

3 Developments

Development Workshop's Quarterly Newsletter

July, August, September 2006

Dw celebrates 25 years of community service in Angola

Few who knew Development Workshop Angola in the early 1980s — with just five staff and a focus on rural programmes in southern Angola — would recognise it today. Twenty five years in Angola has seen the organisation mature into a predominantly Angolan NGO, employing around 250 staff and, together with local partnerships, boasting a wide-ranging mandate featuring urban and rural settlements, water and sanitation, peacebuilding and microfinance.

Shortly after DW's arrival in Angola it became apparent that the rural south was unsafe. Large areas sheltered refugees and liberation forces fleeing the independence struggles in Namibia and South Africa. At the same time, Angola's destabilising civil war was well underway, forcing countryside populations to flee for the main towns.

"Migration to the coastal cities had started and it became clear that the real human settlement problem was

developing into an urban problem," said Allan Cain, who launched DW in Angola in 1981.

DW began working within the Angolan government, assisting the Ministry of Urbanism and Construction with self-help housing programmes and school planning and design, but within five years, the rapidly expanding *musseques* (shantytowns) of Luanda were bursting at the seams and struggling to cope.

That prompted DW to start

a research programme to upgrade the *musseques* in cooperation with the Institution of Public Health, its then director, Dr. David Bernardino, and the Angolan Women's Organisation. With a small group of Angolan professionals, DW set up the Government funded Office for Musseque Rehabilitation (GARM). This type of partnership was to become a distinguishing feature of DW's modus operandi, but also shifted the organisation's focus towards the emerging community health crisis threatening Luanda's urban poor.

"We were looking at the problem of human settlements as one of physical space and housing, but we came to realise through this process that the number one problem was the lack of basic services such as water and sanitation," explained Mr Cain.

In the late 1980s, at a time when Angolan civil society, particularly the church organisations, was beginning to strengthen, DW launched the award-winning "Sambizanga" project to improve water supply, sanitation, and community health for more than 100,000 people in one of Luanda's poorest municipalities.



Development Workshop supports Angolan communities to rebuild

continued from page one

On the ground at a strategic time, DW helped these newly formed community groups, often led by people it had worked with in the past, by channelling support from Canada and elsewhere into FONGA, the Angolan NGO forum. Decisions on grants and projects and administration were the responsibility of local NGOs, an approach Mr Cain believes was crucial to further strengthening the emerging civil society capacity.

With the return to even more violent conflict following the elections in 1992, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) arrived to coordinate an emergency response. As the only NGO to remain in Angola through the 1980s, DW was the first port of call for some of the larger NGOs who wanted to set up programmes here; and it was also able to access more donor funding to feed through to its local partners.

This was a time of immense need; an estimated half a million internally displaced people (IDP's) arrived in Luanda in 1992-1993 alone. DW expanded its emergency water and sanitation projects, building thousands of latrines, public stand posts, and forging strategic partnerships with the city water (EPAL) and rubbish collection (ELISAL) companies.

While plugging away at improving basic services, Mr Cain and DW staff were acutely aware that Angola was on a roller-coaster ride between cease-fire and fighting. During the post-Lusaka Accord ceasefire, DW opened an office in Huambo, one of the worst war-affected areas and launched a programme of community based rehabilitation focused on water wells and school reconstruction. The work continued despite the eventual return to conflict.

"It became clear to us and our partners that consolidating peace was the key to development in Angola and that peacebuilding needed to become integrated into our programme," he said. "The way the war permeated everything – people's attitudes, the way decisions were taken, the way community projects were built – had a lot to do with alleviating conflict."

In 1998, when Angola once again slipped back into war, DW spearheaded a partnership discussion on peacebuilding that



It is important to build on local knowledge and local institutions

making to capacity-building," Mr Cain said.

"However we also know that there is so much more to understand. That is one of the most interesting challenges — the opportunity to do original and innovative work," he added.

Angola and DW face many hurdles in their post-conflict transformation, not least fortifying local capacity, rebuilding the war-shattered infrastructure, catching up on the backlog of much-needed policy and legal reforms, and conducting research to assess the true needs of the population and to provide a solid basis for policy reforms.

