

# HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN ANGOLA



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## **OVERALL SITUATION**

*As relief agencies wait for the final results of ongoing crop assessments in various parts of the country, preliminary indications seem to indicate the rise of multiple pocket malnutrition areas in lieu of a general food emergency. Meanwhile, increased overland access has led humanitarian organizations to improve relief operations in northern Huila. During the reporting period, WFP transported by road for the first time relief items from Huambo to Caconda. This convoy signals improved security conditions along the roads linking the provinces in central and southern Angola. Joint Government/UNITA/UN/NGO missions to affected areas in northern Huila continue to define priority locations for future assistance while preparations to conduct humanitarian convoys in the province by mid-February come to an end. In Uige, UNITA officials participated at a session of the Provincial Humanitarian Coordination Group (PHCG) for the first time since September last year. Members of the national HCG, led by the Minister for Social Assistance and Reinsertion travelled to Uige to attend to this session.*

*Ten days after the extension of UNAVEM's mandate by the United Nations Security Council, the quartering of UNITA soldiers continues in the four opened Quartering Areas. As of 19 February, UN agencies and NGOs operating at the open QAs were providing humanitarian assistance to over 15,000 former UNITA combatants, their dependents and populations residing in areas near the QAs. UCAH has organized seminars on health and civic education for NGO and UNITA staff who are operating in the open QAs. During the reporting period, members of the Joint Commission led by the Deputy-Special Representative of the Secretary-General visited Andulo to assess preparations to open this QA. Also during the reporting period, the Director-General of the FAO and the United Kingdom's Minister for Overseas Development began their respective visits to Angola.*

### **Humanitarian Relief Assistance**

**Kuando Kubango:** On 17 February a joint Government/UNITA/UN/NGO team travelled to Likua to carry out the third emergency distribution in the area. WFP plans to visit Likua soon to assess the impact of the joint emergency intervention as a basis for future assistance in the area. In Menongue, CARE continues distribution to over

60,000 beneficiaries, including some 12,000 IDPs. Relief agencies operating in the province recently reported indications of small scale return of IDPs to their areas of origin.

**Cunene:** AICF informed participants at the National Food Aid Coordination meeting, held 16 February, that UNITA had requested NGOs operating in

southern Angola to assist populations in Namacunde. AICF invited interested relief agencies to discuss future humanitarian operations in this municipality.

**Huila:** The transport of relief items by road continues to increase. During the reporting period, WFP carried out its first humanitarian convoy from Huambo to Caconda, the later in the province of Huila. WFP transports food aid for AICF who plans to continue general food distributions in Caconda until June this year. After a recent encounter between local Government and UNITA officials and humanitarian organizations, access to needy populations, mainly in the northern areas of the province is increasing. As part of efforts to improve joint humanitarian interventions in the province, a joint Government/UN/NGO assessment mission to Catala reported evidence of a precarious food situation. Members of the mission recommended a general food distribution, supplementary feeding and assistance in health and education. As provincial authorities and UNITA officials agree to improve security conditions and demining begins, secondary roads linking the province to other parts of the country open to humanitarian convoys. Meanwhile, demining continues along the Lubango-Menongue and the Lubango-Quilengues-Chongoroi-Benguela roads. The opening of these routes will greatly facilitate humanitarian activities in the province.

**Benguela:** ICRC reports a severe loss of maize harvest in Ganda, Caimbambo and Cubal. Maize is the main crop for populations in this region. However, the sorghum crops seem to give positive indications which may help to muzzle the effect that the loss of the maize harvest on food security levels. Relief agencies operating in the province plan to distribute short-cycle sorghum seeds to the areas affected by the dry spell that has doomed the maize harvest. Meanwhile, humanitarian organizations in Chongoroi continue efforts to target humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups and rehabilitation activities. Overland access from Cubal to Ganda is expected to be possible for humanitarian convoys by end-February as demining activities proceed along the route.

