World Food Programme

Vulnerability Analysis and Food Aid Working Group
Chaired by WFP/VAM Unit

Angola

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT IN RURAL AREAS

National Overview

Luanda, June 2004

Contents

1. SUMMARY

This report present the outcomes of the provincial Vulnerability Analysis (VA) reports and the quantitative food security community survey in eleven provinces of Angola. Fieldwork and discussions at provincial level were carried out during the months of April and May 2004. Outcomes of both approaches have been integrated in the global analysis, and this has guaranteed a national and provincial understanding of the current levels of vulnerability to food insecurity in the country. The provincial VA reports are separate documents and can be obtained from WFP.

The food security situation in rural Angola is still dominated by the return and resettlement of populations to their areas of origin. As a result of the disruptions caused by three decades of civil war these population groups have generally returned with very few productive and domestic assets and are currently rebuilding their livelihoods with limited access to basic services and few options for income diversification.

The agricultural season 2003-2004 was globally good with increased production forecasts in the northern and southern part of the country and mixed prospects in the central highlands. Future agricultural production is still hampered by limited access to productive assets such as animal traction and fertilizers and poor access to agriculture extension services. These services would provide returnee farmers with the required information of local farming practices, knowledge which many of them have lost.

The Table 1 below gives an overview of the characteristics of vulnerability to food insecurity by geographic area. The study has recognized five distinct areas with a different vulnerability profile. The most vulnerable region remains the central highlands with a very high proportion of poor and food insecure families within the population followed by the provinces in the southeast (Moxico and Kuando Kubango) where the remoteness is the main obstacle for obtaining food security. All other provinces have pockets of population who are vulnerable to food insecurity (mainly recent returnees), but they are generally less vulnerable and less sensitive to shocks affecting their livelihoods than those in the central highlands, Moxico and Kuando Kubango.

Vulnerability ranking	Area / provinces	Main characteristics of structural and current vulnerability
Highest	Central highlands (Huambo, northern Huila and parts of Bié)	• Globally reduced harvest due to excess rainfall, impoverished soils, poor farming practices without any agricultural inputs. • Poverty, few productive or domestic assets at household level. • Very sensitive to any risk and extensive recourse to negative coping mechanisms (sale of charcoal and firewood, hunting). • Few options for income diversification through income generating activities. • Localized high population density, resulting in limited access to agricultural land.
Moderate	Moxico, Kuando Kubango, parts of Bié	• Remoteness, lack of access to basic services and infrastructures. • Few options for income diversification due to limited opportunities for casual labour.
Low	Malanje	• Only recently returned returnees. • Poor access to basic services.
Lowest	Bengo, Kuanza Norte, Kuanza Sul, Uige, Benguela, Huila	• Few localized pockets of isolated vulnerable population groups. • Relatively good access to markets and services. • Relative good income diversification and income levels.

Table 1 Summary vulnerability profiles by area

Malnutrition information is one of the main indicators of food insecurity but few anthropometrical surveys have been carried out during the last six months. None of these have indicated alarming levels of malnutrition in the areas covered by the surveys and total acute malnutrition rates amongst children under five (wasting) have never reached more than 7.3%.

The vulnerability analysis estimates the food insecure population at 334.000 persons (of which 73% live in Huambo province) and 717.000 persons highly vulnerable to food insecurity. Asset-poor recent returnees are the largest group of food insecure (72%) followed by vulnerable residents (28%). A large part of the highly vulnerable group might become food insecure during the lean season and will need to be supported by special programmes in order to assist them during the preparation of the land for the agricultural season 2004-2005.

The *relative* distribution of food insecure and vulnerable populations by province is illustrated in Figure 1. The figure illustrates the link between geographic vulnerability and exposure to risks and the concentration of food insecure and highly vulnerable people.

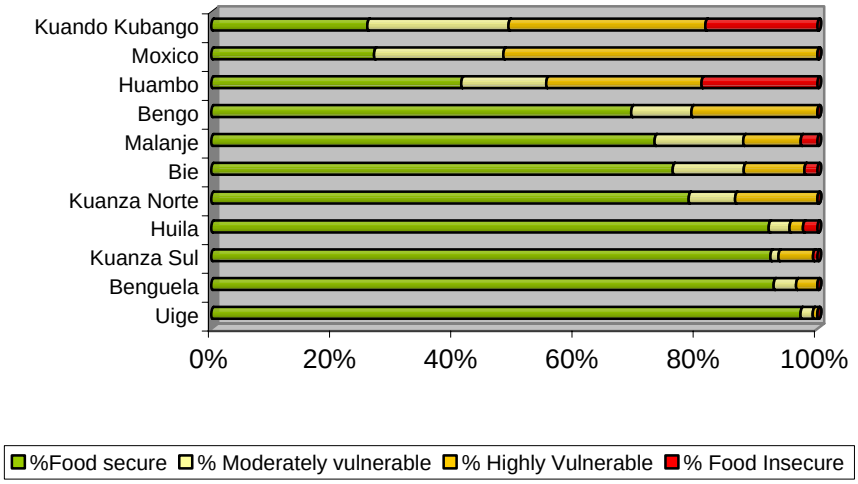


Figure 1 Relative repartition of population groups by province

2. INTRODUCTION

The end of the civil war and the return and resettlement of returnees and refugees has considerably changed the nature of vulnerability to food insecurity in rural Angola. Spontaneous resettlement of several 100.000 internally displaced Angolans and refugees during the last two years and continued improvement of access to rural communities has drastically changed the household's livelihood systems and their food security. This improvement in physical access to rural communities has allowed a re-orientation of the vulnerability assessment methodology, with the introduction of quantitative survey methodologies.

2.1 CONTEXT OF THE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

During the final years of the war and during the period immediately following the peace agreement, WFP/VAM has taken the lead in the analysis of vulnerability to food insecurity in Angola. Working in partnership with partners and stakeholders, WFP/VAM established an institutional framework for monitoring levels of food security within Angola which could be used by all members of the humanitarian community for designing and guiding their interventions. This did not include the large urban populations in the cities along the coast.

Given the rapidly changing situation in the country, a methodological change in the vulnerability assessment was required. This VA 2004 can therefore be considered as a transition between the VA designed during the war and the future VA's geared towards a non-emergency context. Additionally, WFP/VAM will gradually change the objective of the VA towards its own internal needs rather than towards the needs of the humanitarian community as a whole. The objective will be to improve the targeting of its interventions amongst the most vulnerable populations in the most vulnerable areas and to increase the effectiveness of its programme design. It will be impossible to maintain the same spatial coverage (which has been almost national) because the survey methodologies used will be more resource intensive and will be targeted to the areas where WFP will continue to maintain its operations. As part of this change the VAM unit has embarked on the preparation of a Livelihood Zoning survey to facilitate the implementation of these future surveys.

2.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

This report discusses vulnerability to food insecurity in rural areas in Angola and presents the findings of the (1) *provincial Vulnerability Analysis reports (VA)* and (2) *community food security survey* in eleven provinces in rural Angola. General findings of the joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment mission (CFSAM) and secondary data from various sources have also been incorporated in the analysis.

The main objective of the provincial VA reports is to describe the vulnerability at provincial level and to obtain estimates of the numbers in the population who are food insecure and vulnerable to food insecurity, while the main objective of the community survey is to compare relative vulnerability levels at provincial and regional level.

2.2.1 The Provincial Vulnerability Analysis Reports

The provincial VA reports are based on a composite vulnerability indicator with information obtained from government bodies and humanitarian agencies. Discussion at provincial level results in an integrated report and a vulnerability index, which assesses vulnerability by area and by social group. The index is composed of five main elements in order to determine geographic risk to food insecurity and identify the most vulnerable population groups. The elements are: accessibility and population movements, agriculture, market functioning and price trends, health, nutrition and sanitation and income and coping strategies. The annex 1 gives more details on the construction of this index.

Other information on the conditions in the provinces was collected during the joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM), which was in Angola from 18th May until 5th June 2004.

2.2.2 The Community Survey

A quantitative community survey was carried out during a two-week period at the end of April 2004 and in total, 234 communities were visited. The main objective of this survey was the characterization of vulnerability at regional and provincial level and to provide quantitative

estimates of parameters related to vulnerability to food insecurity at community level. Extrapolations allowed obtaining a few indicators at household level.

By describing "what" is going on in a population by looking at the frequency of certain events or characteristics, summary statistics such as frequency distributions, means, medians, ranges and other measures of variation are created that describe a population in an aggregate way. The analysis uses therefore a spatial approach by comparing provinces and regions and by describing frequencies of characteristics related to vulnerability to food insecurity at community level. This approach has assisted in determining the type and the scope of the problems that rural communities in rural Angola are facing.

The community surveys were based on structured interviews with closed questions and covered the following aspects:

- Demographic structure of the community, composition of its members (residents, returnees, IDP's etc.) and relative differences in their living conditions and wealth;
- Population movements and origin of the returnees/IDP's;
- Main economic activities of the communities and potential income diversification.
- Remoteness of the communities and their access to basic services and infrastructures, such as markets, education, transport and health facilities;
- Type of coping mechanisms used and their frequency, with a particular focus on the use of negative coping mechanisms;
- Access of the members of the community to productive and household assets;
- Access to education and gender issues related to school enrolment;
- Characteristics of subsistence agriculture: access to land, impact of land mines, access to and use of fertilizers and herbicides, quality of the 2003-2004 season, access to and origin of crop seeds;
- Proxy indicators to estimate the impact of HIV/Aids and general issues related to HIV awareness.

In the central highlands, an additional questionnaire was used to improve the assessment of the spatial distribution of the impact of the rains on crop production. This questionnaire covered the following topics:

- General agricultural characteristics such as cropping calendar and crops cultivated;
- Quality of the rainy season;
- Water logging, floods and their impact on crop production;

Results of both surveys[1] were integrated with the outcomes of the provincial reports and with secondary data obtained from different sources.

2.2.3 Sampling of the communities

Due to the lack of a *sampling frame* with information on location of communities and villages and their populations, a one-degree grid (cells with a size of more or less 11 km) was created covering the complete territory. Cells from this grid where then randomly selected, and within each of these cells, two villages were selected by the interviewer according to the following criteria: (1) the two villages must be on different roads, (2) the villages must be accessible by car, and (3) the villages must have minimum 15 and maximum 800 households. The number of communities selected was proportional to the estimated rural population in each province.

