lack of experience in articulating more abstract concepts, such as one's relationship to a place or people.

Based on participants' responses highlighted above, this paper defines reintegration as a process that displacement-affected persons undergo which is characterized by human security and individual perceptions of inclusion and belonging to a place. In contrast to the traditional focus on reintegration as a process specific to returnees, this

definition is more inclusive. That is, it acknowledges that reintegration is experienced by everyone in a displacement-affected context, whether directly (as a returnee/IDP) or indirectly (as a stayee). Nor does this definition of reintegration imply a 'return to normal', as wars are often fought over decades, thus transforming economic and social landscapes in the country of origin, in addition to one's psychological perceptions of 'home'. Building upon this definition, this paper suggests that both institutional and individual factors must exist in order for reintegration to occur. Contingent upon political will from both the national government and the international community, institutional factors are discussed using the framework of human security which can be broken down into the following categories:[1]

Figure 1: Human Security

Although education security is not officially included in the framework, it is included here because of its relevance in the context of reintegration. Each prong of human security in the context of reintegration can be summarized as follows:

Food security

- Access to markets, land and agricultural tools and seeds.

- Access to food assistance until the first harvest.

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[1] Pioneered by UNDP, the human security framework was introduced in the 1994 *Human Development Report*. As stated in the report, human security is based on two fundamental tenets: the safety from chronic threats, such as hunger, disease and repression, and a protection from sudden and detrimental disruptions in the patterns of daily life, such as disruption to one's home, job or community.

Economic security

- Access to livelihood opportunities, either formal or informal.

- Freedom of movement to take advantage of economic opportunities.

Health security

- Access to health clinics, low-cost medicine and trained personnel.

- Access to relevant information affecting one's health and basic rights.

Educational security

- Access to schools, teachers and non-formal educational opportunities for children.

- Recognition of relevant education documents for employment purposes.

Environmental security

- Access to potable water in one's area of residence.

- Access to land and ownership rights.

Personal security

- Access to freedom of movement and identification documents.

- Access to police and effective conflict resolution mechanisms.
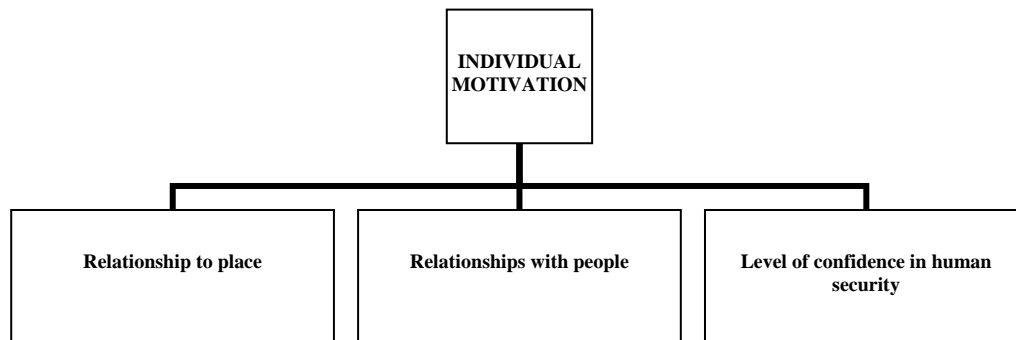
Political security

- Freedom of political association, protected both through legislation and law enforcement.

- Access to information through radio, phone and print media.

Community security

- Access to support and development of one's community without interference from state or non-state actors.

Reintegration depends upon access to these rights, but it also relies on individual factors. While institutional factors influence one's ability to reintegrate, individual factors impact one's motivation to reintegrate. Although harder to quantify, such individual motivations must be acknowledged and considered in policy planning initiatives. A multitude of factors influence human behavior, but three factors can be singled out which significantly influence one's motivation to reintegrate. They are: relationships to place, relationships with people and confidence in human security.

Figure 2: Individual motivation

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                    │  INDIVIDUAL  │
                    │  MOTIVATION  │
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│  Relationship  │ │ Relationships  │ │ Level of confidence│
│   to place     │ │  with people   │ │ in human security  │
└────────────────┘ └────────────────┘ └────────────────────┘
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Relationship to place

- Based on the importance placed on one's region of origin and displacement.

   o This relationship can stem from one's history, socio-cultural associations, or particular experiences before or during conflict. For example, an individual might feel strongly attached to his or her village before flight because of relationships with the land or ancestors, while others may adapt to an urban environment during exile and prefer to stay in such a context upon repatriation.

Relationships with people

- Based on one's affiliation with people in the area of origin or displacement.

   o This affiliation can be a result of ethnicity, language, religion, socio-economic status or other associations. For example, one may feel strongly attached to clan or kinship ties in a region of origin, while others may form new, more powerful ties with people and communities during exile.

Level of confidence in human security

- Based on one's belief that human security will be forthcoming, either immediately or in the near future.

   o This includes access to security in food, livelihood opportunities, health, education, land, safety, political affiliation and community development. For example, some may feel that the state and international community are making visible improvements in living conditions, while others may decide to prolong repatriation until conditions improve or the situation stabilizes.

What we know about reintegration

The literature on reconstruction, reintegration and returning refugee/IDP populations is very recent. What does exist can be divided into two branches: that of international organizations seeking to promote these processes, and scholars who are seeking to

better understand it. At the intersection of academia and actual practice, reintegration specialists draw from both sides of the professional spectrum.

Who is a 'returnee'?

The term 'returnee' is cited frequently in the context of war-torn societies which experience cross-border displacement. Yet to whom does it refer and what are the meanings attached to it? Unlike a refugee or IDP, there is no legally-prescribed definition of a 'returnee'. As such, aid agencies, governments and the war-affected themselves have used the term loosely, normally referring to a 'returnee' as one who has returned from refuge in another country (UNHCRb 2005: 83).

The word itself arose out of the need for humanitarian agencies and governments to distinguish between categories of persons returning after war, and refugees have traditionally been recognized as one of the most vulnerable groups in post-war settings. Yet just as former refugees face challenges upon return, so too do former IDPs and stayees, as they confront changes in population, new constraints on resources and having to cope with war-time losses. Despite the fact that some people who have not been internally displaced and who have remained in one place may identify themselves as stayees in a post-war context, it is important to note that many of them experienced some degree of displacement. Therefore, this paper considers both former refugees and IDPs as returnees.

Although some NGOs and donors use the terms refugee, IDP and returnee to help them target assistance and differentiate between displaced persons, such divisions can oversimplify the complex realities of post-conflict environments. For example, these divisions overlook the fact that refugees in most parts of the world bypass official assistance altogether, choosing to settle locally in rural communities or urban centres (Jacobsen 2005: 5).

This is not to suggest that self-settled refugees do not experience hardship as a result of their displacement, but rather that localized coping mechanisms help support refugees in ways that aid agencies and governments ignore or fail to see. Until very recently, UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies targeted returned refugees as the most vulnerable populations in post-conflict contexts, failing to consider the range of experiences that war-affected people have. Acknowledging that a returnee-focused approach was detrimental to economic and especially social reconstruction, agencies like the UNHCR have shifted their focus to a more inclusive one, which targets regions rather than persons affected by displacement.

Reconstruction and reintegration

Not only are displaced persons categorized, but so are the processes which they are assumed to undergo. A few of the more common terms include 'return', 'reintegration' and 'reconstruction,' all of which imply a return to pre-war normalcy and are seen as part of the greater relief-development continuum. In theory, the continuum has three phases: pure humanitarian assistance, the introduction of development activities and eventually the end to humanitarian assistance, accompanied by a transition into development (UNHCR 2004: 17). Ideally, this

process includes actors such as the government, humanitarian/development agencies, multilateral institutions and the private sector. The reintegration process, or state, is situated somewhere in the middle of the continuum, and international organizations have adapted this model to fit their specific roles and operations.

It is now common to associate reconstruction with the physical rehabilitation of basic infrastructure – roads, bridges, clinics and schools – or with processes such as support for good governance, civil society and capacity-building. Although reconstruction operates in tandem with reintegration, the latter focuses more on how civilians grapple with the rebuilding of society in both the economic and social spheres. It is, in essence, the human face to reconstruction. The concept of reintegration is based on the assumption that war causes displacement, and that people emerging from war undergo *re*-placement. Although some refer to reintegration as a process specific to returning refugees, evidence from war-torn regions suggests that the term should include all displacement-affected persons.

UNHCR has been at the forefront of policy and dialogue on reintegration. Prior to the 1990s, the assumption was that repatriation equaled a return 'home,' which would simply reconnect returnees with their homeland and ultimately foster a sense of well-being (Ghanem 2005: 36-7). Yet experience showed the importance of providing longer-term protection and assistance for returnees and the link with larger durable solutions, of which voluntary repatriation is one.[2] Although the agency's mandate ends in ensuring that refugees are returned "in safety and dignity," its commitment to finding durable solutions to crises has led to increased interest and action in post-conflict contexts.

UNHCR places reintegration in its '4R' approach for dealing with refugees and other persons of concern in post-conflict contexts: repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction (UNHCR 2004: 8). Created in 2002, this approach was developed through international legal obligations, tripartite agreements and the procedures outlined in the *Handbook for Voluntary Repatriation* and the more recent *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*. The 4R approach was designed as an integrated approach and aims to "bring together humanitarian and development actors, create a conducive environment in countries of origin to prevent the recurrence of mass outflows and facilitate sustainable repatriation and reintegration".

UNHCR's move to institutionalize a post-conflict framework was a major contribution to other institutions at the field and policy levels, as it reframed thinking about reintegration by placing it within a larger cycle of migration and development. According to the *Handbook*, reintegration is "a process that should result in the disappearance of differences in legal rights and duties between returnees and their compatriots and the equal access of returnees to services, productive assets and opportunities."

It goes on to say that "the 'end state' of reintegration is the universal enjoyment of full political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights." In focusing on these areas, UNHCR demonstrates the importance of human security by focusing on positive rights which returnees are entitled to. For example, they should have access to legal

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[2] The other two durable solutions are local integration in the host country and third-country resettlement. See UNHCR[c], 2003: 5-6.

processes, political processes and a stable government and productive resources and services. In addition, the agency recognizes the importance of local context in planning and implementing the 4Rs, calling for a flexible approach to reintegration based on the realities of a particular region.

Individual perceptions of 'home'

As illustrated above, UNHCR has contributed to our understanding of the macro processes necessary to spur reconstruction and reintegration. However, it is also important to recognize the individual perceptions which influence these frameworks. How do returnees and IDPs conceptualize repatriation and reintegration, and how does one's association with "home" influence decision-making, if at all? While some scholars claim that 'home' is rooted to a particular place, others support a much more fluid interpretation.

