

Constraints

UNHCR was not able to complete organized return from camps and settlements by the end of 2004 as initially intended due to a continuing lack of access to some parts of the country. While UNHCR and its partners were able to open up seven new return corridors, two key routes in northern Angola remained blocked. In eastern Angola, given the continuing access problems, IOM was forced to launch costly air operations to ensure that repatriation could commence. The long rainy season also delayed the start of movements to some parts of the country due to poor road conditions, while continued conflict in Cabinda made it possible for only a few refugees to return from the Republic of the Congo.

The isolated border provinces to which most refugees returned were among the most severely affected by the civil conflict. Access to basic services remained very limited, threatening reintegration prospects for returnees and delaying the return of some refugees. The limited development efforts that were implemented in Angola focused primarily on the more densely populated and relatively easily accessible Plan Alto Provinces.

Funding

Donors continued to provide strong support for the Angola operation. Nevertheless, the high costs involved in opening up new corridors of return forced UNHCR to divert substantial resources from reintegration to repatriation. Moreover, the severe financial constraints faced by WFP impacted on the repatriation operation in terms of reductions in the food rations provided to returning refugees and cuts in the passenger and cargo air services operated by WFP to areas of return.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

The legal framework governing return to Angola continued to function through regular meetings of six tripartite commissions established between the Angolan Government, UNHCR and countries of asylum. UNHCR worked with its partners to ensure that basic protection objectives were met, including provision of birth certificates to returnee children, family reunification and assistance to vulnerable returnees. The Office provided assistance to

Persons of concern

Population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Zambia (returnees)	46,500	36,000	-	-
DRC (returnees)	34,100	23,100	-	-
DRC (refugees)	13,500	10,800	55	62
Namibia (returnees)	8,800	5,800	-	-
RoC (returnees)	800	300	-	-
DRC (asylum-seekers)	600	-	54	26
RoC (asylum-seekers)	200	-	48	30

Income and expenditure (USD) Annual programme budget

Revised budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
19,188,432	12,747,045	6,784,628	19,531,673	19,101,960

¹ Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments. The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

spontaneous returnees through a network of reception centres in areas of return and continued initiatives to build awareness among border officials and other local authorities of the rights of returning refugees, including compliance with the central Government's recognition of the voluntary repatriation form as an official temporary identification.

Upon arrival, returnees were supplied with a two-month food ration, followed by additional supplies until the first harvest following their return. Rations were reduced for part of the year due to limited supplies from WFP. To ensure the sustainability of return, UNHCR worked with its partners to initiate various reintegration initiatives in areas of return. UNHCR and the Government of Angola also agreed that a technical expert would be deployed in early 2005 to work with the Government to develop a reintegration framework in areas of return, in line with existing development plans.

For the refugees in Angola, local integration remained the most feasible durable solution. WFP provided rations to over 7,400 refugees up to October, thereafter food assistance was limited to vulnerable refugees only. While most refugees possessed documentation, access to public education and health facilities and were permitted to work, the Government did not yet accept UNHCR's proposal that refugees be granted permanent residency or citizenship. Three refugees were resettled to a third country, while UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of four refugees.

Activities and assistance

Community services: A total of 663 vulnerable returnees received assistance to rebuild their homes, 27 unaccompanied minors were reunited with their parents and three workshops were organized on sexual and gender-based violence. Mine awareness training was provided to all returnees at the reception centres. Vocational training benefited 120 returnees, including 65 women. Under a UNHCR-ILO initiative, a women's association charged with the operation of a community development centre in Lumbala N'Guimbo was helped to set itself up. Vocational training enabled 40 refugees to improve their local integration prospects. The refugee centre in Luanda organized educational, cultural and income-generating activities. Finally, 40 urban refugees received micro-credit.



Crop production: Eleven thousand families in return communities received seeds and tools through a joint UNHCR-FAO initiative. Agricultural pilot projects were launched in Moxico and Zaire provinces for the cultivation of ground nuts, maize, cassava and potatoes. Agricultural services for refugees in Sungi settlement included assistance to establish an agricultural cooperative.



Angola: In addition to food, all returnee families received buckets, plastic sheeting and other non-food items. Women actively participated in the distribution. *UNHCR/N. Behring-Chisholm*

Domestic needs/Household support: All returnee families received a kitchen set comprising a jerry can, buckets, plastic sheeting, soap, blankets and a mosquito net, as well as a tool kit.

Education: Intensive Portuguese-language training was provided to 10,000 returnee children and 600 adults; 12 schools were built in key return communities.

Health/Nutrition: Thirty health posts and one hospital were rehabilitated in the main communities of return and support provided for medical personnel and essential medicines. Training was provided for 15 nurses and 25 traditional birth attendants. Each reception centre included a functioning health post, where returnees were screened upon arrival, children were vaccinated and families received HIV/AIDS sensitization and health education

information. All returnee convoys were accompanied by an ambulance and health personnel.

Legal assistance: Seventy per cent of returnee children received a birth certificate in the reception centres. All returnees received mine awareness training in the reception centres; 24 seminars on conflict resolution were held and 35 peace promoters were trained; 15 workshops on voluntary repatriation and the rights of returnees were organized for border officials and other local authorities. The national refugee eligibility body was assisted to improve its processing of asylum claims, resulting in a 10 per cent reduction in the backlog of pending cases. Workshops for immigration officials on refugee rights were held in three locations.