Random grid cells that could not be reached by road (for any reason) were replaced by replacement cells and two villages from these cells were selected according to the same criteria. Figure 2 below illustrates the location of the 234 villages, where interviews with key informants took place.

It must be noted that more than 30% of the area under investigation was excluded from the survey because of inaccessibility. This has introduced a bias in the results of the study and it is therefore likely that the outcomes of the study are better than the actual situation.

[1] All results of the analysis are presented by province or by region, because at the time of sampling, no detailed information on livelihood zones was available. More disaggregated surveys and in particular household and anthropometrical surveys would be required to understand and target the needs of specific vulnerable populations within a given area. These types of surveys would cover subjects such as the household's food intake, crop production, expenditure pattern, income diversification, household composition and educational attainment, food stock at household level, productive assets etc, and would result in more comprehensive statistics.

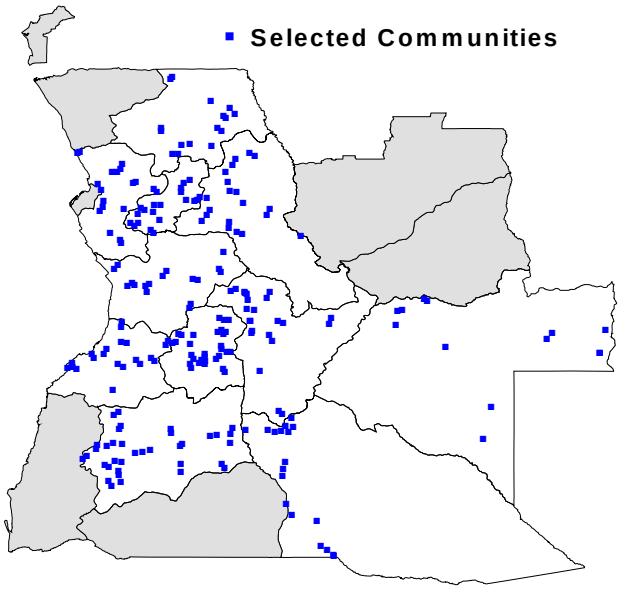


Figure 2 Location of selected communities for the interview

3. STRUCTURAL VULNERABILITY TO FOOD INSECURITY

This chapter aims at giving an overview of structural vulnerability issues at community level. It focuses on the demographic situation and population movements, economic activities and income diversification, access to basic services and communities' coping strategies. Most of these structural vulnerability patterns were obtained from outcomes of the community survey.

3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The average number of people living in the villages visited is 819 persons, ranging from 80 to 4000 persons. The average size of the household is 5.1 persons[2] with the dependency ratio increasing from north to south of the country: 4.4 persons per household in the northern region and 6.1 in the southern region

On average, a relative high 21.5% of the households are headed by women[3], with a maximum of 33.3% in Benguela and a minimum of 7.9% in Kuando Kubango. In all other provinces, the proportion of female headed households ranges between 17.3 and 27 %, but the survey shows no evidence that these households are more vulnerable than the others. There are very few (less than 1) orphan children[4] living in the rural areas, except in Kuando Kubango with an average of 8.9 children per village, but the reasons for this difference are not known.

The community survey indicates that on average, only 48.4% of the households have been residing[5] for an extended period in the community. The other inhabitants are returnees (45%), resettled households (3.7%) or IDP's (2.8%). The Figure 3 below illustrates the average composition of the communities by province.

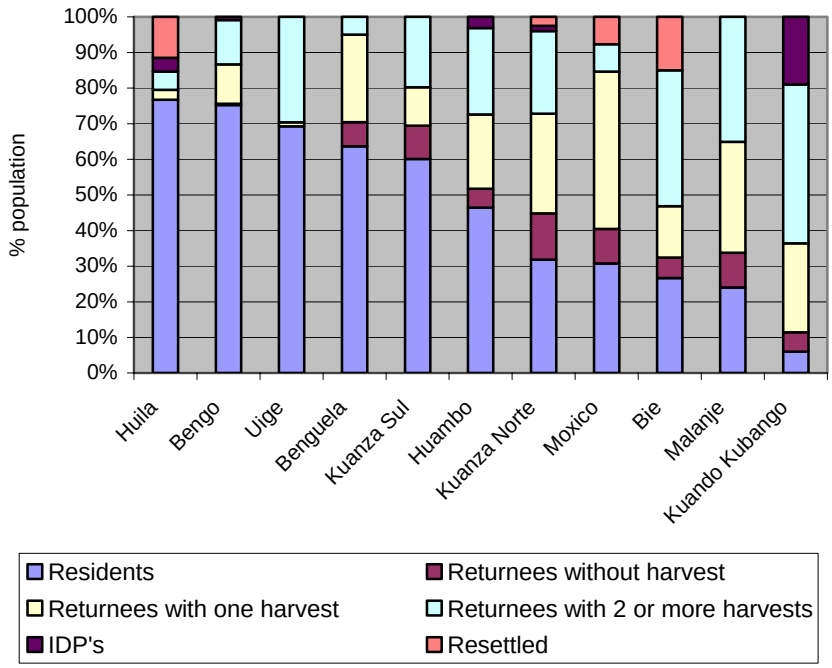


Figure 3 Population structure by province

The villages in Kuando Kubango, Malanje, Bié, Moxico and Kuanza Norte are very young, with less than one third of the community members being residents. Communities in Huila, Bengo, Uige, Benguela and Kuanza Sul have more than 60% long-term residents and can be considered much more established.

[2] This figure is higher than the 4.3 persons found by MICS 2001 for rural households.
[3] The MICS 2001 study found 27% of the Angolan households headed by women (both urban and rural), with could indicate a decrease of 20% since 2001.
[4] Orphan children were defined as children below 15 years old, who are living on their own.

Up to 5.5% of the rural population is composed of returnees who at the time of the interview (April 2004) had not cultivated at least once. A maximum of 13% is found in Kuanza Norte, 10% in Moxico and Malanje and 9% in Kuanza Sul. Bié and Huambo have 5.5% of returnees without any harvest, while the other provinces have fewer. These population groups must be considered amongst the most vulnerable, except in areas where opportunities for earning incomes from the use of casual labour are abundant.

Most villages (87%) have existed for more than 15 years. It is only in Kuando Kubango, Moxico and Bié where respectively 25%, 15% and 11 % of the villages have existed for only 1 or 2 years. This confirms the population movements and the intensity of these movements during the last two years in these provinces.

Globally, most returnees and resettled households come from other parts within the province (61.5%), followed by returnees from Luanda (23.1%) and other parts of the country (9%). Only 6.3% of these returned or resettled households come from other countries and there is only a significant portion of returnees in Malanje and Uige (from Congo), Moxico (from Zambia) and Kuando Kubango (from Namibia). It is expected that in the coming years this return from abroad will increase due to the refugee growing repatriation programme - mainly in the north-east of the country.

Only in 40% of the communities with long-term residents and newcomers, are residents are better off than the recently settled households, in particular with respect to the condition and size of the dwellings and access to productive assets (plough, etc.). For other characteristics such as access to luxury goods[6], access to income generating activities and knowledge of farming practices, there are almost no differences (not significant). Incidences where resettled households are better off than residents are very rare.

Most communities (71% of the total) consider that living conditions in the community have improved since 1998, and 14.9% consider that there has been no change. All these communities mention the return of peace and free movement having improved over the last five years. However, in Huambo, Huila and Bié, there is up to 35% of the communities who consider that living conditions have deteriorated. The main reasons given are the loss of productive and domestic assets during the war.

Facilitated movement and easier access to agricultural land mainly explain the general feeling of improved living conditions in rural areas. However, few opportunities for alternative livelihood mechanisms exist in these areas, a situation which might reverse the present migration pattern from urban to rural areas. People face serious difficulties when reintegrating in their areas of origin and have limited opportunities to rebuild their livelihoods due the lack of income diversification and access to basic services. In particular the younger and demobilized populations might be forced back to urban centres. Also, the loss of productive and domestic assets during the war, the limited labour market in rural areas, and the low crop yields in the last few years in some areas continues to affect the productive capacities of the returnee population.

3.2 Economic activities, agriculture, and income diversification

Agriculture (including horticulture and fruit trees) is the single most important economic activity in rural Angola, but nevertheless accounts only for an estimated 43.8% of the total income of the rural communities (see Figure 4). The other important income sources are casual labour (17.9%), livestock (11.2%), charcoal production (8.5%) and various business related activities (5.2%).

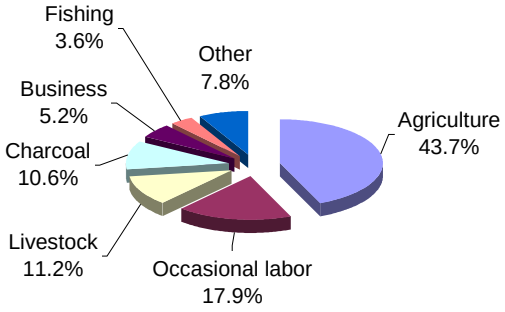


Figure 4 Structure of total income in rural Angola

[6] Luxury goods were defined as domestic assets such bicycle, radio, television etc.

There are considerable differences between the regions in the country (see Table 2 below). Globally, agriculture is more important in the northern regions, while livestock has a higher share in the south of the country. Casual labour is mainly restricted to agriculture and is a very important income source for rural households, in particular in the provinces of Huambo (34.1% of the income), Bié (32%) as well as Benguela (28.1%).

Charcoal and firewood production is an important income source in Huambo (estimated at 17.6% of the total income), Benguela (12.3%) and Moxico (10.2%).

	Agriculture	Casual labour	Livestock	Firewood/ Charcoal	Business	Fishing	Other
North	53.2	13.3	5.1	8.3	9.2	3.5	6.9
Central	35.6	28.1	5.5	15.1	6.6	0.6	8.4
South	41.8	9.0	30.0	7.1	5.0	3.7	3.4
Total	**43.8**	**17.9**	**11.2**	**10.6**	**5.2**	**3.6**	**7.8**

Table 2 Income sources by region

The "other incomes" accounts for 7.8% and includes the sale of local drinks (2.6%), the Sale of honey (2.2%), handicrafts (1.2%), palm oil extraction (1.3%), and construction (0.7%).