Gaim Kibreab is one advocate for the territorialized view of return and reintegration. Although many refugees and IDPs succeed in creating new lives in places of exile, he argues, they also retain the desire to someday return to their region of origin. He not only highlights the strong social and economic connections that people have with their regions of origin, but he also points out the associations that refugees keep with a certain place (Kibreab 1999: 385). In particular, he suggests the importance of the association with certain rights, such as the freedom of movement and livelihood. Thus, one's notion of 'home' may be more than just a question of access to physical assets and social networks - it can include far-reaching rights and privileges that outsiders may be unaware of.

In contrast, others claim that this territorialized view of reintegration is both outdated and unrealistic in such a globalized world. Anthropologist Laura Hammond draws from her work with Ethiopian returnees to suggest that 'home' is more likely to be associated with community, identity and political and cultural membership rather than a fixed geographic space. She highlights how "home is a variable term, one that can be transformed, newly invented, and developed in relation to the circumstances in which people find themselves or choose to place themselves." (Hammond 2004: 10)

Thus, 'home' can be created outside of a familiar environment, just as it can be re-created in an area of return. This fluid concept of 'home' is supported by Liisa Malkki, who challenges the assumption that culture and identity are rooted to a particular place (Malkki 1995). Through her research on Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Malkki finds that refugees do not necessarily identify themselves with a fixed location, but rather in other ways, which may be ethnic, gender or age-specific. This emphasis on space and place continue to shape conceptions of displacement.

Yet as Tania Ghanem points out, refugees' decision to return and reintegrate depends on more than just their relationship to a real or perceived 'home'. Also influential are their experiences in exile. Such factors include the number of years spent in exile, the conditions experienced there, the degree of integration with the local population, the policies of the host government towards refugees and even their own personal profiles (Ghanem 2005: 24-25). Hence, changes experienced during displacement may impact the way in which an individual later identifies with his or her 'homeland', whether they involve intermarriage or a change in livelihood, diets or habits.

Reintegration in Moxico, Angola

A former Portuguese colony which became independent in 1975, Angolan history is both rich and complex. Although history is not within the scope of this paper, it is an important part of understanding the country's experiences of war, displacement and reintegration.[3] It is a country blessed, or some say cursed, with natural resources. With the second largest oil industry in Sub-Saharan Africa, Angola pumps out approximately 1.6 million barrels of oil per day, and this number is expected to reach two million by 2007 (2005 estimate; CIA 2007).[4] In addition to the petroleum sector, Angola is the world's fourth largest exporter of diamonds. Apart from oil and diamonds, Angola exports a variety of other minerals and commodities, such as fish, coffee, timber and cotton. The U.S. and China are both key players in the Angolan economy, accounting for over 70 per cent of Angola's exports.

Angola's wealth and economic importance in the global economy cannot be disputed. What is cause for concern, however, is the lack of distribution of this wealth, demonstrated through some of the worst socio-economic indicators in the world. Currently, life expectancy for the average Angolan is 38 years and the adult literacy rate is 66.8 per cent (CIA 2007). In 2003, approximately 70 per cent of the population was estimated to be below the poverty line, and UNDP ranked Angola as number 161 out of 177 countries in the 2006 Human Development Index (UNDP 2006: 286). Economic management, deep internal divisions and weak institutions have all contributed to this current state.

Twenty-seven years of civil war (1975-2002) between the MPLA and UNITA left infrastructure crippled, populations scattered and local economies in shambles.[5] While it is difficult to estimate over such a long period of time, the number of people killed in the Angolan civil war is frequently estimated to be one million (IRINa 2006). Characteristic of so many civil wars over the past couple of decades, civilians were the principle victims of the Angolan civil war, used as pawns by both the MPLA and UNITA (Hodges 2004: 21).

Tens of thousands became refugees in neighbouring countries (DRC, Congo, Zambia and Namibia), yet even more became IDPs, or *deslocados*. At the end of the war in 2002, there were an estimated four million displaced persons, accounting for about 30 per cent of the population (IDMC 2007). Approximately 1.5 million of these were registered as IDPs by humanitarian organizations, but the number was no doubt much higher, perhaps as much as twice as high. Many IDPs integrated into urban areas, which tended to offer more protection and economic opportunities. As a result, urbanization accelerated during the civil war, and many people never returned to their

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[3] For a more detailed account of Angolan history, see: Messiant, Christine. "Angola: the Challenge of Statehood." in David Birmingham & Phyllis M. Martin, Eds. History *of Central Africa: The Contemporary Years, since 1960*. (New York: Longman, 1998); Hodges, Tony. 2004. *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

[4] Most diamonds are extracted from Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul provinces in the northeast, and there have been reports of human rights violations by the state-controlled private security companies which oversee the mining and extraction. (See Rafael Marques, 2006. "Operation Kissonde: the Diamonds of Humiliation and Misery" Available from: http://www.cuango.net/kissonde/default_I.htm.)

[5] While this paper deals with the effects of the civil war between the MPLA and UNITA, it is also important to acknowledge the existence of an on-going, low-intensity conflict between the FAA and those supporting the secession of the northwest province of Cabinda.

villages or municipalities after the end of the war. Today, it is estimated that at least half of the population lives in urban areas, with an astounding one-quarter living in the capital of Luanda (ibid.). Despite official rhetoric of the government denying the existence of IDPs, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimated that there were still over 91,000 IDPs in Angola in 2006.

Most Angolans residing close to international borders chose to cross them during the war, benefiting from protection under the auspices of the UNHCR and national host governments. An estimated 600,000 fled from the country and mainly settled in Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Namibia, and smaller numbers in Botswana and South Africa (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 6). Soon after the signing of the peace agreement, plans were made to organize repatriation of refugees through tripartite agreements between UNHCR, the government and host countries.

The UNHCR currently estimates that more than 410,000 refugees have returned 'home' since 2002 (UNHCRa: 2007). Out of this number, approximately 123,000 took part in official repatriation, meaning they were physically accompanied by UNHCR or IOM to their regions of origin (UNHCRk: 2005). Another 89,000 returned spontaneously but received UNHCR assistance upon arrival, and 150,000 repatriated without any assistance. The following figure highlights the breakdown of returnees by country-of-exile:

Figure 3: Repatriation, 2003-2005 (spontaneous and organized)
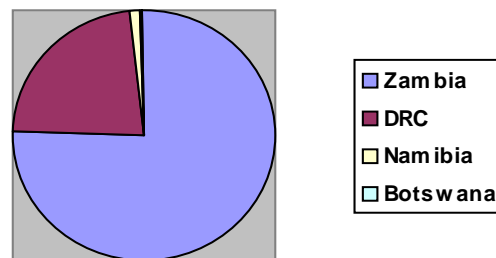
Source: IOM

Although the effects of war were felt throughout the country, the provinces most heavily affected by displacement were Uíge, Bié and Moxico (IRIN 2005). Moxico was chosen as the focus for this study because of its geographic isolation and large concentration of returnees. Over the course of eight weeks, field research was conducted in a total of four municipalities in Moxico with the support of an NGO working in the area, Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS).

Given a range of logistical constraints and other commitments, emphasis was placed on gaining an overview of reintegration in the region rather than focusing on one particular place. Therefore, reintegration was examined in four municipalities and their capitals, including the Bundas (capital: Lumbala Nguimbo), Alto-Zambeze (Cazombo), Luau (Luau) and Moxico (Luena). Within these four municipalities, focus was placed on the municipal capital and approximately two surrounding villages. One

week was spent conducting the research in each site. The methodology incorporated the views of the local government, international NGOs working in reintegration and the local population, whether returnees, former IDPs and/or stayees. Four principle questions guided the research:

- How is reintegration operationalized by UNHCR, national governments and other actors?

- According to this framework, what is the state of social and economic reintegration in Moxico province?

- How do returnees and stayees perceive the current state of reintegration?

- What are returnees bringing with them when they return and how do these assets/skills/values contribute to reconstruction, if at all?

The research relied on a combination of qualitative methods, including key-informant interviews and focus group discussions, in addition to participant observation. In order to gain a better understanding of the context and reintegration structures already in place, structured interviews were carried out with at least three NGO or government officials in each municipality, and with traditional authorities, or 'sobas' in the villages researched. Focus group discussions were held with returnees, former IDPs and stayees, when possible, and sought to include both adults and youth.

Most respondents of the research were former refugees, all of whom lived in refugee camps for some period of time. Although there were also refugees who settled in local communities, they were harder to locate and tend to fall outside the fixed category of returnee, or 'retornado'. Perhaps this finding was a result of 'returnees' being more easily identifiable by JRS and *sobas* (traditional chiefs) in communities, which in turn affected the selection of research respondents. The three Angolan refugee camps in Zambia included Maheba, Mayukwayukwa and Nangweshi.

In the DRC, they included Tshimbumbulu, Kisenge and Divuma. Camp residents were provided with humanitarian assistance through the UNHCR and its implementing partners through agreements with host governments. Such assistance included regular food rations, shelter, basic household supplies and land for cultivation. In addition, a range of services were available to refugees, such as health clinics, schools and skills training.

Participants cited various examples of NGO vocational training, HIV/AIDS, human rights, and conflict resolution workshops offered to refugees, in addition to micro-credit opportunities. While the majority of refugees cultivated and conducted petty trade in or around the camps, others were able to gain employment with NGOs, further their education, or obtain and apply needed skills. Although refugees had to obtain proper passes to leave the camps, exit and entry was relatively free, thus easing the movement of people and goods.

Moxico: a snapshot of displacement

Moxico is the eastern-most province of Angola, bordering the DRC and Zambia. The province is divided into nine municipalities, four of which were examined through this research. Moxico is known to be a UNITA stronghold, and much of the province was heavily contested both by the MPLA and UNITA during the war, especially towards the end (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 17). As a result of heavy fighting in Moxico, most residents became displaced. In fact, Moxico saw the greatest numbers of repatriated refugees in the country (IOM & MINARS 2005: 14). While many residents fled to neighbouring countries, others were internally displaced or stayed near their area of origin. The years of displacement amongst the respondents of all four research sites varies greatly, but this research highlighted some major patterns of displacement. Although some older participants said that they fled during the independence struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, the majority of participants cited the following periods as the peaks of displacement:

- Mid-1980s

- 1992, post-election

- 1998

On average, returnees spent between four and thirty-one years outside Angola. Flight and return were not fixed phenomena, but were rather varied depending on the political climate and confidence of the refugees to return. For example, some returned for elections in 1992 and then fled again soon after.

The principal years of repatriation to Moxico were 2003 and 2004. Despite the closing of camps and cessation of international legal and material assistance, there were still an estimated 47,000 Angolan refugees in neighbouring countries (UNHCRa 2007). Those who remained have locally integrated and many are intending to stay, if permitted by national authorities. Motivations for staying in Zambia or the DRC are multiple, including marriage to host-country nationals, illness, economic commitments, education or security concerns.

A majority of respondents still had family members in either Zambia or the DRC, suggesting the strength of cross-border networks. According to the IDMC, there were still an estimated 19,000 IDPs in Moxico province as of November 2005.[6] Thus, while this study focuses on the effects of return, it is important to acknowledge the incomplete state of repatriation and high level of on-going displacement within the country.

