

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN ANGOLA

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OVERALL SITUATION

On 1 March, President Eduardo Dos Santos met with Dr. Savimbi in Libreville, Gabon for the third time since the signature of the Lusaka Protocol. Various issues concerning recent development in the peace process were discussed and specific measures agreed upon.

*Meanwhile, overland transportation of humanitarian items continues to increase in southern Angola. During the reporting period, WFP carried out the first convoy from **Lobito to Lubango** via **Chongoroi and Quilengues**, thus improving the link between the Benguela and Huila provinces. Within Huila, the first humanitarian convoy successfully attended to populations residing in areas near Cuvango and Cinquenta. The convoy allowed Government, UNITA, UN and NGO personnel to conduct joint vaccinations and food distributions for vulnerable populations. Preparations continue to organize a humanitarian convoy to Quilengues and Catala municipalities. Also on overland access, a recent WFP road reconnaissance mission along the **Sumbe-Andulo** route via **Quibala and Mussende** considered the route usable for humanitarian convoys. The opening of this route will facilitate access to the Quartering Area in Andulo.*

Humanitarian Relief Assistance

SCF-UK evaluation of the seeds and tools distribution: At a recent session of the National Food Aid Coordination meeting, SCF-UK informed participants of the preliminary findings of their assessment of the seeds and tools distribution carried out last year. Some of the preliminary findings included: indications that most of the seeds were distributed on time; that less seeds were consumed in areas where seeds distributions were accompanied by food for seed protection; that farmers prefer local seeds to the imported type; that farmers had planted a mixture of imported and local seeds; and that farmers requested for more agricultural tools to improve their production levels.

Kuando Kubango: During the reporting period, the

joint MINARS/UNITA/UN/NGO team finalized the third and last general food distribution to some 23,000 beneficiaries in Likua. A recent assessment mission to the area by representatives of MINARS, UNITA, WFP, UNICEF and AAA reported a significant improvement of the nutritional situation compared to that of November last year that led to emergency interventions. The team also reported evidence of a reasonable harvest and signs of rising livestock. Members of the local population requested for assistance in the supply of educational material, medicines and other non-food items.

Huila: The first in a series of humanitarian convoys to areas in the east and northeastern segments of the province, succeeded in assisting populations near Cuvango and Cinquenta during the reporting period. Although local UNITA and UNAVEM

officials had travelled the route frequently, one of the trucks in the convoy detonated a mine a few kilometers before reaching the locality of Cinquenta, resulting in the injury of a member of the convoy. Reports indicate that this was an old mine washed to the surface due to recent rains. In a coordinated effort with UNAVEM the victim was medevacuated by air to Huambo where he received medical care. Erstwhile, three joint vaccination teams immunized population in two municipalities along the route. The convoy comprised of Government, UNITA, UN and NGO staff signalled the beginning of improved overland access in the province, i.e. a significant step towards free movement of people and goods in the province. With these convoys, populations residing both in Government and in UNITA areas can now have access to humanitarian assistance in health, food and non-food sectors.

Benguela: ORA continues to assist IDPs at camps in Dombe Grande and Lobito. This organization reports the spontaneous return of some 300 IDPs to Chongoroi on a monthly basis since February this year. Recent efforts to assist in the return of these displaced were stalled due to limitations in terms of transport and access, despite recent reports from Provincial authorities and humanitarian organizations operating in the province who consider the security situation around Chongoroi to be fairly stable. ORA continues preparations to support resettlement activities in Chongoroi by providing former displaced families with food during a six month period as well as seeds and agritools. In Lobito, ORA has treated some 600 cases of TB, mostly residents and some IDPs. As part of efforts to continue assistance to street children, ORA International also plans to increase the capacity of its center to accommodate 200 street children. Located in Lobito, this center currently provides accommodation, food, education and recreational activities to some 100 children in extremely difficult circumstances. To attenuate the dry spell that seems to affect certain areas in the province, WFP plans to support national NGOs during a second seeds distribution to some 18,000 families in Caibambo and Chongoroi.

Bie: As part of UNICEF's efforts to support health care services in the province, UNICEF assessed EPI operations in Chinguar and distributed essential drugs and health equipment in the locality of

Cunhinga. On the other hand, CARE International recently reported the arrival of some 400 new displaced persons to Camacupa and Catabola reportedly fleeing from tension in nearby areas. In Kuito, the number of malnourished children attending to the MSF-B nutritional center has fallen from 100 to 65 during the reporting period. Meanwhile last week, MSF-B began supplementary feeding activities for the malnourished in Camacupa. The center expects to attend to some 600 beneficiaries in the area.

Moxico: In Luena, MSF-B recently finalized a nutritional survey which revealed 6 per cent global and 1.4 severe malnutrition rates. While these results show a significant decline of general malnutrition levels, MSF-B recommends the continuation of general food distribution and health assistance for displaced families. In order to avoid reverting to a food emergency status, the report also suggested close monitoring of the nutritional condition of this population. In Camanongue, UNICEF reported the beginning of preventive health activities in the area and announced their disposition to assist NGOs interested in supporting the resettlement of displaced persons.

Lunda Sul: As nutritional conditions of populations improve in the province, local authorities, UN agencies and NGOs operating in the region agreed to initiate preparations to phase out general food distributions in Saurimo. Humanitarian assistance will now be targeted solely to the most vulnerable.