3.2.1 Agriculture

The sale of agricultural products is the major source of cash for rural households but this does not indicate that above subsistence levels are produced. Figure 5 shows the percentage of communities that sell part of their subsistence crops (maize and/or cassava and/or beans). In Huambo (17.1%) and Moxico (26.5%), very few communities are selling surpluses of their cultivated subsistence crops, as compared to more than 50% of the communities in the other provinces. In Bengo, Kuanza Sul, Huila and Kuando Kubango, almost all communities sell part of their cultivated crops into the market.

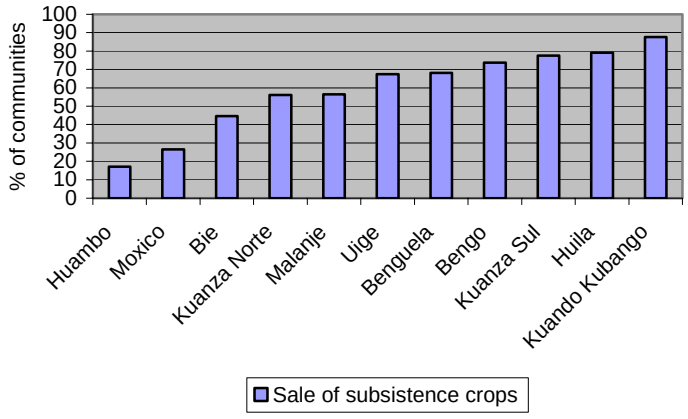


Figure 5 Sale of surplus crop production

On average, 43.8% of the households in the communities use cereal and bean seeds obtained from their own production, while 39% purchase the seeds and 15% have obtained them through gifts. In Huambo, Malanje and Moxico however, only 22-27% of the communities use seeds from their own production, while other provinces have more than 50% of the households sowing cereals with seeds from their own production.

During certain periods of the year, fruits provide extra cash income in communities where they can be commercialised. Fruit trees account for 4.9% of the total rural income, with a maximum of 16.4% in Bengo and more than 10% of the income in Kuanza Sul, Kuanza Norte and Uige, all areas with market links to the capital Luanda.

The majority of the recently established communities have been planting fruit trees during the last two years: 94% of the villages in Uige and more than 80% in Huambo, Kuanza Norte, Bié, Bengo

and Kuanza Sul. However in Benguela, Huila and Kuando Kubango, only a minority of the villages has planted fruit trees, often explained by unfavourable climatic and environmental conditions.

62.8% of the farmers have access to agricultural land through family property while 25.1 % obtain access by authorization of the soba. There are however significant differences between the provinces, mainly related to cultural issues. For instance, in Moxico, 75% of the land is cultivated by permission of the soba while in Huambo 54.7% of the land is family property. Direct payment for cultivating land occurs only in Kuanza Norte (13%), Huambo (3.8%) and Kuanza Sul (2.1%).

Up until this point in the re-settlement process, access to agricultural land does not appear to have been a problem. The exceptions have been Huambo, Huila and Benguela provinces, where more than 40% of the communities mention this problem.

3.2.2 Livestock

Livestock ownership is a very important factor for ensuring household food security. However, the levels of ownership of livestock are extremely low – largely due to the disruptions caused by the war - and livestock ownership should be encouraged in order to improve household food security. An estimation of stocks of animals at household level is relatively difficult. Nevertheless the results of the survey show some important patterns, which are consistent with other information sources. In all provinces, except Huila and to a lesser extent Kuanza Norte and Kuanza Sul, families hold an average of less that one ruminant, which is totally inadequate to serve as coping mechanism in case of economic shock. The Figure 6 below shows the percentage of households who have one-to-five and more than five cows, goats and pigs respectively.

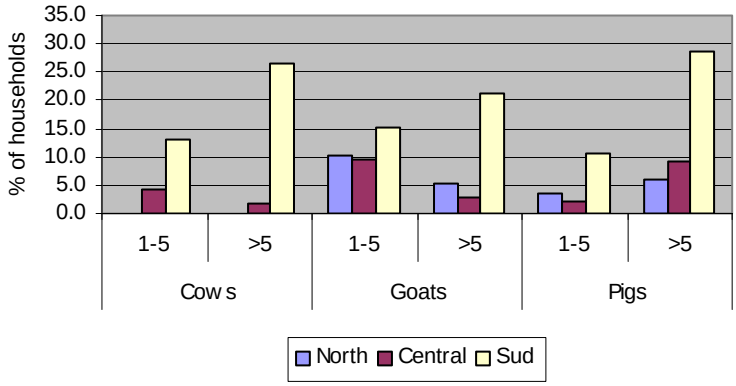


Figure 6 Estimation of the number of animals per household by region

Under normal circumstances, a holding of fewer than five animals of the same species is not considered to be sustainable, i.e. five is considered to be the minimum number which will allow the household to sell during difficult times and then replenish the herd/flock afterwards. The data shows that most households (84.9%) in Huila have a minimum of five goats, pigs and/or cows – holdings that are considered sustainable. In Kuanza Norte and Kuanza Sul, around 20% of households have a herd or flock of five or more animals, while in all other provinces, 10% of the households or less have more than five of any of these animals. In Malanje, Bié and Moxico, less than 2% of the households have more than five animals.

3.2.3 Casual labour

Casual work in the agricultural sector is the second most important income source in rural Angola and accounts for 17.9% of the total rural income. In Huambo and Bié, this income source provides more than 32% of the rural income. The labour market is much less developed in Moxico and Kuando Kubango, accounting for 9% and 4.6% of rural incomes respectively.

Almost all communities in the area covered by the survey provide work to members of other villages or have access to work in other villages (Figure 7). The majority of villages in Kuanza Sul (71%), Kuanza Norte (50%) and Malanje (40%) are net providers of labour for people from other villages. The provinces of Benguela and Uige on the other hand provide mainly labourers. Almost all work is related to agricultural production, and in some areas there is some mining as well.

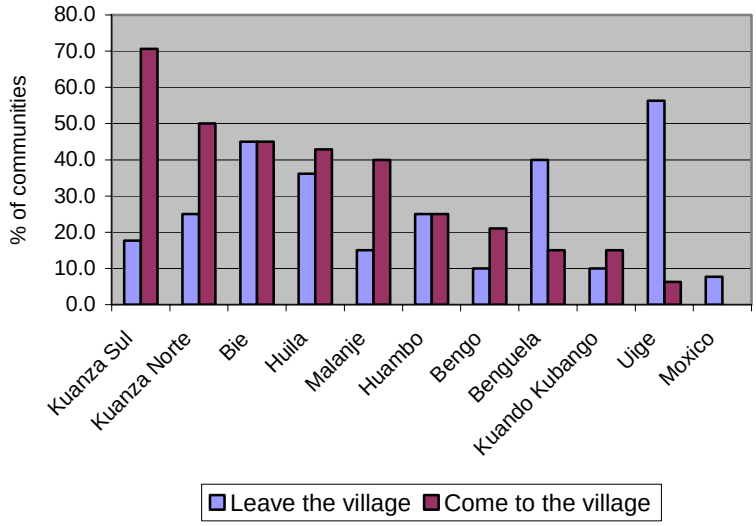


Figure 7 Temporary population movements related to the casual labour market

Unpaid collaboration between farmers depends largely on the province. In only 10% of the communities in Malanje, farmers help each other during agricultural work, while in Huila this type of assistance occurs in 80% of the communities. Kuanza Sul and Kuando Kubango have also a large proportion of communities where members help each other during agricultural work.

3.3 Access to basic services and infrastructures

Information on access to basic services and infrastructures such as public transport, markets, health facilities and education gives a good idea of the remoteness of the community, which is an important composite indicator in assessing this aspect of vulnerability to food security within these communities.

3.3.1 Public transport

Nation wide, public transport is available in only half of the communities visited. More than 80% of the communities have regular access to public transport in the provinces near the national capital (Bengo, Kuanza Norte and Kuanza Sul) and Huambo. Communities in the provinces of Moxico, Kuando Kubango have almost no public transport. In general there is no difference between the wet season and the dry season, except in the provinces of Kuanza Norte and Bengo, where 55-60% of the communities are not reached by public transport during parts of the wet season while they are accessible during the dry season.

The lack of public transport in combination with the lack of nearby basic services has a negative impact on the vulnerability of the rural populations in these provinces to food insecurity.

3.3.2 Markets

Only 9.6% of the villages have a permanent or periodic market. The average distance to the closest market is 28.9 km, but in several provinces distances reach more than 100 km. Average distances are 68.8 km in Malanje, 55.3 km in Moxico and 30.5 km in Kuando Kubango. In Bié, Benguela, Huambo, Huila and Uige, the average distance is less than 20 km. Figure 8 illustrates the distance of the closest market to the selected communities.

Food-aid products are found in 30% of the markets in Malanje, Benguela and Moxico but generally much less in the provinces with the highest amount of food distributed (less than 10% of the markets in Huambo and Bié).

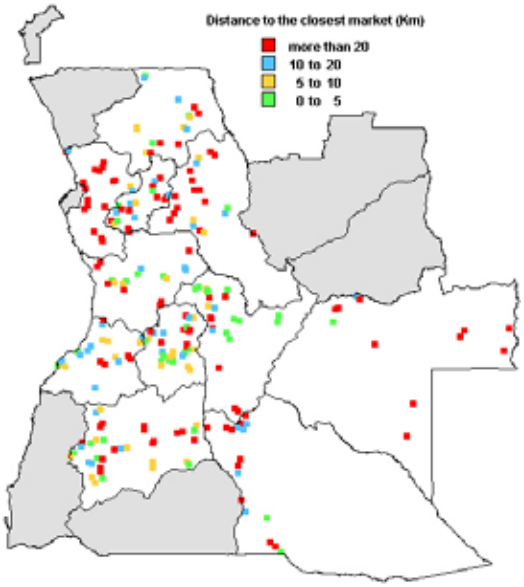


Figure 8 Average distance to the closest market in km, by village visited

3.3.3 Education

70.9 % of the villages have a primary school at the village itself. Only in Moxico (46.2%) and Bié (45%) less than half of the villages have a primary school. In Moxico, schools are more than 20 km from the villages without school, while in all other provinces, the distance is between 2 and 8 kilometres. The condition of the school buildings, the classrooms and the equipment is very poor everywhere.