Human security

The following section highlights the state of human security in the areas studied and will be broken down by sector. Each section is designed to give a brief overview of the current situation and the principal challenges being faced.

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[6] The rest of the IDP population resides in the provinces of Cabinda, Huíla, Cuando Cubango and Luanda (IDMC, 2007).

Food security

Upon repatriation, returnees were entitled to food rations from the World Food Programme (WFP) as part of their official reintegration assistance package. The objective of these rations was to help support returnees before their first harvest (or through the course of two growing seasons). Assistance was designed to give returnees three months of full rations, followed by a transition into the general food distribution (GFD) programme for a period of one year.[7]

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNHCR also facilitated the distribution of seeds and tools in certain regions. WFP also occasionally assists organizations carrying out reintegration activities, such as JRS and local schools, Women's Centres, or health posts upon request. In addition, Food for Work (FFW) programmes have contributed to both employment and food security in the Bundas municipality.[8] However, cuts in donor money in 2004 forced WFP to cut its cereal rations and limit food assistance to only one growing season.[9]

Despite this framework for official assistance, food security was one of the most pressing concerns expressed by respondents, all of whom had not yet had their first harvest and were in need of seeds and agricultural tools. What went wrong? There are a two major problems which the system of food assistance failed to address: distribution and agricultural cycles.

First, distribution was not consistent or equitable to the population either as a result of access, lack of proper identification of beneficiaries, or problems in the food pipeline. Respondents varied in their experiences with food aid - some received full rations, others received rations for only a few months, and others did not receive any at all. For example, two communes in the Bundas municipality did not benefit from any GFD, and three others suffered from a high level of food insecurity despite receiving food assistance (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 39). Similar inequalities in distribution were found with seeds and agricultural tools. Although separate from official WFP assistance, the FAO and other NGOs distributed these items to returnees in order to jump-start food production. In a bairro located in the outskirts of Luau town, for example, returnees in 2004 received rations, seeds and tools, but those who returned in 2003 and 2005 only received rations for 2.5 months and no seeds or tools.[10]

Targeting also failed to incorporate all returnees and was especially weak at including IDPs. According to one WFP official, food assistance operates under the assumption that returnees are the most vulnerable population in war-torn regions.[11] Such a perspective is strongly reflected in the lack of assistance directed to IDPs. All of the former IDPs interviewed stated that they did not receive any form of assistance from agencies or the government, despite the fact that a WFP official in the Bundas said that IDPs were included in the GFD. In the absence of food assistance, people have

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[7] This includes three times the ration of the general food distribution.

[8] Lutheran World Federation (LWF) also set up a FFW programme in one commune of Alto-Zambeze for a short period of time.

[9] There were no School Feeding Programmes in Moxico at the time of the visit in 2006. Although the effects are not known, the Angolan government's ban on genetically modified foods has likely impacted a reduction in donations as well. (Human Rights Watch 2005: 26).

[10] Focus group discussion; Bairro Chicanga, Luau: 7/4/06.

[11] Interview with WFP official; Lumbala Nguimbo, the Bundas: 5/28/06.

had to rely on other coping strategies, such as fishing, hunting, trading, piecework, farming on other peoples' land, or relying on family members' rations. Fortunately, differences in food distribution have not appeared to cause any significant friction within communities.

The second challenge involved what appeared to be poor planning of the food assistance programme, which gave little attention to local crop cycles. As a cassava-based region, a detailed study of the terrain and food-based culture would have highlighted the agricultural cycles and soil quality necessary for cassava to flourish. The local strain of cassava used takes an average of two to three years to grow, and most have not had any success with growing maize, complaining of bad soil. The result is that people are harvesting early. This is cause for concern and signals a need to monitor food availability in the coming years. Although other crops such as beans are growing in certain areas, this is not considered, according to one focus group, as 'real food.'[12] Thus, not only was the assistance not delivered effectively, but it was unable to speak to the specific contextual needs faced by populations in Moxico. This is particularly problematic for vulnerable populations such as the elderly and those caring for orphans from the war. Although the government has provided housing for some of these people in certain places such as Luau, assistance is limited and there are no targeted assistance programmes provided to them by international agencies or the government.

Economic security

The main livelihood activity of residents in Moxico province is agriculture, although a minority participates in other livelihood activities, such as carpentry, small-scale trade and services. Yet this is not to suggest that people's skills are limited to agriculture and carpentry. On the contrary, many returnees came back to Angola with a variety of skills. Some of the most frequently cited training includes tailoring, masonry, blacksmith, mechanics, micro-credit, agriculture and health care. The main economic challenge for the population of Moxico is the lack of access to employment opportunities. This includes the access to material, infrastructure, credit and the recognition of documents received abroad.

Although farming is one type of employment, respondents referred to employment (*empregos*) as activities included in the formal market economy. Although there are no official statistics, research suggests that unemployment is very high in Moxico, both in the formal and informal sectors. A group of carpenters in Luau, who were a mixture of former IDPs and returnees, estimated that only between 25-30 per cent of people are economically reintegrated in Luau and that for reintegration to occur, it must start with jobs.[13] Unemployment has strongly affected repatriation and migration patterns, with many former IDPs and refugees choosing to remain in host countries or settling in urban areas where they think employment opportunities are greater. This is particularly the case for youth, the majority of whom have some education or training, but no opportunities.

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[12] Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/16/06.
[13] Focus group discussion; Luau: 7/3/06.

Particularly amongst returnees, respondents consistently voiced their frustration at the lack of instruments to start their own businesses. While the government and UNHCR urge private investment in the region, especially in industries related to wood, mechanics and juice production, there are few signs that such investment is occurring, other than the large-scale reconstruction projects being carried out by the Chinese (RoA & UNHCRa 2005: 33). UNHCR has tried to boost some economic activity through the formation of Women's Centres in three municipalities, designed to promote the economic empowerment of women through activities such as sewing, bread-making, weaving and the donation of livestock.[14] Thus far, this type of intervention has had mixed results, with some centres running in full capacity and others nearly dormant.

Access to trade and markets is also very weak in Moxico due to poor infrastructure, thus inhibiting economic activity and growth. The destruction of the Benguela Railroad was especially deleterious for economic growth by limiting trade between the municipalities and in particular, with Luena. Although the government recently contracted the Chinese to rehabilitate it, it will likely take years before the railroad is completed and reaches some of these municipalities. Nevertheless, it is a positive step in the rehabilitation of key infrastructure. In addition to the railroad, bridges and roads remain in poor condition, making it difficult to transport goods and people, particularly during the rainy season when regions become virtually cut off from one another. The Bundas, Luau and Alto-Zambeze all lack basic infrastructure. Where infrastructure *does* exist, it is often in bad condition and in need of rehabilitation.

The WFP and UNHCR have made a valuable contribution to the rehabilitation of roads and bridges, and IOM has also played a supporting role in bridge construction through its Community Revitalization Programme (CRP). In Cazombo, the main bridge across the Zambezi River was destroyed in a UNITA attack during the war, thus cutting off transport for both military and humanitarian purposes. At present, a small barge pulled by rope facilitates the occasional vehicle that needs to cross the river, but most people use wooden canoes to cross. Some communes are completely isolated due to a combination of mined roads and the lack of bridges.[15] Still, they have a sizeable number of inhabitants, with one commune in Alto-Zambeze, Lumbala Kakengue, estimated to have a population of 9000.[16] Out of the three municipalities, the Bundas is the most isolated due to poor road conditions.

Not only does poor infrastructure inhibit access to markets, but it also reduces access to humanitarian assistance for the population. The WFP bi-weekly air service that began after repatriation has been severely cut back, with plans to eventually phase it out due to funding cuts. In all research sites, respondents expressed their concern at their increasing isolation as they become cut off from external communication and assistance. Trucks make occasional journeys between the municipalities, but this is normally at great risk considering the bad road conditions, particularly during the rainy season. Except in Luena, there is no public transport in the municipalities. Some people utilize bicycles, an attractive asset in such an isolated region. Outside of Luena, it is rare to see vehicles on the dirt roads in town, save those of government officials or NGOs.

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[14] A Women's Centre is currently under construction in Luau.
[15] One such commune is Luvwei in Alto-Zambeze municipality.
[16] Interview with UNHCR official; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/10/06..

Respondents in Luena cited not only the poor quality of roads and frequent break-down of vehicles, but also the poor market conditions in which to sell their produce. One focus group referred back to their experiences cultivating in Zambian refugee camps, when produce was sold to local companies.[17] In Angola, they argue, such companies do not exist, and the government tends to import food from other countries like Brazil instead of supporting local food production, pushing down prices and making it difficult for farmers to sell their produce.

Another major constraint on economic activity is the lack of credit. With no formal banking institutions in the municipalities, residents are unable to gain enough capital to start small businesses. The closest formal bank is in Luena. In Luau, JRS carried out a pilot micro-credit programme that focused on livestock and carpentry, but which had limited success. Surprisingly, there are no micro-credit programmes in the Bundas or Alto-Zambeze. In the Bundas, a study showed that the lack of credit was an influential factor in the limited level of agricultural productivity (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 49).

As highlighted above, many returnees took advantage of skills-training in health and education offered by NGOs in the refugee camps of DRC and Zambia. Upon completion of such courses, many (but not all) students received certificates acknowledging their completion. Although NGOs tend to recognize these certificates, many returnees have experienced difficulties in getting similar treatment from potential employers, including the government and small local enterprises.[18] Thus, while some returnees possess relevant skills, they lack the means to have them formally recognized and apply them. UNHCR has made efforts to negotiate the recognition of these documents, but the challenges remain great, especially with its recent departure from most of these municipalities.

Although no data was collected on such a sensitive topic, one could also speculate about the degree to which informal economic activities support livelihoods of the population. According to one statistic, only 10 per cent of Angola's economy is recorded in the formal sector (cited in Nordstrom 2004: 113). That is, 90 per cent of the economic activity occurring in the country is unregulated and informal. This is a staggering figure and one which reflects the realities of many war-torn landscapes, where people survive through informal livelihood activities which escape state regulation. The research did not specifically examine this area, but the implicit assumption, given such staggering levels of unemployment, is that informal sector activities exist and will only continue to fill the employment gap.

Health security

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Angola has some of the worst health statistics in the world. With a life expectancy of only 38, Angolans suffer from a variety of diarrhea-related, tropical and respiratory diseases, such as TB and malaria. Although the HIV/AIDS infection rate is minimal compared to its neighbouring countries (3.9 per cent), there has been no accurate analysis since the repatriation officially ended in 2006, particularly in regions affected by returnees such as Moxico (CIA 2007). The

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[17] Focus group discussion; Luena, Moxico: 7/12/06.
[18] Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/16/06.

principal challenges that residents face include access to health facilities and adequate resources.

