

Developments

Development Workshop's Quarterly Newsletter

May, June, July 2004

Our latest expansion reflects optimistic mood of the country

Take an old colonial house along Luanda's busy Rua Rei Katyavala, tear out the kitchen, turn bedrooms into offices, add a lot of fresh paint and what do you have? - our new DW project office! Up the street in an old apartment block the original DW office still serves as headquarters as it has for 15 years now. The heightened activity at DW and the latest expansion reflects the optimism that prevails throughout post-war Angola, a mood of striving ahead to rebuild the country.

While some non-governmental organizations

(NGOs) are planning to phase out of the country, now that the humanitarian crisis is over, DW has no plans of down-sizing. As a matter of fact, we are growing. Back in 1980 when the Angolan government invited Director Allan Cain to develop a self-help housing programme, DW had only three employees.

Today there are 132 in Luanda and 107 in Huambo.

Although the number of employees has grown, DW's objective remains the same - that of human settlements development.

It started focusing on the needs of war-displaced poor back in the eighties when the

civil war intensified and more and more people fled the rural areas for the safety of the cities. Informal settlements sprang up on the peripheries, especially of Luanda, and among other initiatives, DW began to assist residents in accessing basic services such as water and sanitation.

The prosperity that peace should bring to Angola unfortunately does not extend to everyone equally. "The urban poor aren't benefiting much from peace. Despite the massive building that's happening in Luanda, little has affected the poor," is how Allan sums up the situation, noting that in Luanda these days the "urban poverty" is getting deeper.

Advocating for recognition of basic land rights, especially occupant's rights, tops DW's current list of priorities as the government gets set to pass a new Land Law in 2004. One of DW's major concerns is that the new land legislation may even impoverish the poor more because they will lose rights to land that they occupied during the war. The new land law will remove their tenure rights unless they have legal title papers. 80% are in this situation and risk becoming illegal occupiers.



Luanda DW staff crowd together on verandah of new office building inaugurated this year.

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A letter from DW's National Program Manager, Carlos Figueiredo



A new style of work is needed for the new phase that Angola is entering. At DW we are focusing more on the long term and encouraging more openness and exchange of opinions. We want to improve communications not only within DW but also with our supporters and our partners, and in the communities we work with. As we launch the first edition of our newsletter we believe we have taken another step in that direction.

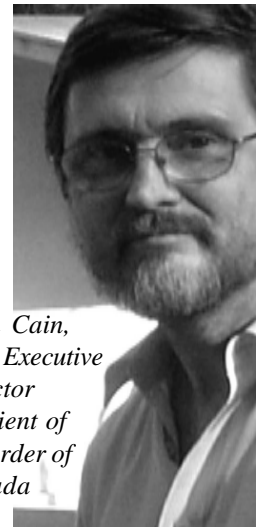
It's time for more sustainable development

oriented action for this new phase. The root cause of problems needs to be tackled and capacity must be created in people and in their organizations to solve problems and make the best use of existing resources.

Continuity, a long-term vision and solidarity with local people and local processes are the main ingredients for this approach.

I am very proud to be working with someone who always defended this approach, namely DW's Executive Director, Allan Cain. This year Allan received the highest award offered by his home

country, the Order of Canada. This is a recognition for his long term commitments to development work in Angola. Congratulations Allan! We are proud to have you at the helm.



Allan Cain,
DW's Executive
Director
recipient of
the Order of
Canada

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DW wants to ensure that the poor too will benefit from peace. The handy excuse 'because of war' can no longer be applied for example, to lack of water and sanitation. Progress on improving basic services and eradicating poverty should accelerate. Expectations are quite high now, but despite the \$500 million invested in improving the city of Luanda, the situation for the poor has yet to show improvement.

One of the biggest but also most exciting challenges DW faces in the post-war era is that the

geographic focus has changed tremendously. Whereas previously we focused on Luanda and Huambo, projects are now opening in 13 more provinces including Zaire, Moxico, and Cunene, where DW will partner mainly with churches and local NGO's, training people and supporting programs.

The strategy for the future, besides continuing to strengthen ties with local governments, is to make DW programs more sustainable: for example, the micro credit could become financially self-sustaining. Staff are encouraged to

continue their education at night school or through distance education. In April DW launched in-house English classes and computer courses.