**Huambo:** ICRC reports the presence of an agronomist in the province who is conducting an in-depth assessment of the crop situation. The

findings of this assessment are scheduled to be presented at the next session of the National Food Aid Coordination meeting coordinated by WFP. On 13 February representatives of UCAH and AMI travelled to Bailundo to obtain an overall picture of ongoing and future humanitarian operations of NGOs in the health sector in Bailundo municipality and surrounding areas.

**Bie:** WFP reports the need for non-food items in Chitembo where they plan to support road rehabilitation activities. WFP supports MSF-Belgium's health operations in the area. CARE International recently reported the distribution of food aid to a total of 27,000 beneficiaries in the province of Bie. Most of these beneficiaries are displaced families in Kunje, Chisendo, N'harea, Catobola and Chipeta.

**Moxico:**MSF-B reports its intention to suspend its intensive feeding program in Luena but will continue supporting the paediatric section of the local hospital. In Lumege, MSF-B prepares to begin supplementary feeding in response to evidence of malnutrition among children. General food distributions to some 90,000 beneficiaries in Luena will continue until the next harvest. Internally displaced families from Camanongue have gradually begun the return to their areas of origin. WFP plans to support activities geared at assisting IDPs resettle in their areas of origin as part of efforts to stimulate IDPs in Luena to return massively.

**Malange:**WVI reports ongoing registration of vulnerable groups in Malange city in close collaboration with CARITAS. This is part of efforts to improve targeting food aid to those most affected by the war. Further to recent encounters with local UNITA officials on the expansion of humanitarian programmes to areas under their control and the recent rehabilitation of the bridge over the river Luximbe, relief agencies are finalizing preparations to intervene in those areas. WVI reports preparations to conduct nutritional surveys in areas reported by UNITA to reveal evidence of acute malnutrition as a basis for future humanitarian interventions in the area. Preparations for future emergency operations in Caculama include the registration of some 10,000 displaced families from Cagandala who currently reside in Caculama. Relief agencies operating in the province report a

### ***Mine Action Programme***

■ **Mine Training:** Training courses for Angolan deminers continue in Kuito at the Central Mine Action Training School. Over 40 Angolans are expected to graduate from this course by early March. UCAH's Central Mine Action Office (CMAO) projects that its counterpart the National Institute for the Removal of Explosive Obstacles (INAROE), will be able to train over 500 Angolan deminers by the end of 1996.

■ **Demining:** Specialized international NGOs continue demining operations in various locations, mainly in the provinces of Malange, Huambo, Benguela and Bie. This activity is supporting urgent humanitarian interventions in health and agriculture.

■ **Mine Survey:** Norwegian People's Aid has begun mine survey activities along the Malange-Saurimo-Luena route. With the arrival of additional bridges donated by the American government, preparations to begin the rehabilitation of bridges along this route is expected to begin soon. Meanwhile, international NGOs involved in demining continue to survey suspected mined areas in support of relief activities along Angola's coast and interior.

### ***Demobilization and Reintegration***

■ **Quarterming Area Update:** Quarterming of UNITA soldiers continues in the four opened Quarterming Areas. As of 19 February a total of 15,340 UNITA soldiers were registered at the QAs in Vila Nova (4,739), Londuimbali (3656), Quibaxe (1945) and Negage (5,000). Final preparations continue to open the QAs at Andulo (Bie province), Quibala (Kwanza Sul), N'Tuco (Zaire) and N'Gove (Huila).

■ **Health Seminar:** From 12-17 February a health seminar took place in Negage with the participation of NGO and UNITA personnel responsible for providing health services to soldiers at the QAs in Angola's northern region. This seminar was organized by UCAH in close collaboration with UNITA and NGOs.

■ **Civic Training Seminar:** A one week seminar organized by UCAH for NGO staff operating at the QAs at Quibaxe and Negage began on 19 Friday at Negage. This seminar includes the participation of the Civic Education Promoters currently implementing this programme at the QAs in Vila Nova and Londuimbali.