School enrolment figures are relatively high with 75% of the eligible boys and 71.2% of the girls attending primary school (Figure 9). Enrolment rates are higher than 80% in Uige, Huambo, Malanje, Huila and Bengo and below 50% in Moxico, Kuando Kubango and Bié. Gender disparities (4.1% on average) are limited except in Kuando Kubango, where 35% less girls attend school compared with boys.

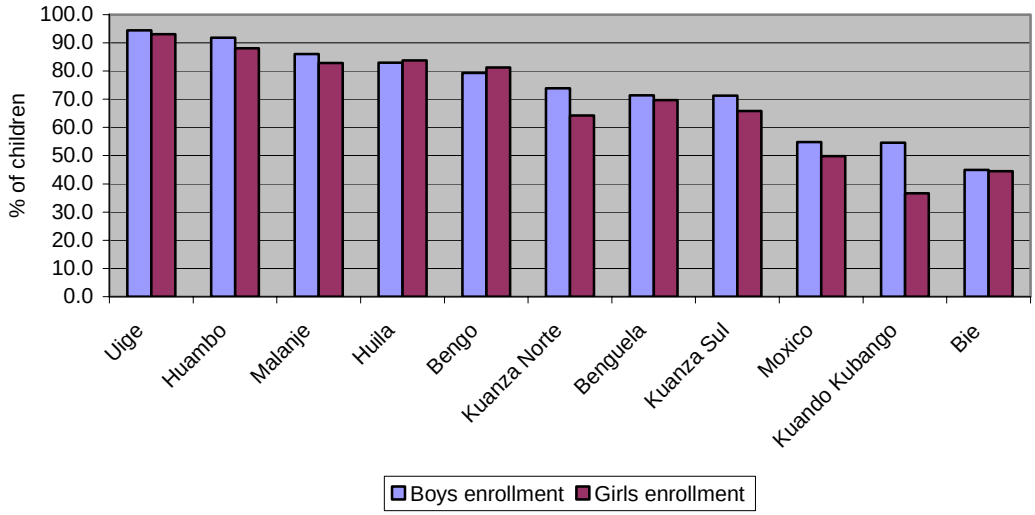


Figure 9 Primary school enrolment estimates by gender and by province

The main reasons mentioned for not sending children to school are the poor quality of the schooling facilities, the lack of interest of parents to send the children to school and the lack of financial means.

3.3.4 Health facilities and health conditions

Very few communities have access to health facilities in the village itself. Only 2.6% have a health centre, while 19.2% have a health post and 3.8% a pharmacy but there is no significant difference between the provinces. The minimum distance to any official health facility is more than 25 km in Moxico, Malanje and Kuando Kubango, between 10 and 20 km in Bié, Bengo, Kuanza Norte, Kuanza Sul, Uige and Benguela and less than 10 km in Huambo and Huila. The average distance to a hospital ranges from 24.6 km in Uige to 287 km in Moxico. However, a traditional midwife and traditional healer are generally present within a few kilometres from any village.

The three most reported illnesses are malaria (35.1%), diarrhoea (31.5%) and respiratory infections (22.6%) with relative few differences between the provinces. Other diseases reported are scabies (4.6%) and measles (1.8%).

In Huila, Huambo and Moxico province, scabies is mentioned often (>15% of the communities) between the three most important diseases. Most of these areas also have the highest concentration of poor households.

3.3.5 Drinking water

For the majority of the communities (55-60%), drinking water is obtained from rivers or lakes all year round. Very few communities (10.8%, country-wide) have access to water from a protected water source. The data shows that there is no lack of access to water during the whole year, but that most water sources are not suitable for direct human consumption. This probably has an effect on the health of children and might explain certain cases of malnutrition cases caused by diarrhoea.

The only province where villages report problems with access to water in the dry season is Kuando Kubango (80% of the villages). In the other provinces, there are few communities who mention this problem.

3.3.6 Agriculture extension services

Agriculture extension services are poorly developed in the country and merit special attention by the government and the humanitarian community. Only 32.1% of the communities had access to extension services during the previous year (see Figure 10). Services are more developed in the northern provinces and Benguela compared with the provinces in the centre and south. For instance in Huambo and Bié, only 20-25% of the communities had access to extension services during the previous 12 months, while in Benguela and in the north, more than half the communities have access to extension services. Most services are provided by the MINADER (61%) followed by various NGO's (36.4%), but with MINADER mainly operating in the northern part of the country.

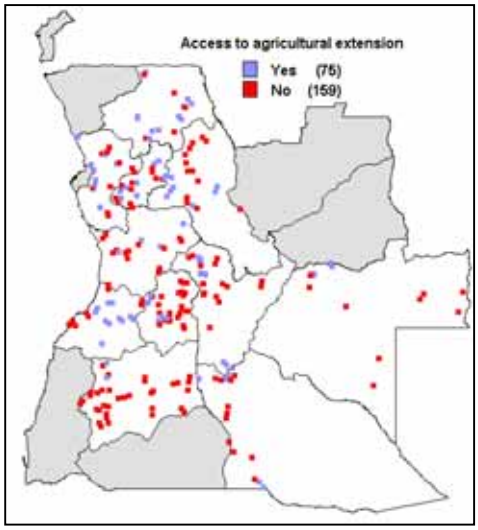


Figure 10 Communities with access to agricultural extension services during the last year

3.4 COPING MECHANISMS

Coping strategies are short-term responses to periodic stress or sudden shocks of natural, economic or political hazards and they provide communities and individuals with opportunities to cope during these shocks. Besides the obvious coping mechanisms such as reducing the number of meals or the quality of the meals, the most important single strategy is casual work. In the less vulnerable areas, coping strategies are more diversified, while in more vulnerable communities, strategies are limited to casual labour, charcoal production and hunting or collecting wild fruits. The figures below illustrate the relative difference in implementation of different strategies in an average community (Figure 11) and a vulnerable community (Figure 12).

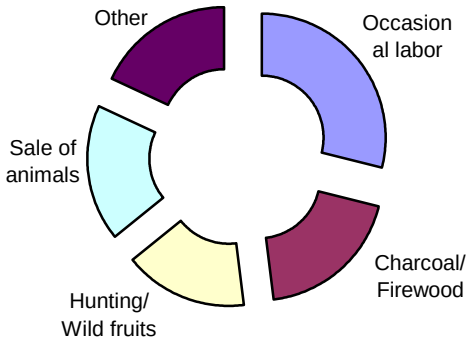


Figure 11 Relative importance of coping strategies in Angola

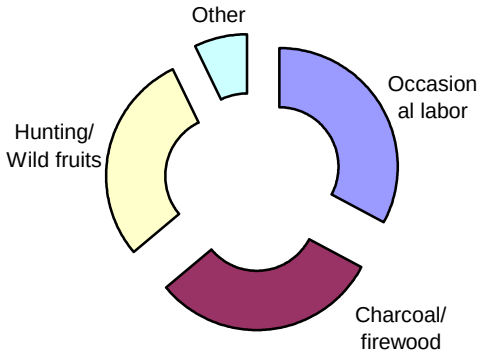


Figure 12 Relative importance of coping strategies in a vulnerable area

Income from casual labour is the most important income source besides agriculture and its importance increases during difficult periods. It is regularly available in most areas (generally less in Moxico and Kuando Kubango) and 84.4% of the communities use it regularly in case of shock. The Figure 13 below shows the percentage of communities where this strategy is used very often by most members and very regularly. In Bié, Kuanza Sul and Bengo, almost everyone in every community has recourse to this strategy; while in all the other provinces more than 50% of the people are involved in this strategy.

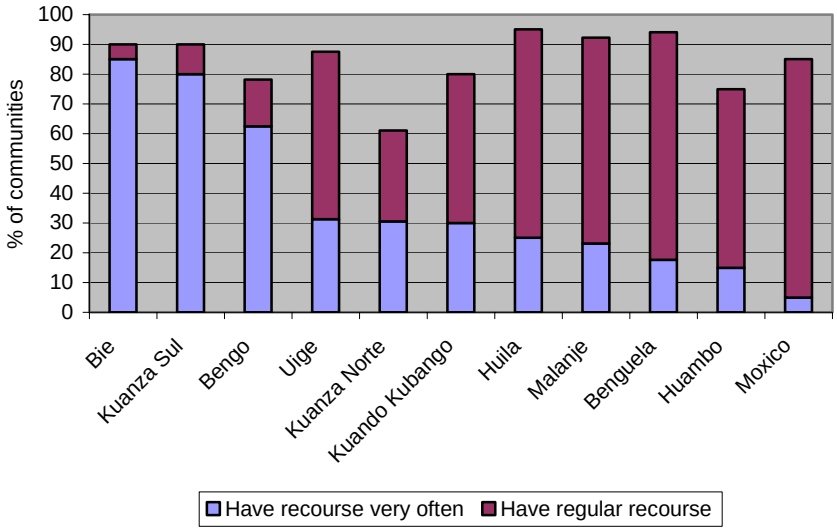


Figure 13 Casual labour as coping strategy

There are a very few other coping mechanisms available besides this strategy. The sale of animals is only used in the provinces with a minimum stock of animals, such as Huila, where more than 90% of the households regularly use this strategy. In Kuanza Norte, Benguela and Huambo, there are about one third of the communities where community members apply this strategy during difficult times, but animal stocks are often not sufficient to regenerate the herd.

Negative coping mechanisms include the sale of charcoal and firewood, removal of children from school, the sale of productive assets or even the sale of land. Of these, only the sale of charcoal and firewood is very often used by more than 22% of the communities. In Huambo, Benguela and Bengo between 60-70% of the households use it very often as reaction to a shock. Few people use this mechanism in Moxico and Kuando Kubango, due to the lack of marketing opportunities.

The figure below shows the percentage of communities where households use negative coping mechanisms very often. In Huambo, more than 60% of the communities the great majority of households often use a negative mechanism. In Benguela and Bengo the numbers are 40% and 35% respectively.