Today, poverty is still very much a reality, which retains the need for the urban settlement and water and sanitation work. But peacebuilding now focuses on community-based reconciliation projects rather than advocacy and on civic education for the upcoming elections. More sustainable programmes, including the KixiCredito microfinance project, which gives a helping hand to entrepreneurs in the informal sector, are assuming a greater role.

"We have a development goal, but wherever possible we are looking at ways of sustaining activities through the market sector," he said. "We have to be more business-minded. This is a response to changes in the reality. Angola is for the first time starting to develop an economy and with the experience we have, we could also contribute to that side of development."

Dw's willingness to learn is reflected in the "Workshop" aspect of its name

led to the creation of the Angola Peacebuilding Programme that involved all the major Church and civil society umbrella institutions with constituencies on both sides of the battle lines.

"Unless communities had a stake in the process through rebuilding their homes and schools and gaining access to basic services, we felt peace could not be consolidated," Mr Cain said.

The guns finally fell silent in April 2002, and DW, already a development organisation, found the parameters of their work shift yet again.

"Peace meant we could work much more widely, geographically speaking, but it also meant that the demand for our programmes increased as people resettled," Mr Cain explained.

DW's willingness to learn — as reflected in the "workshop" aspect of its name — and its experience, has put it in good stead to cope with and manage yet another set of challenges.

"We have learned a lot and a large number of people who have worked with DW have gained a lot of experience. We can offer this to our partners as a part of the contribution we are

When many organisations, finding their services inappropriate as Angola's needs change, are pulling out, DW has plans to adapt its programmes and scale-up.

"Our experience is increasingly relevant, our work has a growing impact, and we are being more useful and effective now than in the past," Mr Cain said. "The demand for our work and our advice and knowledge is growing and we will try to respond to that."

Mr Cain, forever modest, believes firmly that DW's partners — the communities, churches and local NGOs — are responsible for the accomplishments of the projects to date and their continued success.

"Our work rests on the philosophy that it is important to build on local knowledge and local institutions, to look at an approach based on upgrading and improving the way people solve or cope with their problems, rather than introducing external systems which may not be adapted to local resources and environments," he said. "Our Angolan colleagues and partners are in the front line." ■■■

F oreword



eighties when I was the *Comissário Provincial Adjunto* in Huila province, today known as vice governor, so I have known him for over 16 years. At the time, southern Angola was suffering a severe drought and a Regional Emergency Commission had been created and we were coordinating it.

DW plays an important role in the work of Non Governmental

persons, and shelter programs in partnership with IRSEM, as well as local initiative programs.

I think that it should continue developing more projects aimed at assisting the development of communities and continue improving the living conditions of Angolans directly affected by the war.

In the future I would like to see DW's projects directed to the field of education by building

schools and more classrooms, as well as continue to reduce poverty with more micro credit programs.

DW can continue to cooperate with the Angolan Government under the social policies of the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reintegration, MINARS, through projects of sustainable development focused on school aged

children, youth, and demobilized and disabled persons, based on the General Program of the Government of Angola.

I would like to see the partnership grow with visible results not only in quality but also in quantity.

Extracted from an email interview with the Minister of Minars. DW

Development Workshop has been an important partner to our Government. Its social action programs have impacted the lives of vulnerable groups, particularly children living in difficult circumstances, the elderly and demobilized people.

Indeed, it is encouraging for us to know that in the provinces some of these projects are being implemented in partnership with the Institute for Social Reintegration of Ex-Soldiers (IRSEM).

One of the oldest Cooperation Agreements our Government has is the one with DW, dating back to July 1989.

I am aware that Mr. Allan Cain has been living in Angola since 1981.

I have known Mr. Allan Cain, Director of Development Workshop, since the late

“ One of the oldest Co-operation Agreements our Government has is the one with DW ”

Organizations operating in the country during this post conflict period. This organization has implemented projects for adult literacy, poverty relief through micro credit, peace building, civic education, providing clean drinking water and sanitation within the program of reintegration of displaced and refugee

by **João Baptista Kussumua,**
Minister of Assistance and Social Reintegration

DW Developments is published quarterly in English and Portuguese by Development Workshop 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, water supply and sanitation, peacebuilding, governance, microfinance and small enterprise, and disaster mitigation. DW's strategy is to strengthen communities and organisations to act on development problems and opportunities.