### **Missions:**

■ **Vila Nova, Huambo:** A joint UCAH/OFDA/Spanish Embassy/NGO mission visited the QA at Vila Nova on 16 February. Participants acquainted themselves with the overall humanitarian assistance programme in the QAs as well as issues related to assistance for the families of the quartered soldiers and health activities for the population of surrounding areas. The mission assessed the progress of the humanitarian assistance programme.

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### **in Brief:**

- The next **NGO Information Sharing session** is scheduled to take place at UCAH on Friday, 1 March at 8:30 am.
- The WFP Donor meeting is scheduled to take place at WFP on Thursday, 22 February
- The next session of the **Uige Provincial Humanitarian Coordination Group** is scheduled to take place on 29 February at Negage.

great lack of fish, oil and salt in areas surrounding Caculama.

**Lunda Sul:** Representatives of MINARS, WFP, OFDA and SCF-US travelled to Saurimo to evaluate food conditions of the beneficiaries of ongoing general food distributions. The team recommended a phase out of general food distributions. The Governor agreed on the phase out of general food distributions but recommended that this should not take place before June when the road linking Luanda to Malange, Saurimo and Luena is expected to be open. The Governor highlighted the positive impact that the opening of this road will have on the economy by stimulating the exchange and purchase of food and non-food items. Displaced families in Saurimo were allotted farmlands by the provincial Government, while relief agencies provided support to rehabilitation projects and small scale income projects. Under such circumstances the mission expects the population's level of food security to improve and general free distributions of food aid to end.

**Bengo:** During the reporting period, representatives of the European Union, UCAH, and IPMP travelled to Quibaxe to assess health conditions of populations residing in surrounding areas, survey the situation of the family camps and familiarize themselves with the setup of the QA. Members of the mission considered the situation of the dependents of the quartered soldiers to be positive and reported the need for urgent health assistance to populations residing in surrounding areas.

**Luanda:** On 19 February the national Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG) held its 40th session. Among the issues discussed were the prospects for the 1995/96 harvest in the country, indications of the return of IDPs to their areas of origin, the preparation of the 1996 Appeal and the expansion of humanitarian activities in the province of Huila. Participants agreed to strengthen the HCG's participation at Provincial sessions to support local efforts to establish and maintain a continued working relationship between provincial authorities and local UNITA officials.

**Uige:** During the reporting period, UCAH's Field Advisor carried out a rapid needs assessment in the municipality of Quimbele. While no signs of a food emergency were reported, urgent assistance in health and an in-depth assessment were recommended. Uige was recently the stage of a major breakthrough between Government and UNITA when the Minister for Social Assistance and Reinsertion, accompanied by members of the national Humanitarian Coordination Group, met with the Provincial HCG on 13 February. This session counted with the participation of UNITA delegates from Negage. This was the result of continued efforts by UCAH to improve the working relationship between provincial authorities and local UNITA officials. The first and last time that UNITA officials participated at a joint Government/UN/NGO forum to discuss humanitarian assistance in the province was in September last year. After the session the Minister for Social Assistance and Reinsertion travelled to Negage with a Government delegation where he met with General Dembo, UNITA Vice-President. During the encounter, the participants agreed on specific measures to improve the free circulation of persons and goods as well as security conditions in the province. Thus, having established joint Government/UNITA/UN/NGO working groups to define and monitor humanitarian operations in the province, the next session of the PHCG is scheduled for 29 February in Negage. This will be the first time that provincial authorities attend to a meeting on humanitarian issues in UNITA controlled area.

**Zaire:** Results from the nutritional survey carried out by MSF-Holland in M'Banza Congo indicate 14 per cent global and 3,3 per cent severe malnutrition rates. MSF-H recommends continuation of feeding programmes and nutritional education for the mothers of malnourished children to stabilize this alarming situation.