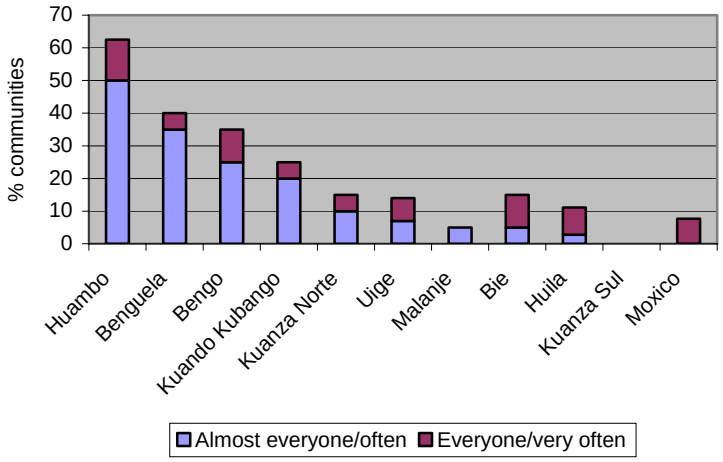


Figure 14 Use of negative coping mechanisms

4. CURRENT VULNERABILITY TO FOOD INSECURITY

4.1 POPULATION MOVEMENTS

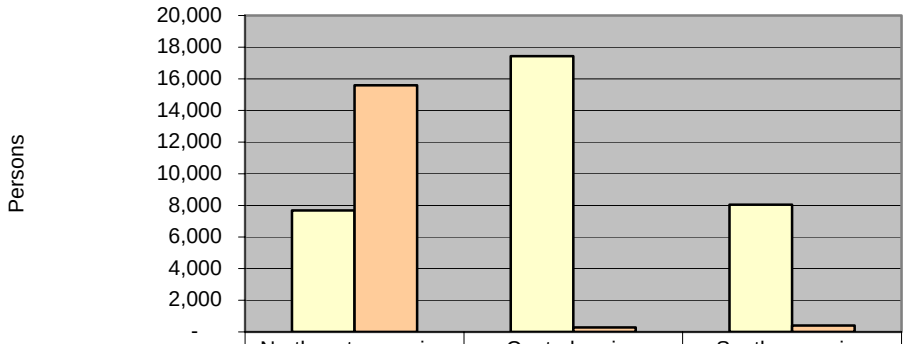
Given the importance of resettlement of returnees on vulnerability in Angola, population movements are being monitored constantly.

The **southern region**[7] has seen relatively few population movements, with internal returnees accounting for 95% of the total. In global terms, this region is the most stable in the country, but intense population movements remain in Kuando Kubango.

In the **central region**[8], large internal population movements have occurred and it is considered that a large proportion of the returnees have not been registered. Most internal returnees have returned to Bié (51% of the total number) and Kuanza Sul (30%) while Huambo registered 19%. There are almost no external returnees in this region.

In the **northeastern region**[9], external returnees from Congo RDC and Zambia represent 60% of the total returnees. Moxico registered the largest number of returnees (77.000 registered persons), while Kuanza Norte registered about 50.000 persons as internal returnee.

Information on returnees from the provincial VA reports during the period November 2003-April 2004 over the last six months is reflected in the Figure 15 below.



	Northeastern region	Central region	Southern region
Internal returnees	7,686	17,429	8,045
External returnees	15,590	279	408

Figure 15 Number of returnees during the last six months by region

4.2 THE AGRICULTURAL SEASON 2003-2004

4.2.1 General overview

The agricultural season 2003-2004 was characterized by irregular and abnormal rainfall in the central highlands (Huambo, Bié and northern Huila), where rainfall data shows above normal levels of precipitation during the period November 2003-February 2004. The first rains came generally late and from November onwards, rains were very frequent, intense and accompanied by heavy winds and in some areas by hail. Hailstorms were mainly observed in the eastern part of Huambo and the western and central part of Bié.
These irregular rains and accompanying hail caused damage to the crops and the resulting continuous wet conditions hampered normal weeding. Competition between the maize and the weeds for nutrients indirectly increased the negative impact of the rains. The runoff of the rains caused localized flooding in the low-lying areas (*nacas*) where almost 100% of all crops where lost.

While the impact on the rains was significant in these low-lying areas, the impact in the higher areas (*lavras*) depended on a number of other factors:

[7] The southern region is composed of Huila and Kuando Kubango province.
[8] The central region is composed of Huambo, Bié, Benguela and Kuanza Sul.
[9] The northeastern region is composed of Bengo, Kuanza Norte, Malanje, Uige, and Moxico.

- Leaching of plant nutrients on the poor sandy soils with limited organic content. The low levels of organic material in the soil (for instance from animals) and chemical fertilizers (expensive and only available in major centres) accentuated this effect.
- Poor farming practices with late planting combined with poor weeding due to continuous wetness of the soil and the plants.
- Lack of crop rotation where the same crop (maize in particular) is cultivated on the same plot for several years without crop rotation.
- In some cases, the use of inappropriate varieties of maize seeds and late planting due to late seed distribution were also factors.

The low average maize and bean yields obtained by farmers this year were not only due to the high levels of rainfall, but to a combination of factors that have together affected normal crop development. Earlier in the year, MINADER and several missions of the humanitarian community estimated cereal crop losses at 60% in Huambo, 30% in Bié and 40-50% in northern Huila. The losses of beans had been estimated at 75% in Huambo and 30% in Bié. The favourable weather conditions which existed during the months following these assessments have, however, reduced these losses.

In the central highlands, the general situation is probably well illustrated by the percentage of households, which have had no harvest this year: Bié is 6.2% of the household, Huila 18.3% and Huambo 40.3%.

In the northern part of the country, weather conditions were normal and normal yields in combination with increased areas planted have resulted in a significant increase in total production.

Other problems related to the agricultural season were reported but the impact of these was localized and had only a limited impact on food security in these provinces. Bengo and Kuanza Sul reported drought conditions and Kuando Kubango reported river floods.

4.2.2 Area planted and harvest

According to the community survey, almost all communities (88.5%) countrywide cultivated a larger area of subsistence crops (maize, sorghum, millet, cassava, sweet potato and beans) this year compared with last year.

The total harvest has only increased in the majority of the communities in the north (67.7% of the communities) while in the central region 76.6% of the communities and in the southern region 87.3% report a smaller harvest than last year (see Figure 16). The same trend is observed for all crops.

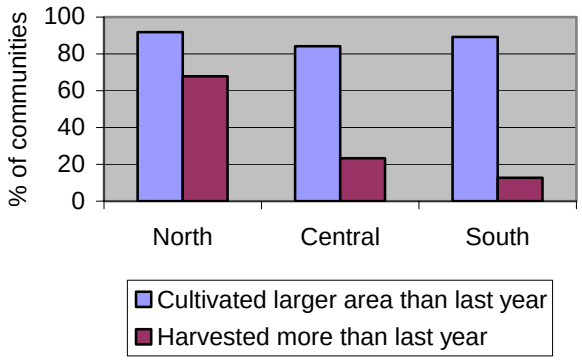


Figure 16 Area planted and expected harvest of subsistence crops

4.3 Food Production and Reserves

The problems related to the agricultural season 2003-2004 indicate a considerable decline of total income from agriculture in the affected areas. The resulting decrease in food reserves is particularly important in the centre of the country, which is illustrated in Figure 17. A decrease of reserves from north to south is observed.

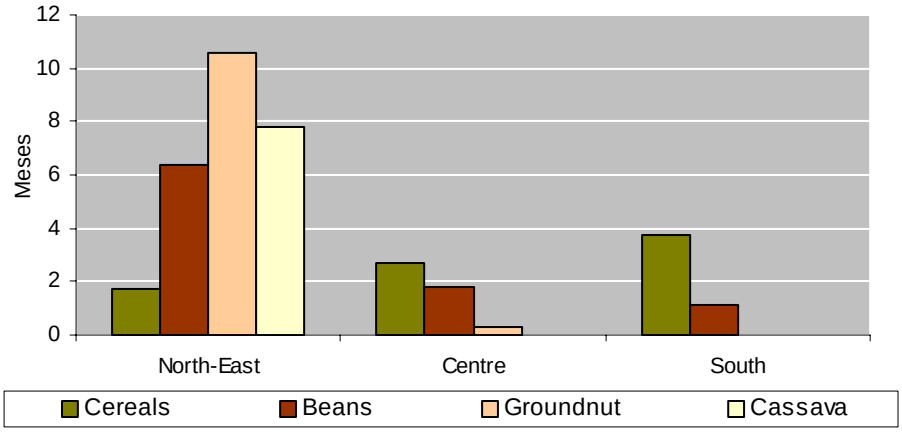


Figure 17 Food Reserves by Region

Cassava dominates in the **northern region** and households have sufficient food reserves to cover food needs until maturation of the crops. The region also has a greater degree of crop diversification, including cash crops such as groundnuts and beans, which guarantee additional cash income. These production surpluses also ensure easy access to seeds for the next cropping season.

Households in the **central region** (with the exception of the coastal areas of Benguela) households largely depend on maize production. Here food reserves may be depleted as early as July for the most vulnerable households. In Huambo Province, many households have harvested small quantities of maize and will depend on humanitarian assistance or other income sources. However, it should be noted that with the end of the agricultural season, opportunities for casual labour and therefore other sources of income, will be more difficult for households to find.

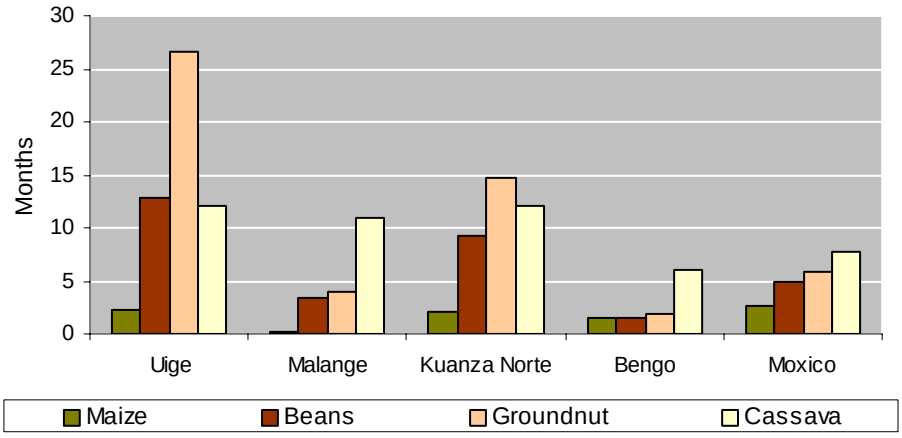


Figure 18 Food Reserves in the Northern Region

Of all the provinces in this region, the population of Huambo is the most vulnerable to food insecurity – see Figure 19 below. Diversification of crops as a means to guarantee access to food does not have the expected results, because alternative crops such as sorghum have low economic value. The municipalities of Caala and Ekunha have alternative crops such as potatoes and vegetables, which guarantee some additional income sources while Bailundo municipality has seen lower crop losses compared with the average in the province.