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Focus on DW staff

Canadian architect helps construct future for Angolans



Twenty five years ago Allan Cain came to Angola to improve the quality of human settlements

What makes a young Canadian and his colleagues just entering their 30's move with his wife and colleagues to a country at war? For Allan Cain, who did just that in 1981, the motivating factor was a deep desire to make a difference. The young architect and four friends had founded Development Workshop eight years earlier in 1973 with the idea of marrying their architectural and planning skills with economic and community development in a bid to lift the quality of human settlements in developing countries. "We all felt there were major challenges and lots of interesting things to do," explained Mr. Cain who worked in Canada, Germany, Egypt, Iran, Oman and Niger before first being invited to visit Angola in 1980.

In Angola, he certainly found plenty to get his teeth into, leading the organisation as it ripened into a well-respected Angolan NGO improving hundreds of thousands of lives with its water and sanitation, urban settlement, land tenure, peace-building and microfinance programmes.

Living and working in Angola was never easy, and its challenges often prove too much for many humanitarian workers within a matter of a few years. Yet Mr. Cain and his family have persevered for more than two decades. "I've lived here for a long time. My children were born here and grew up here. It's become a home for me and certainly for my children," he said.

Mr. Cain's wife, Julia Williamson, gave birth to Mathieu and Rebecca in Luanda at a time when medical services were scant. Like most other residents of the capital, the family had to barter for food during the war years.

During the most bloody 1992-1993 period, many international organizations downsized or removed their staff from Angola, but Mr. Cain stayed to continue DW's work, and helped to coordinate the protection and evacuation of development workers caught in areas of conflict. At one point during the fighting in Luanda, DW made its solar powered radio system available to provide back-up communications for the United Nations and other agencies when traditional electric power systems petered out due to lack of fuel. Angolan NGO partners remember that DW stayed with them during this difficult period.

Now in peacetime, living and working in Angola poses different challenges. "I have to admit that living in Angola is still a struggle, and while it's maybe easier today than 25 years ago, it still takes a lot of energy just in the demands of day-to-day living," Mr. Cain said. "Many things are getting better. Many things aren't. Four years after the end of the war, it's still early days, and there is so much to do and so many rebuilding decisions to be taken."

It is these work challenges which continue to draw Mr. Cain here. "The bottom line is I feel useful. I feel that I have made a difference and there are many people who would like to do that with their lives but don't get the chance, so that is a privilege," he said.

In addition, much of the hard work and persistence of the early days are bearing fruit now. "The first years required more persistence and tenacity because the results were pretty thin in the beginning, I must say. Now it is clear that it has been a good investment of time. Certainly it took a while, but every day invested in time back then has borne results today. The payoffs are coming now," he said.

"I have no regrets, no. Although I could have found more comfortable places to live, I don't think I could find a more interesting place to work." DW

1981 - 2006

25 milestones point the way for **Dw** in **Angola**

1976 – Angolan mission to the UN Habitat Conference in Vancouver, Canada met Development Workshop and invited DW to Angola.

1980 – DW's first mission to Angola involved an exhibition at LEA (Engineering Laboratory of Angola) and working visits to Luanda, Benguela/Lobito and Huambo.

1981 – DW became the first NGO in Angola and set up a unit within the National Department of Urbanism in Luanda, responsible for programs of self-help housing.



1982 – Produced manuals for environmental design for housing and public building for each of the climatic/ecological regions of Angola.

1983 – Carried out an educational facilities planning/mapping project for primary schools of Luanda province; involved in training of planning staff of Minister of Education and producing inventory of school infrastructure and educational coverage throughout the province.



1984 to 1989 - Project design and construction support for South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and African National Congress (ANC) refugee projects in various provinces of Angola, including workshops, schools and vocational

training centres. Many South Africans and Namibians fleeing the apartheid regime had taken refuge in Angola after the Soweto uprising in 1976 and remained until Namibian independence in 1990. DW worked with these communities while they were in exile.