Malange: During a recent visit to Caculama to assess ongoing EPI activities, UNICEF staff reported indications of a suspected anthrax plague in Caculama that has severely affected some residents in nearby communities. UNICEF's provincial office suspects that people are contaminated as a result of the consumption of infected livestock. A joint WHO/UNICEF team is scheduled to visit the area soon to carry out an in depth evaluation. Meanwhile, as part of efforts to support returning displaced families in Cacuso, UNICEF recently accompanied the "Zulu" theatrical group to assess resettlement conditions. Also during the mission, the conditions of children in school age were assessed as a basis for future humanitarian assistance in the area. The "Zulu" group is one of UNICEF's grassroots media; a channel for the transmission of basic concepts

concerning child survival and development mainly in rural Angola. In Calandula, a recent nutritional survey carried out by MSF-Holland reveals 9 per cent global and 3.1 per cent severe malnutrition rates. Humanitarian organizations operating in the city of Malange report a precarious food security situation due the theft of most of the harvest that has deprived farmers of otherwise abundant crops as well as seeds for a second planting.

Kwanza Sul: SCF-US recently completed the successful reintegration of 53,000 formerly displaced persons returning to areas near Gabela, Quilenda, Conde and Ebo. During the past six months, SCF-US provided assistance in food aid, seeds and tools, non-food aid and technical assistance. In addition to support for resettlement, crops in these areas have been positive allowing these populations to become self-sufficient and reinitiate a normal life.

Kwanza Norte: In Golungo Alto, WVI reports a decline in the number of patients attending to their nutritional center. When the center was opened in early January, a daily average of 90 malnourished children attended to the center for assistance; today this number has fallen to 15. In Gonguembo, AICF conducted a nutritional survey that revealed 7 per cent global and 1 per cent severe malnutrition rates.

Bengo: During the reporting period, ADPP installed some 30 water pumps in Caxito, the provincial capital. These pumps were donated by UNICEF as part of efforts to improve the quality and access to water for the population. Also in Bengo, humanitarian organizations report indications of a crop failure in areas around Caxito, Bela Vista and Libongos. However, this situation seems to be attenuated by the fact that farmers were able to keep some seeds that are now being planted.

Uige: UNICEF has resumed full blown operations in the province in response to the improved joint working relationship between provincial authorities and local UNITA officials. On 29 February, the Provincial Humanitarian Coordination Group met for the first time in UNITA controlled Negage with

the participation of Provincial authorities, UN agencies, NGOs and religious organizations operating in the province. Having successfully completed this session, participants agreed to hold the meetings of the sectoral sub-committees on 6 and 7 March in Uige and Negage respectively. Government and UNITA are working closely to define priority areas for humanitarian assistance in the province to facilitate the intervention of relief organizations.

Mine Action Programme

■ **Mine Training-CMATS:** Additional students continue to arrive to begin training at the Central Mine Action Training School in Viana, Luanda province. During the reporting period, some 60 former UNITA soldiers were integrated to the demining course, out which seven are on a paramedic course.

■ **Mine Survey:** Specialized NGOs continue to survey areas along the Malange-Saurimo-Luena route as part of preparations to rehabilitate this road. Agencies involved in this exercise expect the route to become serviceable by July this year.

Demobilization and Reintegration

■ **Status of QAs:** As preparations to open additional QAs in Andulo (Bie), Quibala (Kwanza Sul), N'Tuco (Zaire), and N'Gove (Huila) come to an end, humanitarian personnel and equipment continue to arrive to these locations. UCAH has send UNV's and DRTO's to monitor the implementation of humanitarian assistance in these QAs. The following NGOs are responsible for providing humanitarian assistance to the quartered soldiers in the QAs to be opened: AFRICARE in Andulo and N'Tuco, IPMP in Quibala and MOLISV in N'Gove.

■ **Logistic support to QAs:** As part of joint UCAH/WFP efforts to improve access to Quartering Areas for humanitarian equipment and personnel, WFP has agreed to establish weekly flights to the quartering sites in Andulo and N'Tuco. Additional flights will be established to

facilitate the transportation of humanitarian personnel and equipment to all QAs. WFP support to the quartering process also includes regular overland convoys of food aid to the QAs for distribution to quartered soldiers and their dependents.

■ **Health assistance to areas near the QAs:** CICS completed the vaccination of over 10,000 persons residing in areas near the Negage Quartering Area. To reinforce the implementation of preventive health measures, similar campaigns will be carried out in areas surrounding all QAs.

■ **Demobilization and Reintegration issues:** Recent reports seem to indicate preparations to begin the demobilization of soldiers currently at the QAs. In response to this development, UCAH, in close collaboration with UNDP, IOM, MINARS and IRSEM is developing a contingency plan to jump-start the SeCoR programme and QUIPs in six priority provinces as of May 1996. This is to assist the reintegration of demobilized soldiers back into civilian life.

■ **Missions:** During the reporting period UCAH carried out missions to the quartering sites in Quibala (Kwanza Sul), Andulo (Bie) and N'Tuco (Zaire) to assess the level of preparations for the beginning of the humanitarian assistance programme in these QAs. On 4 March, a joint UCAH/NGO mission travelled to Quibaxe as part of efforts to reinforce humanitarian operations in the area.

■ **Quartering Area Update:** In total, UN and NGO staff are providing assistance to some 3,000 families while they continue preparations to improve the extension of health care to vulnerable populations in areas near the QAs. As of 4 March, a total of 16,657 UNITA soldiers were quartered at the four open Quartering Areas:

Vila Nova: 4,832 soldiers

Londumbali: 4,676 soldiers

Quibaxe: 2,145 soldiers

Negage: 5,004 soldiers

In Brief:

- The next **NGO Information Sharing session** is scheduled to take place at UCAH on Friday, 15 March at 8:30 am.
- Attached to this edition of the Information Bulletin is a copy of report produced by UCAH/DRO containing preliminary information of registered soldiers at the Quartering Areas.