Almost 25 years ago DW was the only international NGO working in Angola. Since then it has tried to listen to the voices of the poor, helping them secure basic needs while laying the groundwork for future development. As the country's reconstruction phase swings into high gear, looking into the future, DW may well be renovating another old house along Rua Rei Katyavala.

Dw Developments is published quarterly by Development Workshop (DW) Angola. DW is a non-profit organisation working to improve living conditions for the poor in less-developed communities. Its programme focus areas include shelter, peri-urban settlement upgrading, water supply and sanitation, primary health care, small enterprise development and disaster mitigation. DW's strategy is to strengthen the capacity of communities and organisations to act on development problems and opportunities.

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Students get a chance to step out into the real world

In January DW and ESSO Angola joined forces again to launch their third annual Student Internship Program. This year 30 university students were given the opportunity for hands-on experience working for a non-government organization (NGO) during their end-of-year break.

Yolanda Antonio, a fourth year law student, worked for Rede Mulher, a counseling centre for women. She was quickly introduced to the problem of domestic violence when a woman came for help, shards of glass embedded in her head where her husband had hit her. The 21-year-old says that while she learned a lot of theory in university, Rede Mulher taught her practical lessons.

Even though she had no previous experience,

Yolanda was able to help reunite couples on the brink of divorce and reconcile parents and children ready to disown each other. "It was a great experience," she says, explaining that the tougher cases were referred to court.

This is the first year that the eight-week internship program stepped beyond Luanda and included Huambo, Benguela, and Zaire. Third year economics major Elisa Zau dos Santos, confesses that when she heard she was going to Huambo, her first reaction was fear. She knew fighting had been intense there during the war and was afraid she would encounter a lot of landmines, plus it was only her second time out of Luanda.

After her internship working in DW Huambo's micro credit program, Lisa encourages all students, especially women, to sign up for the work experience. Before she applied she never dreamed she stood a chance to be selected and only took the qualifying test that all appli-

cants write, because a fellow student urged her on. When she graduates, she wants to work in a field that will improve the lives of women in Angola.

The program places students in jobs that match their field of study. Afonso Eduardo, a fourth year education major at ISCED, the university in Benguela, worked with local NGO, ADRA, and was quick to identify a serious problem in one of the rural areas he was researching. Children wade through two rivers to get to school. During the rainy season the rivers swell, making it dangerous to cross, and one student actually drowned in the attempt. ADRA plans to follow through on Afonso's recommendation to build a school on this side of the river.

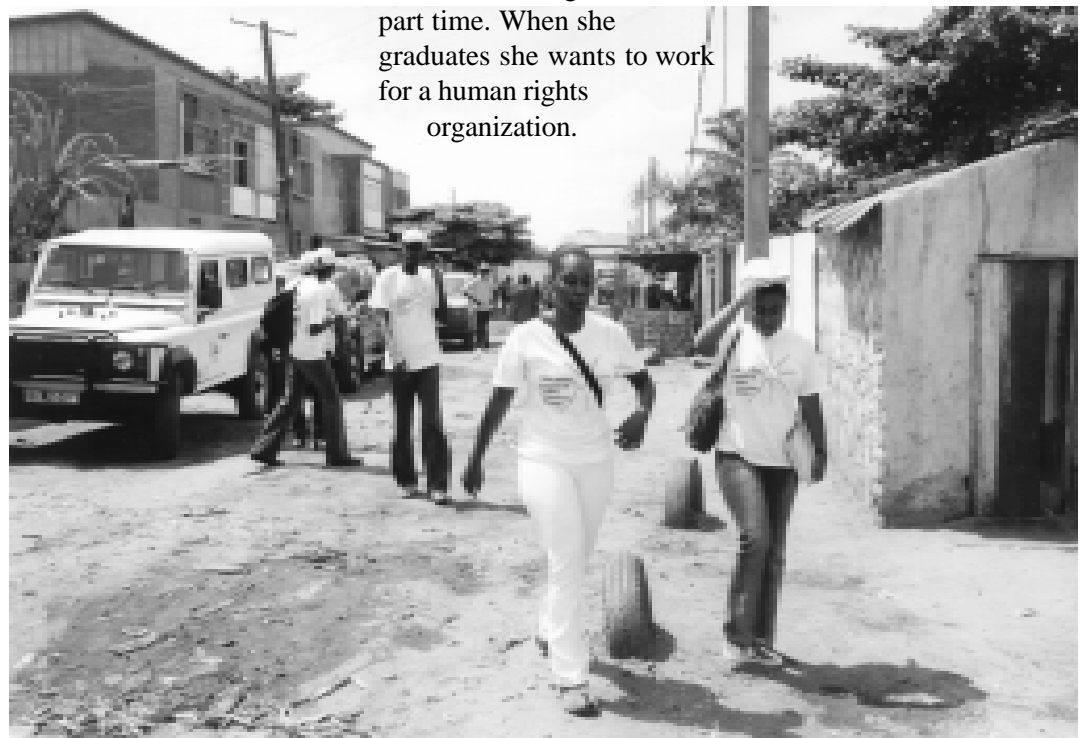
The internship program not only introduces students to the world of NGO's but it also allows NGO's to identify future potential employees. Yolanda is back in university now but she was hired by Rede Mulher to continue working for them part time. When she graduates she wants to work for a human rights organization.