1985 – Local Initiatives Programme launched to support community based projects of local NGOs, churches and associations. Over the years this programme has invested in civil society and built the capacity of local institutions. Hundreds of projects have been supported with funds from the Canadian, Netherlands and Swiss Governments, private sector companies and the NGOs NOVIB, One World Action (OWA) and Comic Relief.

1986 to 1988 – Research programme with the Institute for Public Health and the Angolan Women's Organization (OMA) on Emergency Sanitation for Luanda's musseques.



1987 – Creation of the Office for Musseque Upgrading-Gabinete para Reabilitação dos Musseques (GARM) with a mandate from the Angolan Government to do research and pilot projects for rehabilitating peri-urban informal settlements. GARM launched the Sambizanga Project in 1988 to test for the first time community based approaches to urban development in Angola's context of prolonged war-fuelled urbanization.



1988 to 1992 – DW led a coalition of NGOs, churches, universities and trade unions called Programme Angola – Canada, aimed at supporting Angola's emerging civil society. The programme channelled approximately \$20 million to local projects and institutions in the period leading up to Angola's first multi-party elections in 1992.



1981 - 2006

1990 - AngoNet, Angola's first e-mail/Internet service launched to serve civil society and humanitarian organisations in Angola to network with international and regional partners and with each other. AngoNet was an Internet pioneer in Angola and in the African Region. AngoNet staff contributed to the founding of Angola's commercial Internet providers EboNet and NEXUS. AngoNet has served over 500 NGOs and humanitarian users.



1997 - DW Huambo programme office opened to take over the International Red Cross water and sanitation programme and became the principal partner of the Provincial Government in this sector providing water to over 700 communities in the province over the next decade.



1993 to 1998 - DW's Women's Enterprise Development programme carried out research and piloted projects to support economic survival strategies of women-headed households in informal settlements and market places. The project tested credit, savings and solidarity lending, adapting models from Grameen Bank and elsewhere to the Angolan context. DW helped found and provided facilities to the Rede de Mulher, the women's network, during its first year of development.



1998 - Peacebuilding consultation between church and civil society partner institutions was launched as Angola returned once more to conflict. DW supported CICA, CEAST, AEA, FONGA and IECA to form a coalition that became the Angolan Peacebuilding Programme.



1999 - Luanda Urban Poverty Programme was begun as a partnership between DW, CARE, SAVE the Children (UK) and OWA with support from DFID. DW began two major projects focusing on Sustainable Community Services (water and sanitation) and Sustainable Livelihoods (small loans to low-income entrepreneurs).

1995 - World Bank commissioned DW to do a major study of the Luanda informal water market and its impact on beneficiaries at the community level. This was the first study of its kind in Angola using participatory research techniques.

1996 - DW's Sambizanga Project which began in 1987 was awarded "International Best Practice" recognition at the UN Habitat City Summit in Istanbul. Development Workshop set up a computer Geographic Information System (GIS) unit to help in risk assessments and monitor the impact of projects. Spatial mapping becomes a useful planning tool integrated into DW's infrastructure programmes.

2000 - Development Workshop was awarded the Medal of Merit by the Provincial Government on Luanda's 425th anniversary in recognition of DW's many years of contribution to musseques upgrading. -ONDAKA, Angola's first community-produced journal was published in Huambo in Ombundu and Portuguese by DW's Voices for Peace project. Circulation of 3500 copies.



1981 - 2006



2001 – Peri –urban Land Tenure study was commissioned by the Ministry of Urbanism and Public Works with support from UN Habitat, NORAD and DFID. DW used the results of the study to advocate for improvements in the Land Law and stimulate public consultation that was initiated in 2002.



2002 – The end of the war allowed DW to scale up and expand its programmes of community water supply and school rehabilitation to previously inaccessible municipalities.



-DW helped found national civil society networks: Rede de Terra dedicated to land reform and RASME to focus on microfinance.

2003 – A new branch of SLP microfinance programme opened in Huambo with assistance from USAID and MTCF. The demand for micro-loans grew steadily as families begin to rebuild their livelihoods after the end of the war.