According to national legislation, the government must rehabilitate health posts for centres with a population of more than 5,000 or provide mobile medical assistance to areas with fewer people.[19] All four municipalities studied have health posts with personnel in the town centres, but as one moves outside of the town centre into villages, health posts become scarcer, as do the number of trained health staff. As such, a good portion of the population resides beyond the range of the formal health system (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 51). According to the UNHCR and the Angolan government (GoA), most of the population of Alto-Zambeze does not have access to healthcare (RoA & UNHCRb 2005: 50). Respondents also mentioned the long distances which one must travel to access a health clinic. In the village of Muchache, respondents indicated having to go either to Cazombo (15 km) or the next village of Lunache (25 km) to reach a health post, almost always by foot.[20] The lack of transport also makes it difficult for the sick, who need to be transported to the town and must often rely on bicycles. In some more distant parts of Luau municipality, for example, it can take up to twelve hours to reach the nearest hospital, and many in Luau are treated in the DRC because of the lack of facilities in their region (RoA & UNHCRa 2005: 34). Although there was no evaluation of the prevalence of traditional healers, it is likely that they are becoming important actors in the health system.

Even if health posts exist, they are not necessarily stocked with appropriate staff or materials. In Luau, for example, health posts were built in some surrounding villages by Lutheran World Federation (LWF), but they lack both technically qualified personnel and medications, rendering the posts virtually useless (ibid). Although there is a lack of statistical data for the area, reports suggest a lack of essential medications treating things like diarrhea, malaria and sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 52; (a): 34). A group of youth respondents in Lumbala Nguimbo highlighted the fact that information about STDs and condoms was only available through Medair, an NGO which since left in July 2006. This is particularly worrying, given the early age of sexual activity in this region.[21] In addition, respondents complained of the costs of medicines, which most cannot afford.

Not only does the region lack material resources, but perhaps even more importantly, human resources. The war disrupted the education system and as such, the training of health workers. Thus, it is not surprising to find a lack of trained doctors and nurses in Moxico. Notably, both the Bundas and Alto-Zambeze municipalities did not have one registered doctor in August 2006, but there are some medical assistants. Although some NGOs like Oxfam are theoretically involved in capacity-building activities in the health sector, officials from the Ministry of Health do not accompany their work in communities.[22] It is difficult to attract trained Angolan doctors to come to the area, given the poor state of the medical posts and lack of electricity, transport, materials and accommodation.

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[19] Article 16 (Rehabilitation of Infrastructure), Council of Ministers Decree No. 79/02, December 6, 2002 (Human Rights Watch 2005).
[20] Focus group discussion; Muchache, Alto-Zambeze: 6/15/06.
[21] One group of youth said that sexual activity begins at age 15. Focus group discussion; Lumbala Nguimbo, The Bundas: 6/1/06.
[22] Interviews with Oxfam and Salvation Army representatives; Luau, 7/4/06.

In theory, the government promises both monetary compensation and housing for health personnel as incentives for their work. However, these incentives are either non-existent or insufficient to provide the proper motivation for health workers. The government has recently tried to address this human resource deficiency through training, incentives and work agreements with other countries, particularly Vietnam. To give one illustrative example, the hospital in Luau has total of four doctors, three of them Vietnamese and one Congolese.[23]

Educational security

Youth under the age of 15 account for approximately 50 per cent of Moxico's population (RoA & UNHCRb 2005: 7). Much like the health sector, the education sector severely deteriorated during the war, when schools were either completely or partially destroyed and teachers dispersed (CIA 2007). In many areas, a complete abandonment of towns and villages led to a paralysis of the sector. Although schools continued to operate in the provincial capital of Luena, most schools in the Bundas, Luau and Alto-Zambeze municipalities were either shut down completely or run sporadically in town centres during the war. Three main challenges affect the education sector in Moxico: access, resources and language barriers.

Evidence of poor educational access and quality is clear from the statistics: only 66.8 per cent of the total population of Angola was estimated to be literate 2006, yet this does not reflect regional variation (ibid.). In the Bundas municipality, for example, illiteracy figures are estimated at a stunning 85-95 per cent of the population, and 60 per cent of children do not attend school (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 55). In Alto-Zambeze, the statistic is slightly better, at 47 per cent (ibid: 37).

According to Article 18 of the national Social Assistance for War-affected Regions, the GoA must rehabilitate schools and guarantee that children can attend school without paying fees or being required to purchase uniforms (HRW 2005: 32). Yet four years after the end of the war, the needs remain great. In Alto-Zambeze, for example, there are 88 schools, but only 18 are functioning (RoA & UNHCRa 2005: 36). In most villages, efforts are made to construct a school which accommodates at least the first few grades, and NGOs such as LWF, JRS and Medair have assisted with this. Lunache, a village in Alto-Zambeze, has a primary school up to third grade, and the nearest school offering higher levels is in Cazombo, 40 km away.

Both the distance and cost of reaching the town and staying there make it difficult for youth to continue studying, and such a scenario is not unique to the region. Although primary school is free-of-charge, many respondents cited the costs associated with attending school, including school fees and indirect costs such as uniforms, materials, transport and paying off bribes. According to one youth living in a neighbourhood outside of Luau, those who study are those with resources.[24] Secondary schools are scarce, and for many years Luena was the only secondary school in the entire province.

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23 This has led to difficulties in communication, among other challenges.
[24] Focus group discussion; Bairro Kanenda, Luau: 7/6/06.

One advantage that former refugees had in comparison with former IDPs or stayees was their access to educational opportunities. In both Zambia and the DRC, primary schools were available to children in the refugee camps, and national secondary schools were available outside of the camp.[25] Thus, it is not surprising to hear that many returnees still had children who continued to study in Zambia.[26] Certificates of completion, if they were distributed, are evaluated upon return by the provincial or national Ministry and depending on language ability, the student is inserted into the Angolan school system.

However, if one's language ability in Portuguese is not sufficient, students are held back two years. This setback has understandably led to a great deal of frustration amongst youth, who lack motivation and begin to look outside of school for alternatives. In addition, research suggests that those who completed their studies abroad encounter difficulties in getting their diplomas recognized by either the government or employers. In Cazombo, such documents have even become a point of contention, as they become more than proof of education, but rather a means of local discrimination by labeling one as 'Zambian' or 'Congolese'.[27] UNHCR is helping to advocate for refugees facing these problems, but their presence has decreased in the past year.

Similar to challenges faced in other developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Moxico has a severe lack of resources for education, both physical and human. In particular, the lack of trained teachers has resulted in a high student/teacher ratio. The average ratio for Moxico province is 84 students for every teacher (RoA & UNHCRa 2005: 13). The quality of learning is hampered not only by this high ratio, but also by the lack of qualified teachers.

Although the government requires all teachers to have completed 12th grade, the desperate need for teachers trumps any evaluation of their qualifications. In the Bundas, for example, many teachers only completed up to sixth grade, and some completed up to ninth. Yet on average, the teachers had three to four years of professional training before teaching (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 56). Although NGOs such as JRS have assisted the government with in-service teacher training, there is still much work to be done.

NGOs have also taken the lead in implementing a few vocational and skills training programmes in Cazombo and Luena. In Cazombo, UNHCR carried out a six-month project funded by the national oil company, Statoil, involving vocational classes on carpentry, fishing, bicycle mechanics and computer skills.[28] While this programme targeted both returnees and stayees, it achieved limited success. The computer classes halted due to theft, and other students complained that six months was too short a period. As a result, courses were extended for an additional two months. In Luena, the Evangelic Church Brothers in Angola (IEIA) carried out some vocational training in March 2006 through the support of UNHCR. The three classes included technology, sewing and bread-making. While the courses may have succeeded in teaching

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[25] Interview with UNHCR official; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/14/06.
[26] Focus group discussion; Bairro Saringula, Luau: 7/3/06.
[27] Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/17/06.
[28] Interview with UNHCR official; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/14/06.

students skills, it had little impact on their employability, as they do not have the tools or opportunities to work.[29]

Environmental security

Moxico province is a semi-arid region with a dry and rainy season. It is marked by numerous rivers. The two main environmental challenges confronted by respondents include access to potable water and land.

It is indeed ironic that in a province blessed by abundant rivers, residents of Moxico suffer from the lack of potable water. According to national legislation specifying the government's role in the reconstruction process, the government must provide returnees with access to potable water, with at least one water pump for every 600 people (HRW 2005: 32). Thus far, this goal has not been achieved. This finding was confirmed through numerous focus group discussions in all municipalities. People in rural areas who do not live near water sources must walk long distances to obtain water. For those living in towns, including Luena, high costs of water from unregulated water businesses make it difficult for residents to sustain their water supply. Many residents rely on rivers for their water needs, but overuse and contamination make this a health hazard. The NGOs Oxfam and Medair have been most active in well construction and water points throughout Moxico. Yet following the lead of so many other agencies, Oxfam has pulled out of most of the province, and Medair left the Bundas in August 2006.

Access to land is another important dimension of environmental security. In all of the municipalities apart from Moxico, land distribution for both residential and agricultural purposes is mainly carried out through the traditional chief, or *soba*.[30] Only 3 per cent of the population has documentation of land ownership and as a result, most returnees rely on the *soba* to attest to land rights in case of conflict (HRW 2005: 29). The *soba's* authority in distributing land is recognized by the local state administration.

Given the low population density and virtual reconstruction of so many villages and land, conflicts over land in Moxico have been rare, which is in contrast to other returnee-affected provinces, such as Huambo. Grievances related to land were much more prevalent in Luena, where the population is much more concentrated and resources limited. Although returnees are sometimes given land free by the *sobas*, they often have to pay for it, and some returnees feel that they are charged at a higher price than other residents.[31] Due to population density, land is often quite distant from the town, requiring some to walk three to four hours to reach it, or around 30 km.

Some returnees have been ejected from their land, or denied access to a plot due to cultural reasons. One group of respondents in Luena cited access to land as the principal reason why some people are moving back to their regions of origin, and some even back to Zambia. Thus, while lures of employment and better services may pull people to migrate to towns, reverse migration is also occurring, whereby people

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[29] Interview with IEIA staff member; Luena, Moxico: 7/12/06.

[30] This contrasts with other land distribution systems in Angola, in which families or local officials take a more direct role in land distribution and management.

[31] Focus group discussion; Bairro Kawongo, Luena, Moxico: 7/12/06.

'return' to their regions of origin after they confront poor conditions present in urban areas.

The recent national Land Law complicates the situation of land ownership by giving one year for residents to secure official titles to their land, after which time the government has the authority to appropriate land from families and households who do not possess a title. This is problematic in a war-torn country with a shattered legal system, a lack of efficient land registry, poor information systems and illiteracy, let alone insufficient transport to reach municipal towns (HRW 2005: 30). Although this has not yet created any tensions in Moxico, this decrease in environmental security could lead to future conflict between the government and citizens.

Personal security

Despite the end of official hostilities, residents of Moxico still face a lack of personal security. The principal sources of this insecurity are landmines and the presence of FAA (Forças Armadas Angolanos) troops.