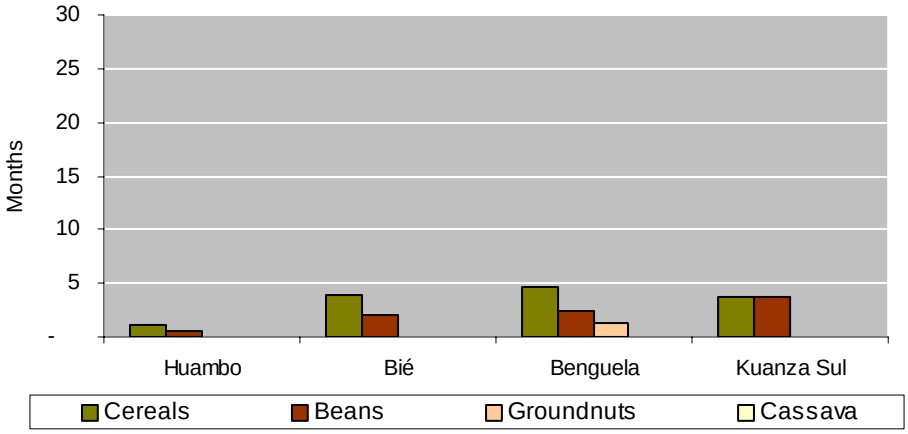


Figure 19 Food Reserves in the Central Region

In Huila Province in the **southern region**, crop production was reduced in certain localities, but cereal food reserves range between 4 and 16 months, which is higher than the national average. The farming system in Huila is based on agriculture and livestock and guarantees a minimum income diversification, which would provide a buffer for possible lower agricultural production. In Kuando Kubango however, food reserves will be depleted within three months after the harvest. The situation is complex here because livelihood systems are not diversified and access to other income sources such as hunting is limited due to security constraints.

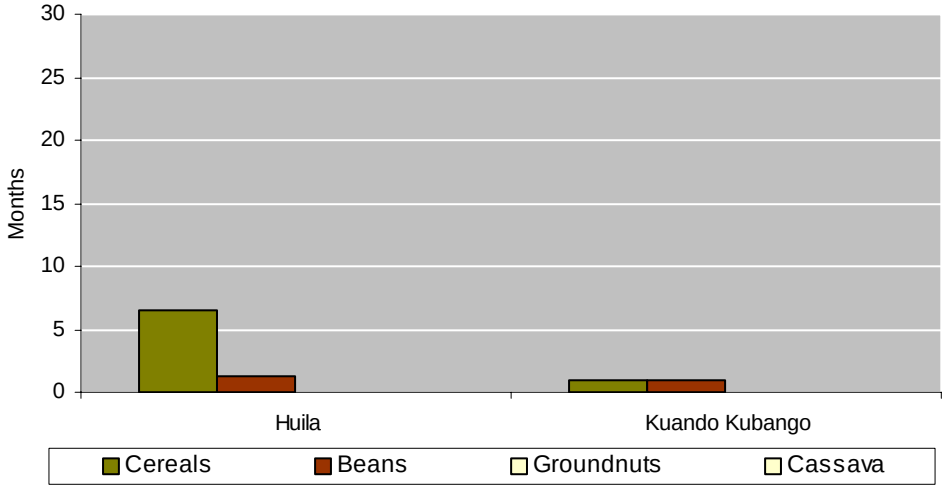


Figure 20 Food Reserves in the Southern Region

4.4 MARKET PRICES OF BASIC FOOD COMMODITIES

Price analysis shows that current prices of maize, cassava flour and beans in markets in the provincial capitals are the lowest levels for the last six months, reflecting the end of the agricultural season and thus the normal seasonal trend. The lowest maize prices are generally observed in the southern region, which is the main producing area. There is no clear explanation for the price increase in December and January, but this might be related to increased transport costs or to the crop losses in the low-lying areas. Maize coming from Namibia is also coming into the markets in the southern region in significant quantities and is expected to result in a further lowering of prices in the area. Prices in Kuando Kubango have seen the highest increase, probably related to the difficult transport situation.

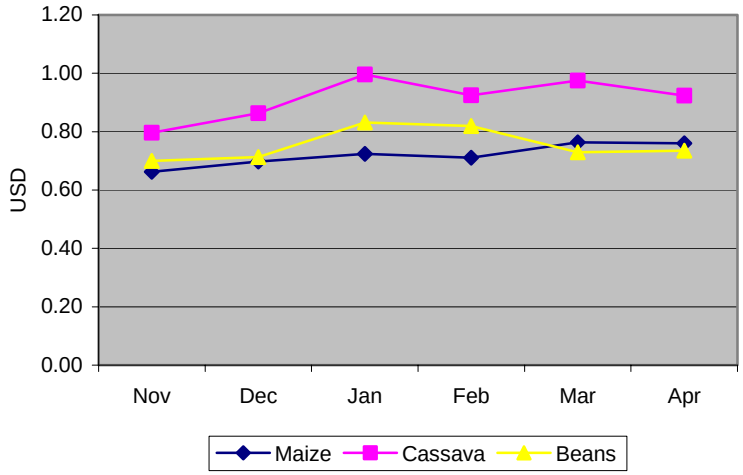


Figure 21 Average prices of major staples during the last six months

Prices of cassava flour are lowest in the main producing and consuming areas of the north and highest in the southern region, where prices are up to 40% higher than in the north. Since the beginning of the year, the price of cassava flour has shown a continuous countrywide decline.

The price of beans is strongly correlated with the agricultural season with a price drop after the main harvest in February. In the central region, prices remained low during the first quarter of the year in spite of production losses due to excessive rains. Surplus production in neighbouring provinces can probably explain this.

Given the fairly constant prices and the regular availability of basic food commodities in all markets, it is generally considered that prices have a limited effect on vulnerability to food insecurity amongst populations in rural Angola. However, vulnerable families cannot wait until then beginning of the rainy season, when prices are high, to sell their stocks because they are often in need of the cash.

4.5 MALNUTRITION AND CURRENT HEALTH CONDITIONS

4.5.1 Health situation

The rainy season and high ambient temperatures have a negative impact on the health situation and result in an increased occurrence of malaria, acute respiratory diseases and diarrhoea. Other external factors are the population's limited knowledge of disease prevention, water consumption from rivers and lakes, difficult access to health services and the poor functioning of the existing health services. In the provinces of Huambo, Bié and Kuanza Norte one of the biggest concerns is scabies, which is affecting entire communities.

Very limited information is available on HIV but the screening of donor blood indicates an increase of the infection rates. There is also an increase in illnesses associated with HIV infection such as tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases, but very little quantitative information is available. In Bengo, 31 new cases of HIV and 150 cases of tuberculosis infection were detected, of which 56% were women. Huila and Bié had respectively 82 and 76 new cases of HIV registered.

The community survey carried out in April 2004 included some questions related to HIV awareness and shows that most communities (91%) have heard about the disease. However, 54.4% of the communities consider that nothing can be done to avoid infection with the virus.

4.5.2 Malnutrition

Nutritional surveys were carried out in the provinces of Benguela, Kuanza Sul and Huila during the period January-April 2004. In general, all surveys indicate an improvement of the nutritional status of the population since the previous reporting period.

In the municipality of Ganda in Benguela province, the moderate acute malnutrition rate (weight for height) is 7.3% (and 0.5% severe malnutrition). The rate of infantile mortality is 4/10.000/day, which is above the normal rate. In Cubal, malnutrition rates are lower with 4.0% moderate malnutrition and 0.3% severe malnutrition. Mortality rates are 1.42 per 10000 per day for children

and 2.02 for the general population, which indicates that severe health problems exist in the community.

Province	Locality	Date	Population group	Method	Sample size	Results		Mortality (x/10,000/day)
						z-Score		
						Global (<-2SD)	Severe (<-3SD)	CM U5
Benguela	Ganda	Fev-04	All pop	Cluster W/H	957	7,3 (5,2-10,2)	0,5 (01,-1,8)	1.36 4,02
Benguela	Cubal	Apr-04	All pop	Cluster W/H	900	4,0 (2,4-6,4)	0,3 (0,0-1,6)	1,54 1,42
Huila	Caconda	Jan-04	All pop	Cluster W/H	958	3,1 (1,8-5,3)	0,8 (0,1-2,3)	1,07 3,07
	Matala	Fev-04	Res	Cluster W/H		4.8 (3.4-6.1)	0.2 (0.0-0.5)	
	Matala	Fev-04	Rea	Cluster W/H		6.7 (5.1-8.4)	0.8 (0.1-1.4)	
Kuanza Sul	Seles	Abr-04	All pop	Cluster W/H	10,324 2,347	15.69	3.75	

Source: Unicef

In northern Huila, nutritional surveys were carried out in Caconda and Matala, which are generally considered as vulnerable areas. Moderate acute malnutrition is only 3.8% (severe = 0.8%) in Caconda which is a considerable improvement compared to the situation in June 2003 when moderate malnutrition was estimated at 9.9% (1.5% severe). The gross mortality rate increased to 1.07 deaths per 10.000 persons per day. In Matala, a nutritional survey in the resettled population in the communal capital showed 4.8% of moderate malnutrition and 0.2% severe malnutrition. In Kuanza Sul, in the municipality of Seles, rates of 11.9% moderate malnutrition and 3.75 % severe malnutrition were found, figures that require further monitoring.

4.6 CURRENT PHYSICAL ACCESS

Access conditions deteriorated significantly during the rainy season, and rendered many regions inaccessible by April 2004 (Figure 21). The problems were most pronounced in the central region and the east, i.e. the provinces of Huambo, Bié and Moxico. In the north, it was mainly the west and south of Malanje, which remained inaccessible.

