

Title: [Special Report to Angola - July 2003 ...](#)FAO GLOBAL INFORMATION AND EARLY WARNING
SYSTEM ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME**SPECIAL REPORT**
FAO/WFP CROP AND FOOD SUPPLY
ASSESSMENT MISSION
TO ANGOLA**25 July 2003**

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- [Mission Highlights](#)
 - [1. OVERVIEW](#)
 - [2. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SETTING](#)
 - [3. FOOD PRODUCTION IN 2002/03](#)
 - [4. SITUATION BY REGION/PROVINCE](#)
 - [5. FOOD SUPPLY SITUATION](#)
 - [6. EMERGENCY/RECOVERY FOOD ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENT](#)

Mission Highlights

- Since April 2002 Angola has been experiencing its first year of peace and stability after almost three decades of armed conflict. People and goods move with decreasing constraints between provinces, improving the conditions under which agriculture, food marketing, and access to food take place.
- Large numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees from neighbouring countries have been returning to their original areas since last year. A significant number of ex-UNITA soldiers have been demobilised and are being resettled. This continuous flow of populations has made the quantification of vulnerable groups more complex.
- The 2003 cereal production is estimated to be 23 percent higher than last year at 670 249 tonnes, due to favourable rainfall conditions during the 2002/03 growing season, an increase in the area under cultivation and substantial distribution of agricultural inputs. Other crops such as cassava, groundnuts, beans, and sweet potatoes, have also increased from last year's levels.
- Cereal import requirements for 2003/04 are estimated at 709 000 tonnes, of which 490 000 tonnes are expected to be covered as commercial imports and 219 000 tonnes as

emergency food aid.

- The number of people in need of food assistance will remain at around 1.4 million. WFP plans to assist over 1 million most vulnerable people including returnee farmers, resettled farmers, socially vulnerable groups, IDPs still in areas of refuge, and vulnerable resident farmers. All these groups are in the process of clearing land and replanting their fields and will need continued food assistance until the main 2004 harvest.

1. OVERVIEW

An FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission visited Angola from 15 May to 10 June, 2003. The mission's objective was to assess the 2003 crop production and the cereal import requirements, including food aid, for the 2003/04 marketing year (April-March). The mission was briefed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration (MINARS), and by the FAO and WFP country teams. Field visits were made to 8 of the country's 18 provinces over a period of two weeks, together with officers from the Food Security Unit of MINADER and observers from the European Union. An observer from SADC joined the mission in its final phase in Luanda.

The Mission was divided into two groups for the field visits, one visiting the provinces of Malange, Uige, and Moxico, while the other visited Luanda, Bengo, Bié, Huambo, and Huila, covering the northern, central, and southern regions. The new stability of the country made travelling this time safer and easier than in previous missions, and allowed for more visits to the agricultural areas of the provinces. Information on the situation in the provinces not visited was provided to the Mission by the Food Security Unit of MINADER, WFP/VAM, and the offices of NGOs with projects in the country.

Since April 2002, when a cease-fire agreement was signed between UNITA and the Government, a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their original areas. The majority of these people are farmers. Some started moving back to their lands immediately after the signing of the agreement, others followed later, and the flow is still going on. Refugees who had settled in neighbouring countries are also returning to their regions in Angola. For a number of reasons, not all returnees were on time to cultivate their land and they participated in the 2002/03 agricultural year by working on the land of resident farmers.

Agricultural performance in 2002/03 has improved. Rains were abundant and well distributed throughout the country, except in some southern provinces. The area cropped in main food crops is estimated by the mission at about 2.56 million hectares, 14 percent higher than last year's figure. This increase can be explained by the good prospects brought about by early rains, but mainly by the fact that returnee farmers worked on the lands of resident farmers. Substantial provision of agricultural inputs by the Government and international agencies, as well as renewed access to markets, also contributed to this year's improved food production.

The mission forecasts the 2003 cereal production at 670 249 tonnes, 23 percent higher than last year reflecting both an increase in cropped areas and better yields. Cereals include maize (545 150 tonnes), and sorghum and millet (97 402 tonnes). Production of cassava, the main staple food in the North, is estimated slightly above last year, at some 5.7 million tonnes (fresh weight).

The cereal import requirement for marketing year 2003/04 (April/March) is estimated at 709 000 tonnes, lower than last year's level. Of that total, 490 000 tonnes are

anticipated to be imported commercially, leaving 219 000 tonnes to be covered by food aid.