One of the most devastating consequences of the conflict has been landmines. Not only were landmines used to defend strategic towns and infrastructure during the war, but they were also aimed at cutting off access routes and preventing populations from reaching important resources such as water or agricultural fields (Landmine Monitor 2005). The various sources gathered for this research estimate the existence of anywhere between hundreds-of-thousands to millions of landmines. Moxico was one of the provinces most heavily affected by landmines, and international organizations involved in de-mining and victim support have been operational there since the end of the war.

Landmines have presented a risk to returnees as they seek to reestablish themselves in more remote areas. In addition, they prevent the use and rehabilitation of key infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, schools and the railroad. The effects of landmines are still felt today, with one survey reporting an estimated 107 landmine-related casualties in Moxico in 2005. It is also important to acknowledge the location of the research sites, all of which were accessible via road and did not penetrate deep into the interior. Unfortunately, most NGOs involved in de-mining and victim support have stopped their operations in Moxico, not because the job is done, but because of funding cuts.

In addition to landmines, personal security is also affected by the presence of FAA troops throughout the province. As mentioned earlier, Moxico was a province hotly contested by UNITA and MPLA throughout the war, and it is cited as the province where the war began and ended. Thus, the high troop presence in the region comes as no surprise. Although the provincial base is in Luena, substantial posts exist in each of the municipalities where research was conducted. Unfortunately, no exact numbers of troops could be gathered for the research. Yet in each municipality, it is not uncommon to see armed soldiers on the streets and this is particularly pronounced in Luena.

While the troops are supposedly stationed in Moxico to promote peace, they are often associated with outbreaks of conflict. Incidents of harassment against the local

population have been reported in almost all municipalities where research was conducted. Both in Lumbala Nguimbo and Cazombo, respondents complained of drunkenness, arrogance and harassment of troops against the local population, especially after receiving their monthly pay. Although the government is taking steps to train the military on human rights principles and accountability for crimes, change is slow. This study did specifically examine demobilized soldiers, yet their reintegration is also of importance and can certainly help or hinder the progress of reintegration efforts in communities.

Apart from the physical threat of landmines and military-related incidents, few large-scale conflicts exist in Moxico. Although smaller conflicts, such as physical aggression, domestic abuse, robbery and alleged witchcraft take place, they appear to be adequately resolved by *sobas*.

Conflict resolution mechanisms operate at both the formal and informal levels in Moxico. The police operate at the formal level, although a low level of training and corruption have deepened a general distrust of them. A lack of training, drunkenness and corruption are some of the perceptions associated with the local police, and the population is more apt to fear rather than respect them. NGOs such as UNHCR, SFCG and JRS are taking steps to train key security officials on human rights and national laws, yet these agencies are cutting down their field presence.

At the intersection of the formal and non-formal structures are *sobas*, who have played a contested role throughout history, as in many African countries. Mixing loyalties to the colonial administration and local population, the *soba* is nevertheless a quasi-legitimate player in the modern Angolan state system. Indeed, some respondents claimed that the authority of the *sobas* had increased since the end of the war.[32] *Sobas* generally represent the interests of the state, and are expected to resolve small-scale conflicts, in addition to relaying the needs of their population to higher state authorities. Research confirms that *sobas* are generally effective in resolving small conflicts in the community.

Political security

Given the fluctuating political environment, it is not surprising to find political *in*security in Moxico. Conflict resolution mechanisms are in-flux, and citizens cannot yet realize all of their rights, such as access to documentation and information. The three main challenges in this area include mistrust between political parties, the lack of identity documents and access to information.

The biggest source of local conflicts can be attributed to lingering political tensions within communities. One example of this was an incident which occurred in Lumbala Nguimbo in February 2006, when a landmine was found on the airstrip where the governor's plane was planned to land. Blame was placed on members of UNITA, and respondents said that houses of key UNITA leaders were burned by MPLA members. Prior to that in 2004, over 50 houses were burned as a result of a backlash against UNITA members trying to open an office in the town centre (HRW 2005: 16-17).

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[32] Focus group discussion; Bairro Chingando, Lumbala Nguimbo, the Bundas: 5/31/06.

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Such recent political tension demonstrates the ever-fragile level of reconciliation between the two political parties.

Political security is also hampered by the lack of access to documents of identification, a problem expressed by former refugees. Under international and national law, the Angolan government is required to issue documentation to citizens.[33] Under national law, the Ministry of Justice is required to issue *cedulas* (birth certificates) and *bilhetes de identidade* (identity cards) to returnees. Not only do these documents verify citizenship, but they are also necessary to gain access to some services or rights, such as the right to vote. In one neighbourhood outside of Luena, government authorities came to register residents for cards, but they have not heard anything in several months.[34] Respondents in Luau also complained of the lack of these documents, which are especially necessary when applying for a job in the public and private sectors.[35] Without such documents, returnees have no way of proving that they are Angolan citizens and are also subject to harassment and sometimes even detainment. UNHCR has made efforts to facilitate the provision of documentation for returnees by negotiating with the government. Officially, the government says that it will accept alternative forms of identification from returnees, such as the Voluntary Repatriation Form issued by UNHCR or the WFP ration cards, but this exception has not yet been applied in practice (HRW 2005: 15).

Access to information is another essential component of ensuring personal security. Communication infrastructure in Moxico, including telephone, radio and television access, is much weaker than in other provinces. Radio access is also weak, but many can pick up signals for Voice of America, the BBC, and occasionally, the national Angolan radio station. In areas bordering other countries, such as the DRC and Zambia, national radio programmes of these countries can also be heard.

Apart from Luena, very few inhabitants have access to television, which is normally found in one restaurant, at the police station, or at private residences of government officials or NGOs. Rarely are Angolan newspapers circulated except for Luena, where only the national government newspaper is sold. Occassional cross-border trade from Zambia and DRC facilitate the occasional circulation of foreign newspapers as well. Although there are more opportunities to access computers in Luena, only NGOs have access to them in the other three municipalities.

Community security

Respondents did not refer to community security as problematic in Moxico province, as government interference occurs on more of an individual level rather than targeting individual communities. As mentioned previously, land disputes are relatively rare and were only mentioned in two focus group discussions, and in both cases respondents said that they were adequately resolved through the *sobas*.[36] However, access to land appears to be a more contentious issue in Luena, where the availability

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[33] See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 15), the UN Guiding Principles (Principle 20), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). For national law, see Article 12 (Identification of Populations) of the Council of Ministers Decree No. 79/02, December 6, 2002.

[34] Focus group discussion; Bairro Kawongo, Luena, Moxico: 7/12/06.

[35] Focus group discussions; Bairro Chicanga, Luau: 7/4/06.

[36] Focus group discussions; Alto-Zambeze and Luau.

of land and competition for resources is much higher. The only other exception to community security is the interference of the state in local churches. According to a group of church leaders in Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze, the local government interferes in their affairs on a regular basis, citing pressure on church leaders to pray at political meetings or mobilize their congregations for certain purposes.[37]

Individual motivations

Now that the human security aspect has been explored, we will examine reintegration on an individual level. In many ways, this aspect is much more difficult to study without a long-term, nuanced understanding of the environment. As mentioned previously, the nature of this research was designed to get an overview of reintegration and emphasized focus group discussions over individual interviews. As such, this section acknowledges the need for further research. Despite these limitations, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn based on research conducted by the author and others.

Relationship to place

The variation of post-war settlement patterns in Moxico highlights the complex relationships which people have with a physical 'home'. For some formerly displaced, (re)settling in Moxico meant a home-coming, while to others, especially the youth, it meant settling in a space which was completely unknown. Returnees and former IDPs may have returned to the village they lived in before displacement, or decided to settle in a new place altogether.

For those that returned to the same village, the settlement patterns of that village could vary greatly. For example, one village of 575 people in Alto-Zambeze was virtually abandoned from 1999 to 2003, and people settled on the same land as before they fled.[38] Yet new people also came to reside in that same village, a frequent occurrence noted by all of the *sobas* interviewed throughout all four municipalities.[39] This influx calls into question the individual motivations to (re)settle. Why would a person choose to settle in another remote village instead of his or her village of origin? Reasons could range from better agricultural opportunities to social networks or personal motivations. These questions were not addressed by the research, but deserve greater attention.

The research highlighted that one's relationship with place depends on both socioeconomic factors and the basic rights and freedoms of individuals. For example, when a place was associated with livelihood opportunities, returnees expressed nostalgia for life in the refugee camps, where land was better, petty trade went on and educational opportunities existed. However, when issues such as freedom of movement were addressed, they expressed satisfaction with their presence in Angola. The research did not find that cultural or religious associations with land played a large role in determining where returnees (re)settled. Further research may explain these aspects of reintegration. On a broader level, returnees still felt some sense of

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[37] Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/17/06.
[38] Interview with *soba* of Mucache; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/15/06.
[39] A total of six *sobas* were interviewed.

belonging in Angola, a feeling which one loses when placed in the confines of a refugee camp.

Place not only refers to fixed geographic spaces, but also to institutions or associations to which individuals belong. Such spaces can include those created by NGOs, such as the Women's Centres, religious groups, or extended families. Whatever form they take, these spaces can foster reintegration not only by offering a needed service, but perhaps more importantly, by providing a venue in which people can share experiences with one another. In areas inhabited by returnees, former IDPs and stayees, these spaces can present opportunities for reconciliation and support that would otherwise be non-existent. One example of this is the Reconciliation Centre in Cazombo in Alto-Zambeze, a municipality which is characterized by a greater number of stayees than other municipalities. Built and started by JRS, the Centre acts as a recreational centre for youth while also serving as learning and social space for activities like needlework, health/hygiene training and literacy classes. Unlike many external assistance interventions, the centre is built for the community and brings people together from diverse backgrounds.

Relationships with people

Apart from one's relationship to place, a person's connection to other people strongly influences one's ability to reintegrate. Clearly, the location of one's family or friends can have a large impact on one's decision to relocate and the ease in which a person reintegrates into an environment. Apart from these more intimate connections, both language and culture are also important.

A variety of local languages are spoken in Moxico province apart from the official language, Portuguese. Such languages include Luchaze, Lunda, Luvale, Tchokwe, Mbunda and Umbundu. As in many other African countries, crossing an international border does not necessarily mean entering an unfamiliar socio-cultural space, and many refugees found themselves welcomed by family of the same socio-linguistic group outside of Angola. For example, the population surrounding the camps in the DRC also spoke Kiokwe, Luvale and other languages spoken in Luau.