From May 2004 onwards, the situation improved considerably but certain areas in Huambo, Moxico and Malanje remained inaccessible. In most of these cases, damaged bridges or suspected mine fields were the cause of inaccessibility. Access problems made 110.000 persons (65% of these are food insecure) inaccessible to the humanitarian community during the wet season.

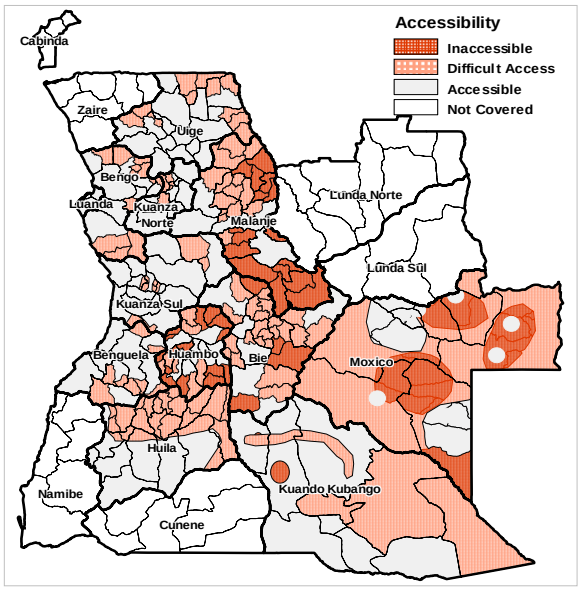


Figure 21 Access situation in April 2004

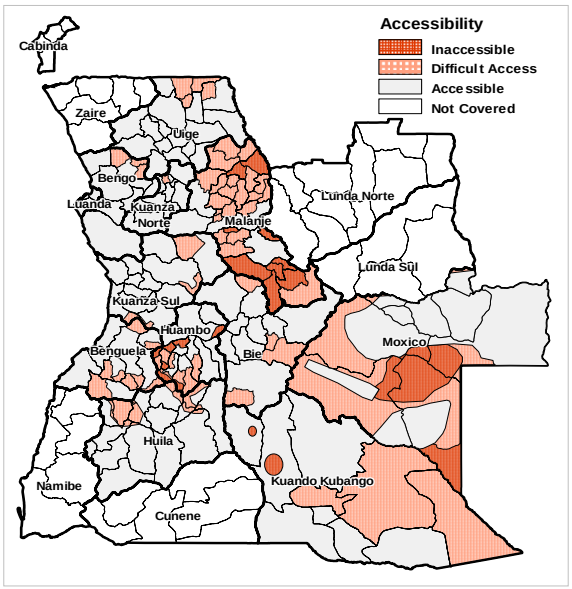


Figure 22 Expected situation during the dry season

5. VULNERABILITY PATTERNS AND WFP INTERVENTION OPTIONS

5.1 GENERAL VULNERABILITY PATTERNS

Provincial and regional comparisons of the quantitative survey data confirm the general expectations regarding the social and spatial distribution of vulnerability patterns in Angola. Vulnerability to food insecurity is linked in the first place to the resettlement of returnee population and the continuous effects of 30 years of civil war, which has destroyed the infrastructure and dismantled basic social services. The most important limitation to restoring agriculturally based sustainable livelihoods is the lack of productive and domestic assets. Returnees often return with very few assets and those assets that were abandoned during the conflict no longer exist. In the vulnerable rural areas, very few coping mechanisms (hunting, sale of charcoal or firewood) are available and most of them have a negative impact on the environment.

It is during the first years of resettlement that these households need support from the humanitarian community in combination with the repair and reconstruction of the transport, school and health infrastructures by the government and its partners. Direct assistance to these households allows them to cultivate during one to two seasons and to rebuild their livelihoods.

The analysis, which covers the period November 2003 to April 2004, estimates the total number of food insecure and people who are highly vulnerable to food insecurity at one million. Figure 23 below illustrates the food insecure and highly vulnerable population by region. The highest concentration of households which are highly vulnerable to food insecurity is found in the central highlands with very high levels in the province of Huambo.

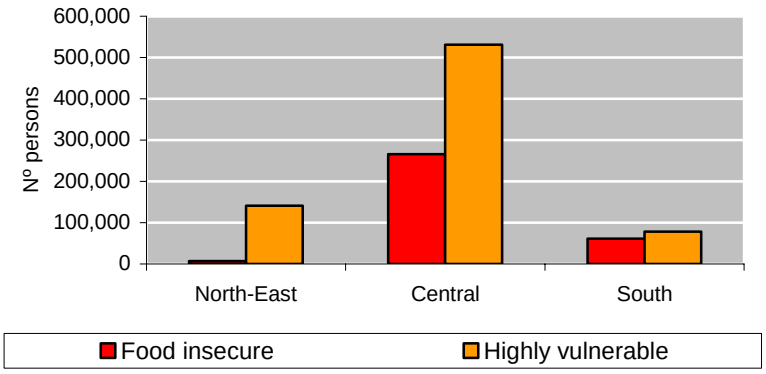


Figure 23 Distribution of food insecure and highly vulnerable populations by region

The **northeastern** region does not have serious problems of food insecurity. The total number of persons in need of food aid is 157.000 of which only 4.2% are food insecure. All of these are located in Malanje province. The livelihood system in this region is based on cassava production. In comparison with the rest of the country, markets are well developed due to a combination of strong links with the markets in Luanda and the cultivation of cash crops.

The northern part of this region has the most diversified and rich natural resource base, and the full recovery of cassava crop will be the cornerstone of the restoration of livelihoods. Vulnerability to food insecurity is mainly linked to limited access to basic services and infrastructures and the limited circulation of goods and people in the remote areas. The exception in this region is the province of Moxico, where problems are more diverse due to the highly dispersed population and the poor access conditions. The highest number of highly vulnerable population is located in this province: 78,000 people, of which 89% are internal returnees and refugees.

The highly vulnerable populations in Bengo province are mainly residents, who have had several years of bad harvests due to poor and irregular rainfall and who have limited access to irrigation systems. In Malanje Province, recent returnees account for 100% of the population in need of food aid. These returnees have only been able to start harvesting cassava for the first time recently or are still waiting their first harvest. The other provinces in the region (Uige and Kuanza Norte) have almost no food insecure people and very few groups which are vulnerable to food insecurity.

Estimates of absolute numbers of people in need of food assistance by province are given in the table below.

Region	Province	Food Insecure	Highly vulnerable	Total
Northern	Bengo	0	27,120	27,120
	Kuanza Norte	0	16,570	16,570
	Malanje	6,650	22,850	29,500
	Moxico	0	78,450	78,450
	Uige	0	5,429	5,429
Central	Benguela	0	29,150	29,150
	Bié	10,600	49,600	60,200
	Huambo	245,200	328,500	573,700
	Kuanza Sul	10,000	78,200	88,200
Southern	Huila	31,770	29,630	61,400
	Kuando Kubango	29,600	51,960	81,560
Country		**333,820**	**717,459**	**1,051,279**

Table 3 Population in need of food assistance by province

The **southern region** has 143.000 persons who need food assistance with 43% being food insecure. The food insecure population is highest in northern Huila and represents 9.5% of the total food insecure population, while Kuando Kubango accounts for 9% of the total food insecure. The large majority (68%) of the total vulnerable population are returnees in both provinces.

In the southern parts of Huila, cereal reserves from the previous good years and extensive livestock holdings provide the majority of the population with sufficient means to cover food requirements until the next harvest.

In Kuando Kubango, with fewer alternative income sources and limited access to basic services, the situation is more critical. The majority of the population, which is vulnerable to food insecurity, is found in this province (64% of the total of the region) and is composed of returnees (22%), resettled (27%) and residents (14.5%). The vulnerability is caused by the low level of food reserves from the harvest in combination with poor natural resources and limited opportunities for casual labour earnings and poor basic services.

The **central region** has 751.200 persons who need food assistance of whom 35% are food insecure. This region contains 80% of the total national food insecure population and 68% of the highly vulnerable population in the country.

The majority of this population is composed of returnees (65%), whose survival strategies are still very fragile and who have not been able to generate enough income during a normal agricultural year.

In this region, the heavy and irregular rains have aggravated an already serious situation, with total loss of the harvest in the low-lying areas and a considerable reduction in the higher areas. In general, the poor transport system, the dependency on subsistence agriculture, the pressure on agricultural lands and poor soils in combination with limited access to agricultural inputs (animal traction, fertilizers...) are the main factors which limit the capacity of vulnerable rural households to escape from the spiral of food insecurity. In addition to these mainly structural factors, people are forced to use negative coping mechanisms (such as sale of firewood, charcoal), which put an additional burden on the already impoverished environment. It must be considered that if these practices continue at the same pace, land degradation and erosion will add to the poverty and food insecurity of the population. The lack of productive and domestic assets of the recent returnees and resettled justifies a large-scale intervention focusing on agricultural extension, asset creation, and income diversification.

Within the central region, the situation is most critical in Huambo province, where 73% of the total food insecure population lives, and 46% of the total highly vulnerable. The highly vulnerable population in the other provinces is lower than Huambo but still represents 27% of the total (23%

returnees and 4 % residents) in the region. In Bié and Kuanza Sul, the majority of the vulnerable are returnees while Benguela has mainly resident population (4% of the total in the region).

5.2 VULNERABILITY BY POPULATION GROUPS

Returnees are still the population group most vulnerable to food insecurity and represent about 58% of the total number of persons in need of food aid against 39% of residents. Resettled population groups are 3.1% of the total and are mainly found in Kuando Kubango province. The number of old IDP's is very small and none remain in the populations in need of food assistance.

The Table 4 below illustrates population numbers by level of vulnerability and population group. The numbers confirm the improvement of the situation and the gradual return to stability in the rural areas. In comparison with the situation last year, a reduction of 810.000 (-31%) vulnerable persons was observed.