The number of people in urgent need of food assistance is estimated at 1.4 million, basically the same figure as last year's, because the reduction in internally displaced people (IDPs) has been offset by refugees arriving from neighbouring countries as well as by demobilised ex-soldiers. Internal and external returnees (*retornados*) make up one-half the population still in need of food assistance (869 700). The other vulnerable groups in terms of access to food are: (i) IDPs who have resettled in areas which are not their areas of origin (80 400); (ii) vulnerable social groups (about 201 600); (iii) people who became IDPs after October 2001 including a large number in some provinces since the cease-fire (160 400); and vulnerable residents, still in need of food assistance (89 000).¹ WFP plans to assist 1.03 million people, 18 percent less than last year, including 610 400 returnees. The food aid requirements of this population amount to 161 000 tonnes of cereals, 17 800 tonnes of pulses and smaller quantities of oil, corn-soya blend, sugar and salt. The remaining needy population will have to be assisted by other humanitarian agencies.

2. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SETTING

Angola has a total area of 1.247 million square kilometres and a 2003 estimated population close to 15 million. The country is endowed with substantial natural resources, which include extensive reserves of oil and gas, valuable minerals, particularly diamonds, and an important hydroelectric potential from numerous rivers. It has a vast agricultural potential in its 5 to 8 million hectares of arable land. Soils are fertile in the northern region and central highlands, where annual rainfall normally exceeds 1000 mm. Livestock is mostly found in the south, which receives lower rainfall and is also less populated than the rest of the country. The country also has vast marine and river resources, particularly fisheries, as well as an extensive forestry sector. In spite of this potential, a high percentage of the Angolan population is living below the poverty line. The civil war that began after independence in 1975 and continued up to April 2002 was the major cause of social instability and economic disruption.

Real GDP growth is expected to remain at 6 percent in both 2003 and 2004, mainly due to rising oil production, forecast at 920 000 barrels/day in 2003 and 965 000 barrels/day in 2004.² Oil accounts for 85 to 90 percent of fiscal revenues and 61 percent of GDP. Exports are projected to be around US\$ 8.5 billion in 2003, while the imports will be around US\$ 4.1 billion. However, the war situation, together with inadequate economic policies, have resulted in high levels of inflation, estimated to be between 115 and 125 percent for the last two years, a figure likely to be maintained in the near future.

Agriculture accounts for only 7 percent of GDP but is a fundamental activity in a country with a large rural population and a small industrial sector (besides oil), because it is the main source of employment and food supplies. Among the food crops, cassava predominates in the north; maize is the main food staple in the central highlands, while millet and sorghum are the most important cereals in the drier southern regions. Livestock are only important in the south. Prior to independence (1975), food production was high and the country was an exporter of maize and coffee.

During the conflict, agriculture fell to an almost subsistence level in many areas, with little or no marketable surpluses and very limited trade activity. Consequently, the country has for many years relied on food imports, both commercial imports of wheat and rice, and food aid mostly in the form of maize and beans. With the cease-fire, however, and the new mobility of people and products throughout the country, the activity of local

markets has been revitalised and is growing steadily. In all areas visited by the mission it was commonly found that both the supply and the variety of goods in local markets have increased substantially from last year's levels.

The country's agricultural potential plus the return of farmers to their land is likely to improve the food situation rapidly, if favourable climate conditions continue to hold. It is possible and probable that, in the near future, Angola will no longer need food assistance from abroad and will be even capable of keeping strategic stocks of food for any eventual crisis or natural disaster. However, there is still much to be done in terms of agricultural rehabilitation and development. Most of the peasant population use only the hoe and the machete as tools. Only in the south is there use of draught animals. There is an overall lack of organisation both to produce and to market surpluses.

The country's potential to produce food should not divert attention from the immense task of social and economic development still to be accomplished. Social conditions of rural populations are very poor. Although resident farmers are presently in a much better situation than returnee farmers, the overall picture is still far from satisfactory. It is estimated that only 5 to 7 percent of rural villages and towns have a latrine system. Health clinics and health personnel are scarce everywhere. Foreign NGOs, churches, and other organisations run the few medical facilities in the countryside. About 80 percent of the population do not have access to essential drugs. Malaria, measles, tuberculosis, and other diseases account for most of the infant and adult mortality. A national vaccination campaign against measles has just taken place, covering 53 percent of the target population. Water is often not safe for drinking and may be carried from long distances.