Refugees who learned the national languages of their country of asylum, either French or English, did so mostly through official channels of education, and youth who were born in their country of exile were especially more prone to speak the national language of that country. Some who went to school in the DRC even learned some English through secondary school classes.[40] Thus, it is not uncommon to find young returnees who speak these languages, but it is more unusual to encounter adults and especially elderly people who can speak them, unless they have a background in trade or another livelihood activity which may have exposed them to the official language. Although a few NGOs offered Portuguese classes in some refugee camps, the impact of these classes appears to be minimal.[41]

Language is a major impediment not only in communication, but in access to economic security. A study done by the government and UNHCR in the Bundas

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[40] Focus group discussion; Bairro Kanenda, Luau: 7/7/06.
[41] Focus group discussion; Bairro Saringula, Luau: 7/3/06.

indicates that the lack of Portuguese language ability is one of the two principal reasons for unemployment.[42] One group of students in Lumbala Nguimbo also cited the language barriers in schools, with teachers using Portuguese, and many returnees having difficulties understanding the teacher.[43] Focus group discussions in Luena also highlighted language ability as an impediment to not only economic, but social reintegration.[44]

In one bairro of Luena which is predominantly Portuguese-speaking, residents would single returnees out as foreigners if they did not speak Portuguese, although the situation is improving. As mentioned in the education section, the three-month Portuguese classes run through JRS are a boost for some adults in this predicament, and the demand is still strong. Just as many residents of Moxico do not speak Portuguese, displacement, urbanization and migration also mean that many do not speak local languages. Thus, language can be seen as not only an important descriptor of one's history of displacement and economic background, but it can also have important effects on one's ability to reintegrate.

Cultural similarities and differences with others in an area can also affect reintegration. Although experiences of war may differ, those (re)settling in Moxico can be said to share similar cultural traditions and values with others in that region. The exception to this might be urban Luena, where there is more cultural-linguistic variation. The effects of war and displacement on the preservation of cultural rituals are unknown, but these would imply yet another commonality which could influence one's willingness to settle in a region.

In focus groups conducted with returnees, former IDPs and stayees, respondents expressed their satisfaction with the level of social reintegration occurring in their communities. They referred to the positive interactions between people in their community and social networks, whether between returnees, former IDPs, stayees, or the government. As mentioned earlier in the paper, conflicts occurring in this region were generally spurred either by the military, politics or competition over resources. In none of the focus group discussions did issues related to former crimes or revenge surface. In Alto-Zambeze and Luau, most returnees had family members who were internally displaced, and this affected the general welcome which returnees were greeted with. In addition, most returnees shared their rations and other goods with those who did not benefit, which also helped to reduce potential tensions over inequality.

Confidence

Returnees and former IDPs repatriated to Moxico because they possessed a certain confidence in the future. This confidence came from a variety of sources. One such source is humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR, which used a "go-and-see" approach as a way of ensuring voluntary repatriation. This way, refugees were able to get a glimpse of the conditions before repatriating. For refugees in camps in Zambia and the DRC, this provided a valuable opportunity to obtain information on the

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[42] The lack of employers and private industry were other reasons given (RoA & UNHCR 2005: 49).
[43] Focus group discussion; Lumbala Nguimbo, The Bundas: 6/1/06.
[44] Focus group discussion; Bairro Kawongo, Luena, Moxico: 7/12/06.

conditions in their regions of origin. Also, refugees and IDPs were presented with information from media sources which helped assure them of security.

Returnees mentioned their exposure to television and radio clips about Jonas Savimbi's death and the ensuing political peace process between UNITA and the MPLA. These were accompanied by encouraging remarks made by the government to return, promising assistance from international organizations upon return. Such signs likely built confidence about food, economic and personal security which people could expect upon return.

One cannot rule out other pull factors which may have influenced the desire to return and built confidence in the future, such as economic opportunities, regaining claim to a resource, or reuniting with family. In short, individual motivation to repatriate stemmed from a range of factors which defy generalization because of their personal nature. Reintegration is a natural step which ideally follows repatriation. Thus, the same confidence which led people to repatriate - a belief in security, opportunities and reunions - also influenced their motivation to reintegrate.

Analysis and discussion

Three years after repatriation in Moxico, enormous challenges remain. This research highlights the lack of human security which exists in the region, thereby preventing reintegration from occurring. While small steps have been taken to improve the economic conditions in Moxico, these findings suggest that the province is a long way from fulfilling the institutional factors necessary for reintegration to take root. In all the components of human security examined, with the exception of community security, enormous challenges remain. The lack of access to transport, infrastructure and resources inhibits all residents from realizing economic and social stability.

Current fluctuating shifts in power since the end of the war make it especially difficult for returnees to locate themselves in these formal governance structures. Any mix of foreign officials, NGO representatives, refugee camp heads, rebels, soldiers, or police might have shaped their conceptions of governance and authority at one point in time. Indeed, it is not surprising that some respondents expressed confusion of who to turn to in times of conflict: the *soba*? The police? This research suggests that informal structures of authority have also gained influence since the end of the war.

The most prominent example is churches, many of which were 'brought back' from countries of asylum. According to a group of local church representatives from various denominations[45] in Cazombo, members are encouraged to turn to the church to resolve conflicts, often in lieu of traditional mechanisms. The existence of other, perhaps more invisible authority figures is also possible, and could include lineage or other cultural leaders, traditional healers, or leaders from refugee camps or the military.

Not only do residents of Moxico verbally express their frustrations with reintegration, but they also speak with their feet, as the number of people settling in urban centres

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[45] These include Catholic, New Apostolic Church, and Protestant evangelical. Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/17/06.

continues to rise. While the government may view these migrations as voluntary, this paper points out that they are symptoms of post-conflict displacement and reflect the failure of reintegration. This time, people are fleeing to the provincial capital of Luena rather than Maheba refugee camp in Zambia; to Luanda rather than Luena. Not only does such flight distort processes of reintegration and family reunification, but on a larger level, it leads to capital flight and entrenches regional economic divisions. As a country with enormous mineral wealth, such problems will not disappear unless the government begins to address economic disparities and promote greater development in rural and peri-urban areas.

Repatriation is currently seen as the preferred 'durable' solution of refugee crises by UNHCR and host and home country governments. The assumption is that through return, refugees will reintegrate and emplace themselves into realities and structures which are familiar to them. This logic may be applicable to periods of short-term displacement, such as under five years. But in a case like Angola, where many refugees spent decades in neighbouring countries, and teenagers and young adults have never stepped foot in their country of origin, repatriation suggests a form of *re*settlement rather than a return to normalcy.

Much debate in recent years has centred on the sustainability of repatriation itself and questions its privileged place as a 'durable solution'. Situations in which returnees experience marginalization, insecurity or a lack of economic opportunities could lead to renewed conflict and/or more waves of displacement. The lack of human security makes it difficult for *anyone* to create or re-create a life, regardless of their previous attachments to a place or community. As urbanization increases and people settle in places unfamiliar to them, governments and donors must question not only the concept of 'return', but also the conditions necessary for former refugees and IDPs to live in a certain place. At the same time, one cannot place the burden of national development entirely on humanitarian agencies or even development NGOs. Rather, governments and international actors need to work together to prevent further internal displacement and urbanization by promoting human security in regions of origin.

Targeting

As the research demonstrates, the targeting of humanitarian assistance to areas undergoing reintegration is flawed. While acknowledging the important life-saving assistance that humanitarian agencies deliver, the system in place has not yet managed to adequately target those in need of assistance in post-conflict countries. Traditional dichotomies used by the international community and governments to distinguish between returnees, IDPs and stayees misplace attention on the greater processes of post-war reconstruction and development. Not only can inequitable distribution of resources create unnecessary divisions between those already divided by war, but it also hampers the overall growth of the region by promoting a short-sighted view of reconstruction and development. In addition, national and international actors involved in the process must develop a better understanding of where reintegration happens. Are there particular locations where interventions might be more effective than others?

The most obvious gap in targeting is the priority given to returnees over former IDPs or stayees. Concentrating on returnees not only reveals ignorance of the realities faced

by other war-affected populations, but it also does a disservice to the larger goals of reintegration and reconstruction which institutions and governments seek to promote. Thanks in part to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the needs of IDPs are increasingly recognized by agencies and governments today. UNHCR has taken on responsibility for the care of more IDPs, although this is still done on an ad hoc basis, depending upon UN approval. As pointed out previously, the Angolan government has also been lauded for its adoption of the principles into national law, yet major gaps exist. Although WFP officials in Angola alluded to the inclusion of IDPs in the GFD, for example, all of the IDPs spoken to through the research denied ever having received assistance.

One of the most daunting challenges of assisting IDPs is how to effectively target assistance. No qualifying indicator yet exists for measuring the period of displacement or distance fled in order to be considered an IDP. Could a person living in a rural area, for example, flee to the nearest town 10 kilometres away for one month and still be considered an IDP? What about someone who fled her village and traveled to the provincial capital, more than a month's journey away, versus someone who crossed a border after a day's journey and received regular humanitarian assistance over a period of years? These bigger questions have not yet been adequately addressed by international agencies or governments, although they bear important consequences for not only post-conflict humanitarian assistance, but the way in which the international legal system defines displacement. Although some international agencies, such as UNHCR, have tried to address the issue by focusing on assistance to *regions*, rather than *persons* affected by displacement, significant protection gaps remain, as the case of Angola demonstrates.

Another group situated even more on the fringes of post-conflict assistance is stayees. Their emplacement in post-war contexts suggests stability, security and a sustainable livelihood to donors and humanitarian agencies. Yet how can one assume that a stayee suffered less than a former refugee during a conflict and is therefore less deserving of humanitarian assistance? Being rooted in a particular place during conflict does not imply a lack of hardship or suffering.

On the contrary, stayees are often caught in a vicious cycle of conflict which inhibits social and economic growth at the family or community level, and are often considerably worse off than their returnee compatriots once peace arrives. Angolan stayees experienced looting, recruitment and abuse at the hands of both UNITA and government soldiers. In Alto-Zambeze, which contained a greater percentage of stayees, respondents mentioned how they were repeatedly accused of supporting either side of the conflict during the war, depending on who controlled the area at the time.[46] Stayees in numerous other war-torn African countries can attest to similar harsh conditions.

Although one could argue that reconstruction assistance such as hospitals and schools benefits the entire population, this support does not compare to a year of food rations, or the distribution of seeds, tools and other household goods which are part of official assistance packages for returnees. Despite the harsh realities which they may face, stayees fall outside of the humanitarian assistance net in post-conflict countries, and are instead expected to play a passive role of acceptance and support to returnees and

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[46] Focus group discussion; Cazombo, Alto-Zambeze: 6/15/06.

former IDPs when they return. If they do not, stayees are characterized as sources of discrimination and harassment against returnees, inhibiting reconciliation and reintegration. Humanitarian agencies fail to recognize the root causes of such incidents which are often linked to the inequitable nature of aid delivery. Thus, international actors have a responsibility to better understand the categories they use to divide populations after conflict. Such analysis might lead some to find that stayees are just as deserving of assistance, if not more so, as returnees and former IDPs.