	IDP	RET	REA	RES	Total
Food Insecure	0	239,620	0	94,200	333,820
Highly Vulnerable	0	462,729	21,900	232,830	717,459
Moderate Vulnerable	0	256,087	20,200	241,351	517,638
Potentially Vulnerable	0	85,426	15,300	142,216	242,942
Total	0	1,043,862	57,400	710,597	1,811,859

Table 4 Population groups and vulnerability levels

The reduction since October 2003 is general over all geographic areas and population groups:

- Food insecure: reduction of 183.000 (-35%)
- High vulnerability: reduction of 549.500 persons (-43%)
- Moderate vulnerability: increase of 36,000 (7.4%)
- Potentially vulnerable: reduction of 113,000 (-32%)

5.3 FOOD AID INTERVENTION OPTIONS

With the gradual reintegration of returnees in their areas of origin, food aid interventions should be moving away from general food distribution towards more specific targeted interventions. Programmes should be better targeted in time, in scope and in type of intervention, according to the timeline in Figure 24 below.

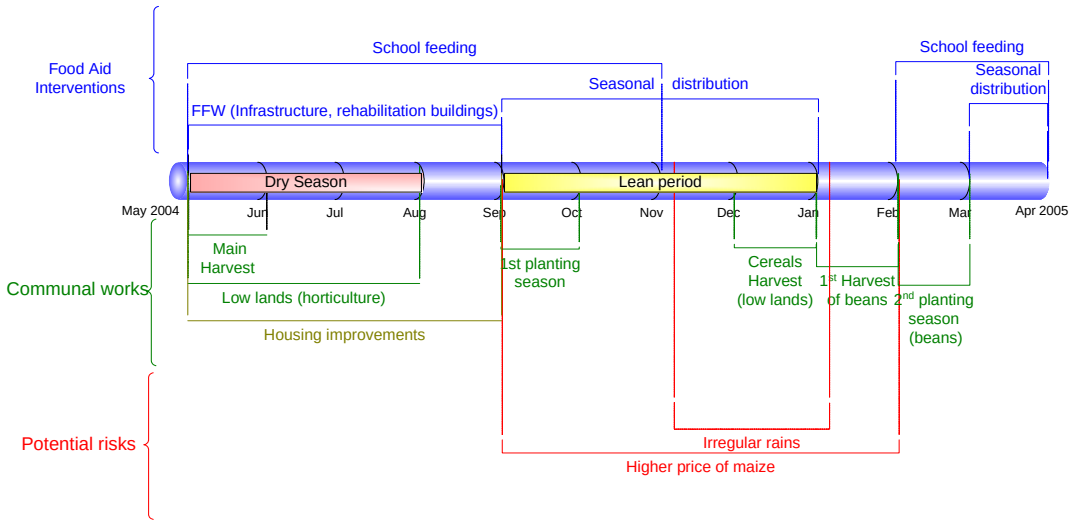


Figure 24 Timeline of food aid activities against the activities in rural communities

Food aid interventions should also be implemented according to the vulnerability patterns found in the different regions, and should prioritise:

- External and internal returnees, demobilized and female-headed households with only one harvest.

- Recently established villages and communities where there is need to construct and/or rehabilitate the infrastructure and services.
- Food-for-work projects for the rehabilitation of roads and bridges.
- Food-for-work projects for the rehabilitation of social and productive infra-structures such as schools, health posts, irrigation systems, production of compost in areas with livestock, planting of fruit trees etc…
- Food-for-work projects in support of reforestation programmes and environmental protection
- Food-for-work to support the installation and protection of water sources.
- School feeding projects.
- Programs to support nutritional safety nets.

The situation in Huambo province with a high level of structural vulnerability to food insecurity requires an integrated approach whereby food aid is combined with long-term interventions. The high population density combined with the poor environment and the extensive recourse to negative coping strategies requires a long-term intervention strategy to increase productivity and to protect the environment for future generations. Activities to implement in these conditions should prioritise infrastructure rehabilitation, acceleration of the introduction of cattle as asset and for animal traction, seed multiplication, agricultural extension and diversification of the economic activities.

6. ANNEX 1 - CVI, COMPOSITE VULNERABILITY INDICATOR

6.1 ANALYTICAL CRITERIA

Following extensive internal discussions within the VAM Unit and, subsequently, within the VA&FA Working Group five main elements of analysis were chosen in order to determine geographic risk of food insecurity and identify the most vulnerable population groups. These elements were:

- *Accessibility and population movements*: for their impact on livelihood systems and demographic pressure on natural resources and income generating opportunities.
- *Agriculture*: being the main activity of the vast majority of the war-affected population in Angola.
- *Markets functioning and price trends*: for their impact on food availability and accessibility.
- *Health, nutrition, and sanitation*: because these are directly or indirectly related with productive capacity.
- Income and coping strategies: being them clear indicators of people's capacity to face food insecurity.

In attempt to measure the impact of the above element of analysis on the vulnerability situation of a given area, a series of analytical criteria were determined in order to classify the situation in terms of each element according to a scale of four possible situations:

1. Good (+)
2. To be monitored (±)
3. Worrying (–)
4. Critical (––)

It was decided that, in order to determine the geographic risk of food insecurity in a given area, information related to at least four out of the above five elements of analysis was needed. The summation of the algebraic symbols utilized to indicate one of the four possible situations for each element is compared with the intervals of two possible ranges of results:

a) From –10 to +5, if information is available to determine the situation of all five elements of analysis

b) From –8 to +4, if information is available to determine the situation of four out five elements of analysis

Each one of these two possible ranges is divided in five intervals which are used to determine if the risk of food insecurity in a given area (geographic vulnerability) is high, moderate to high, moderate, low to moderate, or low.

6.2 POPULATION GROUPS RANKING

The possible mechanisms for an efficient local level targeting within a complex emergency context such as the Angolan one has been one of the most discussed issues within the VA&FA Working Group since the beginning of its activities. Although everyone agrees that the food economy approach would be the best technical tool to specifically identify the needs at community and household level in order to target the most vulnerable members of the population, it is also widely recognized that a systematic use of this type of assessments is not a practical solution within the Angolan context for the following reasons:

- the disruption of livelihood systems in the vast majority of the country
- the wide geographical dispersion of the population in the country
- the limited human/financial resources of all actors involved in the Vulnerability Analysis Exercise
- the high level of technical skills necessary for this type of assessments

However, it is recognized that more field based information is needed to improve the local level targeting which as of present is performed at community level by the provincial VA groups that identify the population groups present in the community and rank them according one of three possible vulnerability level based on length of residence, access to land and agricultural inputs, capacity to develop alternatives income strategies based on the knowledge of the area and their social linkages with other population groups.

In the after-war Angolan context five populations groups have been considered to be representatives of the entire vulnerable population in the country at the time of the harvest, in April-May 2003. These groups are:

a) Internally Displaced People (IDP) arrived after October 2001: these might have access to their first harvest in April 2003

b) Returnees (RET): ex-IDPs or ex-refugees that returned to their areas of origin

c) Resettled (REA): ex-IDPs or ex-refugees that resettled in some areas which is not their areas of origin

d) Vulnerable Residents (RES)

e) Socially Vulnerable Groups (GSV): elderly, street children, orphans, handicapped, etc..

6.3 COMPOSITE VULNERABILITY INDEX

Through an empirical combination of the geographic risk of food insecurity and the degree of vulnerability by which the population groups are ranked at local level by the provincial VA groups, it is obtained the Composite Vulnerability Index (CVI) for each of the population groups in a given locality where enough information is available to determine the geographic risk of food insecurity.

This is done by using the below matrix:

Risk of Food Insecurity	Locality	VL-I					TOTAL	VL-II					TOTAL	VL-III					TOTAL
		IDP	RET	REA	GSV	RES		IDP	RET	REA	GSV	RES		6.3.1.1	RET	REA	GSV	RES	
High																			
Moderate to High																			
Moderate																			
Moderate to Low																			
Low																			
Total																			

VL = Vulnerability Level

Different colours are assigned to four different degree of the CVI as illustrated in the following table:

Composite Vulnerability Index	Description
Food Insecure Population	Indicate those population groups whose livelihood systems have been heavily affected or disrupted and whose minimal nutritional requirements cannot be met unless they have access to food assistance
High Vulnerability	Those populations who will not be able to meet their minimal consumptions needs until next harvest and therefore will most likely be food insecure during the lean season
Moderate Vulnerability	Those populations who might not be able to meet their minimal consumptions needs until next harvest and therefore might become food insecure during the lean season
Potential Vulnerability	These are population groups that should not face food insecurity until the next harvest. However, should some unexpected event affect the availability of food or its accessibility, these groups might not be able to face the crisis and could eventually become food insecure

The cells of the CVI matrix, once filled with estimated number of population groups by location, enable the Provincial VA Groups and, at national level, the VA&FA Working Group to do the following:

- Estimate the number of food insecure population at the end of the VA Exercise
- Qualify the type of population groups that face food insecurity
- Identify the geographic areas with highest risk of food insecurity
- Make a medium term projection of the potential beneficiaries caseload of for food aid/food security interventions
- Plan appropriate integrated interventions to re-establish livelihood systems of war-affected populations

It has to be said that only the latest VA Exercise, carried out in October 2002, has reached a level of sufficient sophistication which allowed to the humanitarian community, at both the national and provincial level, to use the results of the exercise as indicated above.

WFP has used the results of the VA to review its programme of intervention by population group and by district, and to take programming decisions for the first half of 2003.

6.4 LIMITATIONS

The information on the multi-sectoral food security indicators is collected primarily by the Government institutions, NGOs and Agencies, which are members of the Provincial Vulnerability Analysis Group. Gathering data that satisfies both spatial and time dimension of every single vulnerability indicator is an enormous task, probably beyond the capacity of existing institutional framework. Due to the lack of a “gold standard” measure

of vulnerability, the VA&FA working group continues to search for more viable indicators and refine the methodology so as to reduce the subjective perceptions of the problem and at the same time broaden the ground for a clear understanding of livelihood capacities and strategies.

A categorical distinction of vulnerable groups is made difficult due to the high degree of integration among the various population groups in the country. The current data collection methods and the food security monitoring practices further complicate the identification of the factors determining differential vulnerability to food insecurity across groups and the quantitative estimation of affected people. It is therefore difficult to trace with high degree of accuracy, the time sequences and the source of vulnerability of these population groups at the local level following the first level screening provided by VA Exercise.

Only limited information is available in the areas outside of the municipality centre, or in areas outside the humanitarian intervention range. This is due, in part, to the limited presence of government institutions, NGOs and Agencies in the outlying areas of the provincial and municipality capitals.