Opportunity for hands-on experience.

At the end of their two month internship, students receive \$1,400 to help finance their studies. ESSO Angola and DW plan to continue and improve the program when they start recruiting again in October.

In 2003, 24 students participated in the Student Internship Program and the first year there were twelve students.



University students head off to work during their year-end break.

What will happen to their homes?



photo by H.Koning

If the new Land Law passes Parliament in its current form, the urban poor risk losing their tenure rights.

Domingos left the provinces 15 years ago to escape the war and moved to Luanda where he found some vacant land on the perimeter of the city which he occupied as a squatter. Two years ago he divided his land and sold half to Pedro, an acquaintance. They called in two neighbors to witness the purchase. Domingoes wrote out a bill of sale and everybody shook hands and walked away happy, not realizing that the document in Pedro's possession was in fact not an official title deed.

The above story is a representation of situations that constantly occur in Angola, especially in urban areas where property is in great demand. According to a two-year Urban Land Research study conducted by DW from 2001 to 2003, the majority of people who live in the *musseques* or shantytowns surrounding Luanda are like Pedro and Domingoes - poor displaced people who occupy or buy land via the informal market but never obtain a formal title proving their ownership, let alone permission to subdivide their property. Yet they believe their house and property are secure.

As Angola celebrates its second year of peace, the government is slated to pass a new Land Law. It's a perfect opportunity to clear up the land ownership confusion facing both rural and urban dwellers, but as it now stands, the current draft of the new Land Law risks making musseque dwellers illegal occupants of the land that they occupy.

The draft of the Land Law now being discussed in the National Assembly carries risks for the Domingoes and the Pedros in the country, according to Pacheco Illinga, DW Project Coordinator for the land research team. If the law is passed as it now stands, the people who do not have an official deed to their property will be considered illegal land holders. In other words, the land they have, no matter how much they paid for it or how long they lived on it, will not

be theirs and can be taken away from them.

For the past 30 years since Angola's independence, the registration of property has been poorly administered if at all. The issue of land ownership is an administrative problem both in rural areas and increasingly so in urban areas. The musseques that sprawl around the big cities hold almost half the country's population, -three million in Luanda alone- the vast majority occupying their land informally. And the numbers will likely continue to grow. Cities offer economic opportunities that don't exist in rural areas and in post-war situations like Angola's, the tendency is for displaced people to remain where they have their livelihood rather than return to the provinces where their roots are.

DW has stepped forward to actively promote changes to the proposed law so that the urban poor occupation rights will be protected. In meetings and discussions with parliamentarians and provincial governors DW and other NGO's have advocated for changes. "We believe it is necessary to recognize in some cases, the informal document used in post-independence times as well as the verbal witness", says Pacheco, "and we want the law to include details for how to access land ownership i.e. where and how to register property."

Angolans in the musseques occupied or built informally because during the war years the local government was weak. No land was made available for the poor to purchase through the formal, commercial market. Permission to buy property took several years or was not given at all, so naturally alternative processes of transferring ownership evolved. DW recommends that the new law set up ways of regularising ownership, which could include use of informal documents to prove occupancy.

Angola is a country that has lots of land but few people, yet the issue of land is so sensitive that it could endanger the peace that has finally come to the country. If the new Land

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photo by H.Koning

Anselmo Kaluassi, a farmer living in a tiny village on the outskirts of Caala in Huambo province, fears his livelihood as a corn farmer is under threat as a foreign corporation eyes his land for coffee production.