-DW conducted research (supported by Foreign Affairs Canada) for the World Bank and IRSEM on Land and the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Huambo. The pioneering research provides one of the few sources of information on what happens to the demobilized ex-combatants when they resettle.

2004 – Civic Education for reintegration of ex-combatants and their families promoted through DW's peacebuilding network.

2005 – Terra Book “Urban land reform in Post – War Angola research, advocacy and policy development”, was launched by DW together with Minister of Urbanism and Environment Eng. Sita José at the Royal Institute for International Affairs, Chatham House in London.

-Civic Education for Elections project launched with support from Norwegian Cooperation to support churches and civil society organisations in conflict mitigation, voter registration and electoral support.

2006 – The Sustainable Livelihoods Project was transformed into Angola's first independent non-bank Micro-Finance Institution called KixiCredito with over 11,000 clients and a loan portfolio of \$2.5 million USD.

2006 - DW celebrated 25 years of work with Angolan communities. Over 150 well-wishers attended the 25th Anniversary Celebration in May, and at night, 400 employees and friends danced till the wee hours. 

Heading towards future developments



With 25 years of experience in Angola, Development Workshop Director Allan Cain reflects on new directions

We have always considered DW a “learning organisation.” but we want to increasingly be recognised as a “knowledge creation and sharing institution”. We draw our lessons from our projects and share them with our partners. This permits the scaling up of impact of these programmes based on what we have found to be best practices that we have had the chance to test in this particularly complex environment of Angola.

Development Workshop has been engaged in ongoing research in a number of areas. These include such key issues as land tenure, gender and livelihoods in the informal sector, access to water, and peace and conflict risks.

We have acquired capacity in rapid community appraisal techniques and are one of the first institutions in Angola to build geographic information systems (GIS) into our monitoring strategies.

DW will continue to publish its research findings and we will expand our Occasional Papers series and increase our outreach through DW’s Internet site.

We took the decision last year to transform some programmes into “social enterprises” as a strategy of making them more sustainable and able to contribute to Angola’s post-war economy.

Development Workshop’s microfinance programmes in both Luanda and Huambo offer effective lessons on how informal traders and small scale producers can pull themselves out of poverty and provide local economic opportunities through appropriate credit and savings mechanisms. The launching of KixiCredito this year has signalled a major change of approach for DW.

Decentralisation and the determination to build democratic local governance is one of the most significant Angolan Government initiatives since the end of the war. Development Workshop, with its participatory settlements planning skills and community development experience, is uniquely placed to contribute to this Government led programme to eventually reach and rebuild Angola’s 163 Municipalities across the country.



Factory in Huambo now operates as a social enterprise, producing furniture while providing jobs and training

Partners & Donors

It is impossible to reflect on 25 years of community development in Angola, without acknowledging DW’s donors and partners. We are grateful to the following organizations:

ACION International, ACCORD (South Africa), ADRA (Angola), Angola Enterprise Programme, BP Angola, Catholic University of Angola, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CARE (International), Christen Mickelsen Institute (Norway), Christian Aid, Chevron Angola, Defence for Children International (Canada), Department for International Development (DFID), ESSO Angola, European Union (EU), Forum of Angolan NGOs (FONGA), French Cooperation, Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Habitat for Humanity, INTERPARES, INTERMON (Spain), International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Institute for Security Studies (South Africa), Mary Tidlund Foundation, Ministry of Urbanism and Environment (MINUA), Ministry for Social Reintegration (MINARS), Ministry for Territorial Administration (MAT), Ministry of Education (Angola), Netherland Ministry of Cooperation, Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA), NOVIB (Netherlands), NORAD, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, One World Action (UK), OXFAM (UK & Canada), Rede de Terra, Save the Children Fund, Southern Africa Regional Documentation Centre (SARDC), SIDA (Swedish), SNV (Netherlands), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Swiss Peace Foundation (SPF), TROCAIRE (Ireland), UNCDF, United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Human Rights Office for Angola (UNHCHR), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UN Habitat, UNICEF, and UTCAH.