Reintegration strategies: Mozambique and Sierra Leone

The international community currently promotes reintegration either through partnerships with governments or through the creation of community-led structures. The cases of Mozambique and Sierra Leone offer interesting perspectives on reintegration strategies. In Mozambique, primary reintegration assistance came in the form of food, seeds, tools and shelter, in addition to larger reconstruction projects of roads, schools, health centres and wells through Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). In addition, donors experimented with an innovative way of linking relief with longer term development by focusing on sector reform at a provincial level. In contrast to QIPs, this approach targeted a greater number of people, demanded a deeper commitment by donors, and focused on the development of sectors at the provincial rather than community level (Lubkemann 2001: 82). By focusing on sectoral development at the provincial level, programmes were able to link into national agendas while simultaneously addressing local needs on the ground. While there were setbacks to this approach, this unique partnership between donors, the national government and in one case, private companies, illustrates an effective, flexible way to support reconstruction and reintegration by promoting both the centralization and de-centralization of development.

Sierra Leone also provides some useful insights into reintegration, this time in the context of Western Africa. Part of the programme's success is related to the high level of coordination between the UN military, humanitarian and development actors. Through joint strategies and the sharing of resources, these actors helped work with the government to establish peace and security in areas of return. Its success is also attributed to new reintegration projects UNHCR began promoting in 2003 called Community Empowerment Projects (CEPs). Similar to community-based approaches to organizations like the World Bank and UNDP, CEPs are planned, implemented and managed by returnees themselves, drawing on funds from UNHCR. In this way, development needs are specifically tailored to the particular challenges facing the population.

Nodes of reintegration

In Angola, UNHCR and its partners tried to adapt both governmental and community-based approaches to reconstruction and reintegration, although emphasis was placed on the former strategy. Despite some limited success, both approaches possess inherent weaknesses both in Angola and other post-conflict contexts. On the one hand, governments emerging from conflict often do not have the funds, manpower or skills necessary to effectively oversee and manage reintegration activities. On the other hand, community empowerment programmes can reconstruct the very power

hierarchies which sparked the conflict, and can also exclude the most vulnerable. While such approaches might be useful for long-term development projects, a more context-specific method of supporting reintegration must be found for the short-term. Are there spaces and places which already promote reintegration but which agencies and governments have ignored? This research uncovered a few nodes which are worth mentioning here.

One of the ways to locate these nodes is by examining the capital that accompanies returnees and former IDPs back into the country of origin. In addition to the physical assets which Angolan returnees brought back, they also brought back forms of social capital. Perhaps the most notable manifestation of this is through the growth in churches in returnee-affected regions of Moxico. Christian churches were especially widespread in Zambia, where refugees would regularly attend a number of Pentecostal and Anglican churches. The historic role of churches is significant in Angola, often serving as a space for rural social integration during colonialism, particularly when a policy of 'strategic resettlement' was enforced in certain regions (Messiant 1999: 158). The Catholic Church also acted as an important centre of dissent for the war and MPLA policy, and churches saw much growth as a reaction of years of official atheism and war. Presently, churches provide people not only with a source of hope for the future, but they offer a space in which people can come together and socialize. In Angola and other post-conflict countries, this may mean interacting with people with different experiences of war, and in doing so, may foster relationships and a sense of community.

In addition to churches, schools operate as another node of reintegration. Their powerful influence in helping or hindering peace is well-documented, and research suggests that the education system is an especially important component in economically and socially rebuilding war-torn societies. Beyond the greater goals of literacy and numeracy which eventually promote economic security, children with diverse backgrounds play and work together in a way which they are not forced to do outside of the classroom. In short, schools allow children to make and remake social identities, communities and national identity, which are especially important activities in post-conflict environments and ones which can have powerful effects on an individual's motivation to reintegrate.

As discussed earlier, *sobas* also play an important role in the reintegration process. At the intersection of traditional and state authority, they give a face to the vague notion of a state and government, and inhabit both formal and informal spaces of authority in communities. Placed strategically, they can foster reintegration on both the institutional and individual levels, whether they are distributing land to returnees, resolving conflicts amongst neighbours, or presiding over traditional ceremonies.

Where NGOs have a long-term presence and understand local needs, reintegration nodes can also be promoted by external actors. One example of this is Cazombo's Reconciliation Centre, which was established by JRS to help promote community in an environment which was characterized by tension between returnees and stayees. Not only does the Centre serve as a space for formal education, such as Portuguese and adult literacy classes, it also acts as a space in which informal learning occurs - groups gather to practice small-scale sewing projects, bread-making, and to discuss issues like conflict resolution and health and hygiene.

Youth also utilize the Centre, and given the high percentage of children outside of school in Cazombo, it serves as a learning and social space for children, where they can play games, sing, dance and play sports (RoA & UNHCRb 2005: 53). Although funded by JRS, community members constructed the building, and ownership and management of the Centre is now officially in the hands of local residents. Although it was initially an external intervention, evidence suggests that the Reconciliation Centre serves as an effective node of reintegration in Cazombo, bringing together returnees, former IDPs and *stayees* in an informal space.

Churches, schools, *sobas* and the Reconciliation Centre are only a few reintegration nodes present in Moxico. Yet it is not so much who or what the nodes are that really matters, but rather *what they do*. If a structure or person is able to promote reintegration within a community, it should be supported and promoted both by the government and the international community. This could mean donating materials to help rehabilitate a structure, implement a project, or assist vulnerable community members. Fortunately, UN agencies and other actors have come to realize that even with the most modern participatory techniques, outsiders cannot and *will not* know what a war-affected population wants or needs, nor will they succeed in targeting the most vulnerable. The key is locating and supporting those structures or persons which possess such knowledge and which can facilitate reintegration. UNHCR's CEPs used in Sierra Leone are a step in the right direction, but instead of creating new structures, why not find those which are already in place? True, this process may require a greater commitment on the part of agencies and governments, but mostly, it would simply require more listening and observation.

This concept of 'nodes' also applies to structures which promote economic security. Are there spaces which promote livelihoods within a given community, whether urban or rural? If so, how can donors and governments help to promote them? Such nodes could range from local markets or a local carpentry to a river used for fishing or an informal credit group. Understanding the range of skills which exist amongst community members is a major step forward in promoting economic growth. This is particularly important in regions affected by displacement, such as Moxico, where returnees and former IDPs have returned with new skills and knowledge.

This research found that many returnees wish to start their own businesses, but lack the credit to get them started. NGOs with experience and commitment to a longer-term presence could tap into this need by making credit or grants available, the effects of which would inevitably ripple out and help promote economic security for the wider community. Yet even with the best of business plans, entrepreneurial activity can be stamped out if the state is unwilling to support it. Advocating for citizens' rights, while at the same time presenting attractive incentives, are activities which must accompany external interventions.

In sum, nodes of reintegration offer an innovative way to support reintegration by supporting existing structures within a community. This is not to suggest that massive amounts of money be inserted into any of these nodes, but rather that learning about them, their roles and needs would likely uncover small, innovative ways to support them. War-affected persons are resilient and creative, and understanding local coping mechanisms would not only lead to improved assistance, but it would also reaffirm the value and dignity of people themselves.

Institutional will

Without national and international political will, reintegration cannot occur. This is not to devalue the powerful coping strategies of war-affected persons, but certain fundamental building blocks must be provided by the state for human growth and development to take place. Such necessities are all part of the human security framework - infrastructure, security, livelihood opportunities, and basic services among others. This is not the place to debate state-making or nation-building; indeed, one could argue that non-state actors could also provide these mechanisms, which they in many cases do. Yet the current paradigm of post-conflict assistance values institutions over NGOs, states over quasi-states run by warlords or separatist movements. As such, our expectations remain on the Angolan state.

Angola has been lauded for its legal recognition of formerly displaced persons. It is, in fact, one of the only countries which adopted the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into domestic law, and it extended the application to cover returning refugees (HRW 2005: 8-9). Because of the government's lack of capacity and technical expertise, it invited UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to assist it during the initial post-war period. Despite its weakened capacity, the government demonstrates little political will and commitment to support reintegration activities on the ground. In Moxico, government officials tend to appear only at either inaugurations of bridges and schools built by NGOs, or during political campaign visits. This lack of presence is not only noticeable to residents, but also to *sobas*, who describe how their credibility weakens when they are unable to fulfill the needs of their population and provide basic infrastructure and services, which they rely on the government to provide.

"Good governance" is a term frequently used yet rarely defined in donor and institutional circles. Underpinning the concept is the notion that a state will care for its citizens - that it will provide the security, infrastructure, services and economic opportunities necessary for their survival and growth, and not abuse their position of power. Yet one must reevaluate the term in a country like Angola, which has never experienced such a state. Indeed, it is easy to forget that over a century of Portuguese rule stymied development and exploited civilians, leaving the country virtually void of human capital upon independence.

Only a few months after independence, civil war broke out, leaving the country in a state of chaos in most regions until 2002. Given Angolans' absence of any collective memory of 'good governance', it is hardly surprising that today's elite usurp power and plunder resources, just as the Portuguese did. This is not to justify the inequitable system of power and privilege that exists, but merely to place it in a larger historical context, essentially shifting the mirror to uncover more uncomfortable reflections of outsiders' roles in today's current context. Thus, the expectations attached to post-conflict reconstruction need to be rethought and tailored to fit Angola's historical realities.

Angola is moving out of an emergency and into a transitional, or developmental phase. This phase is the most crucial yet also the most unstable, when new political, social and economic structures are reformulated to fit shifting needs and populations. As space opens up for new ideas and policies, donors should give this post-conflict

phase their full attention and financial support. However, this is not reflected in practice, as donor fatigue sets in and attention shifts to other more pressing concerns.

In Angola, most major NGOs are pulling out, if they have not done so already. The UN, for example, has significantly scaled down its presence on the ground, as funding is cut and resources allocated to other crises around the world. UNHCR no longer has a presence in Luau, Alto-Zambeze or the Bundas, and the Luena office is scheduled to close in December 2007.[47] The lead UN coordinating agency in Angola, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), has also reduced its field presence and monitoring activities (HRW 2005: 3). It remains to be seen whether development NGOs will take the place of these agencies, but for now, the relief-development gap continues to grow.

Waning donor interest in Angola is the principal reason why these agencies are leaving. Given the government's record oil sales, donors believe that it has the capacity to care for its own population, at least financially. Donors cite other developing countries which devote a larger percentage of government revenue towards social services, yet whose financial situations are considerably worse off than Angola's. And given the poor accountability and transparency record of the government and its unwillingness to alter, donors fear that their funded development projects will become just another way for elites to fill their pockets with slush funds (HRW 2005: 37).

Given this scenario, donors' ability to apply aid conditionality is quite limited. When they have tried to apply conditionality, the Angolan government has reacted by turning to non-Western countries for assistance, such as China. Donor institutions continue to have a presence in Angola, although their assistance is targeted. Assistance is geographically targeted to areas with a high population concentration, those undergoing social reintegration, and areas where human rights abuses are more common. Given these criteria, it is surprising to find that Moxico is not one of the provinces targeted.

Public-private-donor partnerships

Private partnerships between oil corporations and donors have been increasing over the past few years in Angola, opening up a new funding source for reconstruction and development projects. Yet these development projects rarely go where they are most needed and investments are yet to be seen in Moxico. One major player in national reconstruction projects is China, which through oil-backed bi-lateral assistance, embarked on the rehabilitation of the national Benguela Railroad and a major canal in Moxico. While these projects may one day provide long-term benefits for the region and its population, they currently offer very little to the average Angolan.