“It’s our ancestral land. Many (of our young men) went to the army. We’ve received no help from anyone for a long time. Now these companies want to take our land, but it’s the land of our ancestors, our fathers’ fathers’. If they take away our land, what will we have left? How will we feed our families?,” he asks

A foreign coffee producer, with the knowledge of local officials, has begun to stake out the ground.

“They have already marked the land but they haven’t ploughed or sowed yet” says Kaluassi, pointing to the vast fields plotted out, superimposed on his own small plot. “It’s started already.”

With Kaluassi and his fellow farmers living in such a remote spot, they have poor access to the government administration or courts to hear their complaints. Angolans like him often feel completely powerless when faced with controversial and potentially conflictive issues.

Angola’s legal framework is still in the process of rehabilitation following the end of the war, so there are few local judges or courts to which poor people can turn when they feel unfairly treated or discriminated against.

In the past, this could have been a recipe for disaster, with conflict almost always leading to violence. Kaluassi says he and his fellow farmers scared off the coffee producers by shouting and waving machetes, but after the devastation of Angola’s 27-year civil war, physical fighting is the last thing they want. Nor would it be an effective solution. The foreign firms have the backing of powerful people but the good news is, the case has been brought to court.

Local government sources claim that Kaluassi’s land is part

of 4000 hectares identified by the government to promote agriculture – 3,000 to benefit the land’s owners and 1,000 to plant coffee. In return, a public health post will be built and primary and secondary schooling provided. Kaluassi however argues that there has never been any offer of something in return for the land.

He and his fellow farmers say that their land should be developed for forests and for grazing and is not really suited to coffee production. But more than that, not just anybody can come and take their land and hand it over to others indiscriminately.

“But really it’s the local people, the owners of the land, who have to decide how they use it and how to work it best so that they can fulfill their basic needs.

“To simply take the land and give it to someone else for them to work it and generate cash for themselves is not right. People here are treated like waste, like something that is getting in the way of development,” said one local.

The plight of Kaluassi and his neighbors illustrates that the right of rural peasant communities to land must be recognized to prevent future conflicts. Their interests must be safeguarded and acknowledged by the new Land Law. A monthly newspaper published by DW in Huambo has exposed the story of Kaluassi (see Congratulations to Ondaka, last page) and communities have found that they can gain the attention of government officials through the press. The saga of the coffee invaders is not over yet.

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Law ignores the occupation rights of people in the musseques, whose life savings are invested in their house and land, DW believes it could spark conflict in the future, and jeopardize the consolidation of peace.

“If we lose rights to our land, what will we have left?”



photo by H.Koning

DW News Briefs

A look at the DW sectors



Learning the art of thatching

photo by Huambo Shelter team

Micro Credit

Recent closures forced by the government on open air markets in and around Luanda are negatively impacting some of the 2,500 members of DW's micro-finance program, which lends money to the poor so they can start their own business. In March, a huge market between Luanda and Viana was cleared out overnight leaving vendors stranded with no place to sell their wares. Angola's largest market, Roque Santeiro, is said to be scheduled for demolition this July. Officials claim the markets, most of them on prime property, are not clean or safe, congests traffic and are tourist eyesores.

With no customers for their

wares, vendors have no income, meaning they will not be able to repay the loans they received from DW's credit program known as Sustainable Livelihoods Program (SLP), and worse yet, they may lose their source of livelihood. DW is meeting with clients and market managers to come up with solutions. The informal economy provides 60% of Luanda's employment.

Markets in Huambo, where DW has 760 SLP members, are not yet facing threats of market closures. Huambo's SLP is funded by the Mary Tidland Foundation Canada, and USAID. DFID funds the Luanda Sustainable Livelihoods Programme.

Shelter

The initial building phase of a new training and field research centre for community development and appropriate technology, is almost complete. The Quissala Center, a joint project between ADRA and DW, is located on the outskirts of Huambo and will work with appropriate technology in domains such as thatching, soil management, and bee keeping, to name just a few. DW's Shelter Sector, which is funded by BP, CIDA, the Dutch Embassy, ESSO, the EU and Trocaire, is also busy assessing previously inaccessible areas throughout Huambo province, where schools are needed.