Operational support (to agencies): Computers, radios, motorbikes and generators were provided to the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration (MINARS) offices in five field locations. Each implementing partner was supported through its Luanda office to ensure the appropriate technical supervision of field operations. Twelve light vehicles were also purchased and allocated to the different implementing partners.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: Three new reception centres were constructed during the year in Namacunde (Cunene), Beu (Uige) and Huambo (IOM financed), as well as a way-station in Caianda (Moxico). The eight existing reception centres and transit centres were maintained; 270 kilometres of roads and nine bridges were rehabilitated in Zaire, Uige and Moxico provinces. The Lumbala N'Guimbo airstrip was repaired to ensure continuation of airlifts from Zambia.

Transport/Logistics: All (organized) returnees were given transport to the reception centre and onward to their home community or the closest accessible location (organized returnees and special cases of spontaneous returnees). These movements were part-financed by IOM. For transport from the reception centres to home communities, UNHCR provided its implementing partners with 51 trucks (12 of them purchased using 2004 funds). Maintenance facilities set up in M'banza Congo covered northern Angola, while those in Luena covered Moxico province.

Water: Fifty nine water points were rehabilitated/constructed in Moxico province, and latrines were maintained in all reception centres.

Organization and implementation

Management

Apart from the Luanda office, UNHCR operated through two suboffices and six field offices in Angola. Field office Uige closed mid-way through the year, while field office Malange opened. A total of 137 staff were assigned to UNHCR, of which 41 were international including two JPOs, 11 UNVs, two Swiss Development Cooperation deployees and four Surge deployees and 96 were national. During the course of the year, UNHCR introduced several measures in response to the findings of an external audit. UNHCR also completed the implementation of all the recommendations of a 2003 internal audit.

Working with others

UNHCR implemented repatriation and refugee operations through arrangements with 24 partners, including government bodies, UN and intergovernmental agencies as well as international and national NGOs. In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with WFP to cover the provision of food assistance to returnees and refugees. Other partners contributed substantially to the operations through their directly implemented activities. MINARS, the immigration authorities, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Family and Promotion of Women, municipal administrations and other authorities played important roles in UNHCR's operations.

Overall assessment

Despite difficult climatic conditions and lack of access to certain areas, the voluntary repatriation operation brought home more than 66,000 Angolans in convoys and airlifts, an increase of 20 per cent over the previous year. Overall, 72 per cent of all returnees were assisted by UNHCR, significantly more than during the previous two years.

Success in reintegration was more mixed. While the absorption capacity of key areas of return increased, the major reconstruction effort required to ensure sustainable reintegration did not take place. Conditions remained extremely difficult, particularly with respect to landmines, access to health, education, water services and economic opportunities. While UNHCR is strongly committed to supporting the reintegration process, at least for the next two years, success will ultimately hinge on the commitment of the Government to sustained, long-term investment – with adequate international support – in areas of return. Of particular importance will be building local capacity (both in government and civil society) to implement economic and social initiatives.

With respect to refugees in Angola, significant advances were made in re-orientating the programme from assistance to local integration, with some 70 per cent of the population having attained self-sufficiency. However, regularization of their status in Angola – whereby they become either permanent residents or citizens – is the key issue that must be resolved before local integration can be considered complete.

Offices

Luanda

Cazombo
Luau
Luena
Lumbala N'Guimbo
M'banza Congo
Malange (opened in March)
Maquela do Zombo
Menongue
Uige (closed in April)

Partners

Government agencies

Inter-Ministerial Government Commission for Refugee Issues in Angola
Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration
Ministry of Family and Promotion of Women
Ministry of Interior, Immigration Department
Ministry of Justice
Municipal Administrations
Provincial Directorate of Public Works (Uige province)
Provincial Directorate of Public Works (Zaire province)

NGOs

Africa Humanitarian Action
Agrisud
Atlas Logistique
Caritas (Kuando Kubango, Uige, Zaire)
Centre for Common Ground
Cordenação das Organizações de Serviço Voluntário
Don Bosco
International Medical Corps
Intersos
Jesuit Refugee Services
Lutheran World Federation
Medair
Médecins sans Frontières (Belgium)
Mines Advisory Group
Movimondo
Norwegian People's Aid
Norwegian Refugee Council
Save the Children (USA)

Others

FAO
IOM
UNICEF
WFP
UNV

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Prior years' projects
	Annual programme budget	Annual and Supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	5,708,273	0
Community services	305,325	265,983
Crop production	62,802	613,187
Domestic needs / household support	652,938	0
Education	113,898	213,362
Health and nutrition	728,110	807,489
Income generation	0	54,008
Legal assistance	703,706	154,009
Operational support (to agencies)	1,049,417	949,098
Sanitation	0	1,668
Shelter and infrastructure	1,289,891	994,067
Transport and logistics	2,856,754	934,824
Water	38,441	43,352
Instalments with implementing partners	1,891,823	(5,031,047)
Sub-total operational activities	15,401,377	0
Programme support	3,700,583	0
Total disbursements	19,101,960	0
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	5,903,567	
Reporting received	(4,011,744)	
Balance	1,891,823	
Prior years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1 January		4,575,069
Payments made		781,149
Reporting received		(5,031,047)
Refunded to UNHCR		(243,869)
Balance		81,302
Unliquidated obligations		
Outstanding 1 January		1,590,839
Disbursements		(1,038,916)
Cancellations		(551,923)
Outstanding 31 December		0