Drawing from the lessons of donor funding in Mozambique, one way in which economic security could be enhanced in Angola is through 'public-private-donor partnerships'. This concept uses the familiar term 'public-private partnerships' and inserts 'donors' into it, given their central role in development and humanitarian

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[47] Correspondence with UNHCR official, 3/28/07.

assistance. Such partnerships could be part of the initial reintegration and reconstruction strategy of a country, established soon after the peace process.

Ideally, these partnerships would foster local investment in the form of local businesses or training in areas affected by conflict. If capacity exists, private companies involved in such projects would be national or regional. The Mozambique example involving FINNIDA, the Mozambican Ministry of Health and a private consulting firm in the rehabilitation and development of the health sector in Manica province, offers one instructive example.

While international corporations operating in Angola are primarily concerned with their own business interests, they possess considerable leverage with the Angolan government, depending on them for the majority of national revenue. In addition, growing pressures to fulfill corporate social responsibility commitments have led to increased corporate investment in development projects. Donors could work in greater collaboration with these corporations and the government to select investments which would help foster reintegration in displacement-affected regions. While such projects should prioritize the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure and services, they should also focus on income-generation opportunities and market growth, particularly in urban areas. In other post-war contexts, it might be difficult to address local economic needs before populations stabilize, yet a phased approach and frequent information gathering could jump-start these activities as soon as possible. It is important that the terms of these contracts are favorable to the local population. For example, workers should be locally hired where possible, so that the investments can provide current as well as future employment opportunities for local residents.

As in the case of Mozambique, such partnerships should ideally begin to form during the conflict. Where necessary, donors could support UNHCR by temporarily prolonging repatriation until basic infrastructure and services are in place and these 'public-private-donor partnerships' are set in motion. Each actor in the process would help ensure that investments are sustainable and tailored to local needs: former refugees and IDPs from a region could make investment suggestions based on the needs of their area, drawing on existing skills and resources; UNHCR could use its knowledge of the skill level of the population to inform potential investors and coordinate basic reconstruction projects; and the government could ensure that investments fit into larger national development goals.

There are obvious complications, such as the costs associated with prolonging repatriation and the lack of confidence which many companies might have in a region affected by conflict, or the reluctance of donors to donate to private business rather than NGOs. Still, thinking about larger partnerships and investments, particularly in stable peri-urban environments, may be one way to tackle some of the challenges currently experienced in the relief-development transition.

Ideally, the national government should take the lead in coordinating activities, but this may not always be possible given a lack of capacity or political will. This is where companies, investors and institutions like the World Bank, ILO or UNDP could step in to play a coordinating role and create partnerships which are attractive to both the government and private actors. Countries which fuelled the civil war for so many years and which benefited or continue to benefit from Angola's natural resources, such as Portugal, the U.S., Cuba, Russia and China, especially shoulder a moral

responsibility to help rebuild the country and participate in long-term reconstruction efforts. Participating in these partnerships is one tangible way which they can live up to their obligations and make effective use of their economic clout.

Communication between actors

Lines of communication between aid agencies, host governments, refugees and national governments should be kept open during conflicts so that certification received in refugee camps or in host countries can be recognized immediately upon repatriation. External actors should also be aware of any potential hostility or resentment which local government officials might express towards returnees, who often return better skilled, educated, and are often thought to have led the 'good life' during the war. Such feelings should not be taken lightly, as they can strongly affect the willingness of the government to promote reintegration and open up opportunities for returnees. The promotion of dialogue and negotiation between the government and returnees should not begin once the peace accord is signed, but rather throughout the conflict, if possible. The assumption that the government 'stays' while the people 'flee' during war is not always accurate. In Moxico, some local administrators and numerous *sobas* spent years in refugee camps. Locating these authorities within a camp setting could serve as a starting point for such negotiations. The efforts of UNICEF and UNHCR in promoting such dialogue after conflict is laudable, but negotiations should begin much earlier.

Conclusion

Reintegration is a term which is often referred to by governments and international agencies, but which is rarely quantified or evaluated. Despite this ambiguity, donors, NGOs and governments realize that reintegration is the key to securing future peace and development in post-conflict societies. Failure to understand its characteristics, manifestations and challenges is thus detrimental to all involved. This paper examined reintegration through a theoretical lens which places institutional and individual dimensions at the centre of the process.

According to this analysis, it is evident that the conditions for sustainable reintegration in eastern Angola do not exist. Despite its official rhetoric, the Angolan government is unable to ensure human security for its citizens in Moxico, and humanitarian assistance has had a limited impact on the process thus far. True, hundreds of landmines have been destroyed, some schools and health posts constructed, and some trainings conducted, but these predominantly externally-led efforts are not sufficient. More government and international commitment, investment and human resources are needed in Moxico.

Clearly, donors, aid agencies and governments have limited resources and cannot fill every gap in assistance, nor can they assuage ever criticism fired at them. Yet thinking about innovative approaches in delivering assistance, particularly in areas affected by displacement, may help achieve a more equitable and balanced method of fostering post-conflict reintegration. Re-conceptualizing reintegration as a process dependent on both institutional and individual factors can lead to new and creative approaches of

supporting the process, such as through reintegration nodes or public-private-donor partnerships.

This paper argues that it is possible to realize post-war reintegration in Angola and elsewhere if done in a way which addresses both the institutional and individual dimensions of the process. War-affected civilians are not helpless, nor should they be presented as such. Their own agency in the reintegration process should be acknowledged and promoted. Nevertheless, people are dependent on certain services to be provided by state or non-state actors at least in the immediate aftermath of conflict and appropriate leverage should be applied.

Effective policy-making, whether for the purposes of humanitarian assistance or economic reform, requires a better understanding of reintegration. Failure to comprehend not only how war-affected populations define reintegration, but the foundation upon which it is built, could be detrimental to all actors involved in the process - national governments, international organizations and private actors alike. Reintegration that is not supported internally or externally risks collapsing and sparking renewed conflict. Furthermore, governments and international organizations have an ethical commitment to support reintegration not only because of the humanitarian imperative it involves, but because so much of the death and destruction of the war was either directly or indirectly supported by external actors.

Donors and governments are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of the relief-development transition, which if not supported, could lead to conflict and renewed cycles of displacement. As this realization grows, so too do funding opportunities for relief-development activities. While financial support is important, it is not enough: countries emerging from war need more than donor-funded schools, health posts and more workshops.

Such fix-it approaches characterize institutional concepts of reconstruction and development, but they operate at a level which places people and governments in a powerless and dependent position. Instead, donors and agencies should focus greater attention on partnerships which can jump-start economic activity in regions affected by conflict so that *those affected*, not just donors or agencies, can decide about their own development and peace-building priorities. Aid agencies have taken significant steps in this direction through community-driven initiatives, yet such partnerships must be complemented by activities which integrate the public and private sectors.

Further research

This paper contributes only a piece to a much larger debate about the role of outsiders and governments in reintegration and the best ways in which to support countries and persons emerging from armed conflict. Several issues remain under-researched. One of them is the role that food plays in the reintegration of subsistence farmers. Can food act as a catalyst or impediment to reintegration? Given their privileged role as two staple crops in Africa, cassava/manioc and maize play an important role in food security.

At least in Moxico, research suggests that the particular strain of cassava grown can take two to three years to harvest and does not conveniently fit into the WFP's

specified one-year programme of assistance. Were local crop varieties or cultural preferences taken into consideration, this situation could have been avoided by extending rations or through the application of more creative approaches to food security. Staple crops in other parts of Africa, such as millet and plantains, and other non-staple crops should be better studied and understood by both researchers and aid agencies so that initial food assistance can be better tailored to fit local needs.

Another area deserving further research is the effects of long-term refugee camp experiences on returnees. Do the education, skills and livelihoods acquired in refugee camps benefit people upon their return? Evidence suggests that returned refugees are regarded as the most educated, trained and skilled in communities not only in Angola, but in similar post-conflict African countries, such as Liberia and Sudan. Is this the case and if so, do such skills and education transfer into employment opportunities and larger economic reintegration?

In Moxico, it appears not, as manifested by increased rates of migration, strains on resources and discouragement from the government. This is not to underestimate the value of life-saving information provided to refugees about topics such as HIV/AIDS and landmine awareness in refugee camps, but simply questions the numerous carpentry, tailoring and baking classes which fail to jump-start income-generation upon return to the country of origin. Returnee-concentrated towns are especially full of skilled persons, but as one respondent in Luena put it, *formado para quê?*, which translates to, 'trained for what?' This question should be at the crux at every training programme for displaced populations and should be based on more than just donor preferences or past programme successes.

One way to make programmes more relevant might be to constantly evaluate the situation of the country of origin during conflict, using refugees or monitors as a valuable source of information. Such fact-finding might lead to the creation of vocational programmes which better speak to post-conflict reconstruction needs, such as de-mining or well construction. Once repatriation has occurred, NGOs leading these initiatives could evaluate their success by tracking a pool of returnees to discover whether the skills taught are relevant to them upon their return to the country of origin. In the short-term, donors such as UNHCR should be more rigorous in their funding and monitoring of such trainings.

Refugee camp experiences can also have longer-term affects on individuals' sense of community, coping strategies and cultural practices. These, in turn, can strongly impact the individual factors associated with reintegration. As we have seen, the assumption that reintegration includes a return to normal is both misplaced and inappropriate in some contexts, where a 'return' to pre-war life is either impossible or unlikely given shifts in environments and experiences.

As power hierarchies shift, neighbours alter, traditions transform and people displaced from conflict adapt to new realities which reshape their social and economic fabric. Such changes can be positive, but others can be negative, such as a decline in the respect for authority/elders or local tradition. How do these cultural alterations impact reintegration? Culture is dynamic and adapts to changes in the environment, yet understanding how long-term displacement affects culture can also help national and international actors better support the process.

Angola has moved off the humanitarian radar screen for now. UNHCR High Commissioner Guterres recently visited Angola in March 2007 and announced the official end to repatriation and a new focus on finding a solution for the Congolese refugees living near Luanda (UNHCRh 2007). While Angola moves out of the spotlight, other countries experiencing reintegration move into it. One of the largest repatriation operations currently underway is in South Sudan. It shares many similarities with Angola, including its abundance of natural resources, length of conflict and level of displacement, although its size and divided system of governance present its own unique set of challenges.

The UNHCR began organized repatriation from Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya in December 2005, just five months after the peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement. The challenges which returnees face are familiar, and include landmines, security and a lack of health posts and schools. Can reintegration experiences in Angola, Mozambique and Sierra Leone offer insight for reintegration in South Sudan and other post-conflict regions of the world? The answer is an emphatic *yes*, but whether these lessons will be applied remains to be seen.

Appendix 1: *Map of Angola*

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