Local Initiatives

Cultivating corn wasn't a problem for a community of lepers in Lunda Sul, but when it came to grinding it into cornmeal, they couldn't afford transport costs to the nearest mill. With funds from DW's Local Initiatives program, they set up their own facility and soon locals from other communities paid to use it. Profits went to building their own clinic so now regular treatments for leprosy can be administered locally. Surrounding farmers who used to be afraid of the lepers, now come and use both the corn mill and the clinic without any qualms. Since it began in 1985,

the Local Initiatives program focused on building schools and medical centres, but now it's looking more to supporting sustainable development projects. Managing funds from the Canadian and Dutch embassies and NOVIB, Local Initiatives will cover 14 provinces this year .



Stalls in Roque Santeiro Market

photo by Nick Danziger

Water and Sanitation

DW Luanda Water and Sanitation sector has created two Water Associations to improve services to municipalities Hoji -ya-Henda and N'Gola Kilange. The Water Associations plan to address not only the lack of basic services to these areas that have about 430,000 inhabitants, but also the poor communication between local government

and citizens. They will also assume full responsibility for monitoring the 46 water points DW built with these two communities.

DW is also working with two water authorities, EPAL in Luanda and the Huambo Provincial Directorate for Water and Sanitation, to help improve their services.

CIDA, the EU, SDC, and USAID fund the sector.

Peacebuilding

During the last 25 years conflicts in Angola were between two warring sides. Now that there is peace, the country faces social and economic conflicts which are still complex. In the environment of war citizens heeded rules imposed by the authorities without question. However today people increasingly ask about their civic rights and

obligations.

When the Estalagem market in Viana was shut down in March, people protested. When the police intervened people started throwing stones, burning tires, and tried to burn a public bus. Shooting started and citizens were killed.

In the provinces where ex-combatants, as well as refugees and internally displaced people are resettling into the same communities, conflicts can occur over issues like competing land claims.

DW's Peacebuilding Program is establishing a nucleus of peace promotors in each community, linked to churches and local NGOs, who help mitigate potential conflicts and find solutions when problems occur. *Voices for Peace*, the community media program in Huambo, is already well-established and is working with several

communitiy groups. (see *Congratulations to Ondaka* on last page). They are being asked to take their expertise to Bié to help establish the program there.

Peacebuilding has started to operate in 14 provinces. The program partners with churches and local NGO's and is funded by CIDA, the Norwegian and Dutch embassies, Christian Aid and NIZA. A special CIDA supported Civic Education Project focuse on citizenship rights of ex-combatants.



photo by Nick Danzier

Women waiting their turn at a water point.

AngoNet

In January AngoNet launched its first satellite server in Huambo and this year will offer the first high speed wireless service for NGOs.

A UNDP and Ministry of Telecommunications agreement to expand DW's non-profit AngoNet service to five provincial capitals, is being finalised. When approved, DW's Angonet project, created 14 years

ago, is to offer low cost internet services to non-profit and humanitarian organizations, will expand to Kuito, Malange, Uige, Cabinda, and Zaire. The project will enable high speed internet service via direct satellite connection and wireless point to point connections. That means just dialing up locally rather than long distance to Luanda.

Each city will also have a community Internet, or telecentre, set up with computers so local groups can use email and the internet. AngoNet's Luanda Telecentre at the UTCAH office, on Alameda Manuel van Dunen street has already been running for the last four years.

Visit www.angonet.org for information .

IDRC/Acacia, NIZA and UNDP help fund AngoNet.

BP = British Petroleum, **CIDA** = Canadian International Development Agency, **DFID** = Department for International Development, **ESSO** = subsidiary of EXXON MOBIL, **EU** = European Union, **IDRC** =International Development Research Centre (Canada) , **NIZA** = Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, **NORAD** = Norwegian Agency for Development, **NOVIB** = Organization for International Development Cooperation, **SDC** = Swiss Development Cooperation, **UNDP** = United Nations Development Program, **UNHRD** = United Nations Human Rights Division., **USAID** = United States International Development Aid

Congratulations to Ondaka!

A local newspaper initiated by DW's Community Publishing (Voices for Peace) Project in Huambo, has given local farmers a louder voice when defending their rights. (See story "*The new land law - will it protect rural communities?*", centrefold.) The local reporter for the village, although unable to write, made sure that the problem the farmers in her area were struggling with was discussed at meetings of other village reporters, who supply "Ondaka" with material for their monthly issue.

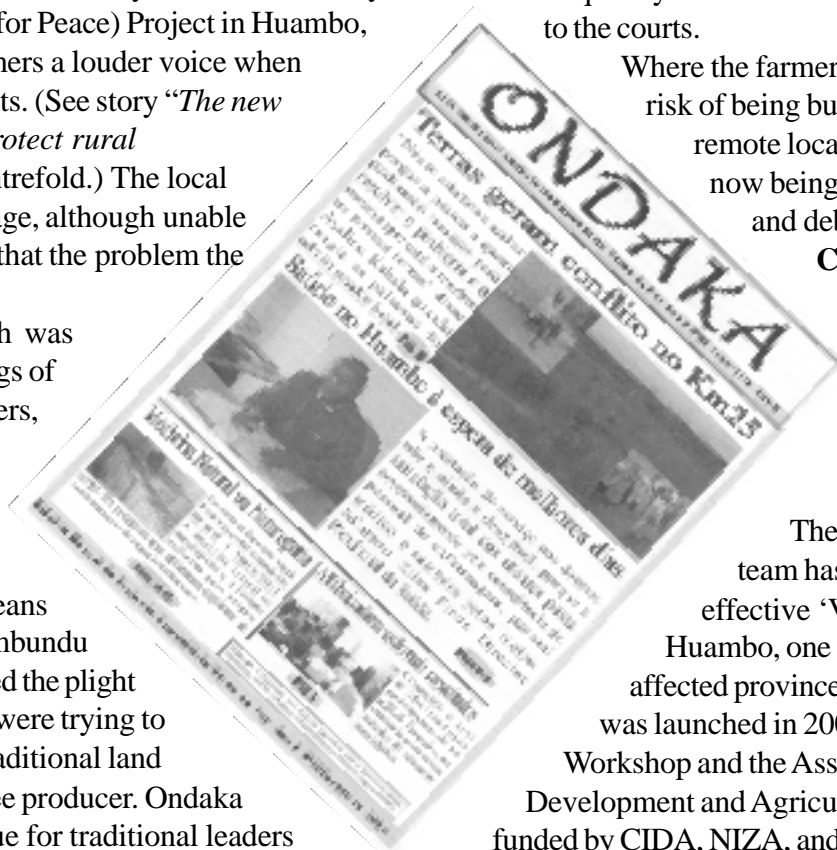
Ondaka, which means *word* in the local Ombundu language, highlighted the plight of the farmers who were trying to protect their own traditional land from a foreign coffee producer. Ondaka has provided a venue for traditional leaders to address government authorities on the issue.

Subsequently the local community has taken the case to the courts.

Where the farmers' complaints were once at risk of being buried, simply because of the remote location of the village, they are now being broadcast, investigated, and debated across the province.

Congratulations to Ondaka for the remarkable exposure they've given to the farmers and for helping to rally the community to address the problem together.

The Community Publishing team has developed Ondaka into an effective 'Voice for Peace' in Huambo, one of Angola's most war affected provinces. Community Publishing was launched in 2001 by Development Workshop and the Association for Rural Development and Agriculture (ADRA) and is funded by CIDA, NIZA, and SDC. In the past the fund for human rights from the British Embassy, also supported this sector.



This is a regular feature of our newsletter. Do you know a DW sector or a person or a group, who confronted a problem and worked to create a peaceful solution, that we can feature in this space? Please email the editor at dweditor@angonet.org

Do you own land? Have you built a house?

If you have built on land or are occupying a house, it is important to begin the legal procedure to regularize your property, **now**. Even if you think that you own your house and land take the following steps and start **today** :

- Collect all your documents. Remember, the bill of sale you received is not an official deed of ownership. Every piece of paper you have that deals with your property, should be collected.
- Go to your municipal government headquarters and make a request to regularize property ownership. The process of regularization is open to every citizen. All municipal government offices have the details of the procedure posted on the wall.
- The municipal government office may send somebody to your property to confirm the details you submitted.
- The municipal office will then send your process to the provincial government, who will make up the legal document for you. This land title deed needs to be signed by the governor.

Remember, this process can take a long time. It is important for you to keep checking with your municipal government to ensure that your regularization procedure is progressing.