The annual rate of growth of the population is 3 percent while life expectancy is 46.6 years. The infant mortality rate is 150/1000 live births, and the mortality rate for children under 5 is 250/1000. Malnutrition and its effects are visible all over the country. The overall literacy rate is 42 percent, with 56 percent for males and 28 percent for females. Rural schools do not function properly due to lack of materials, food for the students, and teachers. Although in many parts of the country houses are made of adobe bricks and look solid, the housing situation is precarious and inadequate, especially in relation to the average size of rural families. In all respects, a massive development effort is needed.

3. FOOD PRODUCTION IN 2002/03

3.1 Cropping systems

Angolan agriculture is almost entirely rainfed. There are three main agro-ecological zones. The Northern Region is characterised by a humid tropical climate, with an annual rainfall over 2000 mm. The main crop is cassava, which occupies about 77 percent of the area planted (or 493 202 hectares); the remaining 24 percent is taken by other traditional crops such as maize, beans, millet, groundnuts, and sweet potato, all of them intercropped.

The Central region has a temperate tropical climate modified by altitude, which ranges from 1000 to over 2500 meters above sea level. This high plateau is characterised by an annual rainfall from 1250 mm to 1500 mm. The main crops are maize (677 070 hectares), mostly planted together with other traditional crops such as beans, sorghum/millet, groundnuts, sweet potato, and Irish potato. Upland rice is cultivated in small areas, as part of a Government-sponsored production campaign. At the household level, livestock mostly consists of a few heads of cattle, goats, sheep, pigs and chicken.

The Southern region is largely characterised by a dry climate, ranging from tropical desert (Namibe) to tropical dry (Cunene), with low annual rainfall (20 mm average). The predominant crop is sorghum and/or millet, which cover about 80 percent of the total area planted (about 222 000 hectares). The remaining 20 percent of land utilisation includes maize, inter-cropped with beans, groundnuts, and sweet potato. Livestock rearing is a parallel activity, with families usually keeping a few heads of cattle, goats and/or sheep, pigs, and chicken.

The Northern and Central regions have two rainy seasons: September to December and February to April. In the Southern region, there is only one season, from October to March, with planting taking place from October to December. During the dry season, farmers plant in low areas called "Nakas", which are close to the water tables and allow the root systems to reach moisture easily. Most common crops are maize, beans and vegetables. In Benguela and Huambo provinces, there is irrigated agriculture in very limited areas.

3.2 Rainfall

Reports on rainfall patterns were provided by the agro-meteorological stations of MINADER, which were complemented with satellite information and interviews with farmers and extension workers during the field visits. Rains in the 2002/2003 cropping season started in the first days of September in the Northern region; in October in the Central Region; and in November in the Southern region. Overall, Angola experienced normal to above normal rainfall during the season. In spite of a slight delay of the beginning of the rains in some areas, precipitation was well distributed in about three quarters of the country, with the exception of the Southern coastal region (Namibe, Cunene, and Kuando Kubango provinces). As a result, crop performance was generally good in all regions, but in the coastal areas of Southern region, insufficient and irregular precipitation caused yield reductions. Pasture and livestock also benefited from the adequate rains of the season and are in satisfactory conditions.

3.3 Supply of agricultural inputs

During the 2002/2003 agricultural year, 2 062 tonnes of seeds (cereals, pulses, groundnuts and vegetables) and 526 000 hand tools (hoes, machetes, and files) were provided by UN agencies, especially FAO, 13 NGOs and MINADER, to about 355 820 families in 14 provinces. Most of the beneficiaries were vulnerable families returning to their own areas. However, resident populations also benefited from these inputs.

The Mission was informed that MINADER also distributed limited quantities of fertilisers and pesticides. Very small amounts of fertilisers and imported vegetable seeds were on sale in local rural markets but plant protection chemicals were not available. Even if these inputs were available in larger quantities, only a small segment of the rural communities could afford to buy them. Agricultural machinery for cultivation (tractors) have been greatly reduced in numbers because of the war. In areas with livestock (Huila Province), the use of animal traction is a common practice.

Availability of seeds and other inputs will contribute strongly to the expansion of the area under cultivation in the next season. A serious effort will have to be made by the Government and international agencies to supply seeds for 2003/04 cropping season, in order to meet as much as possible the requirements of newly resettled families and residents. Attention should be given to the possibility of acquiring and distributing locally produced seeds, which could help the local economies.

3.4 Area planted

The total area planted to the main foodcrops in 2002/03 is estimated at about 2.56 million hectares, 14 percent higher than in 2001/02. The area planted to cereals increased by 14 percent, mainly due to an expansion of maize plantings, and that to cassava by 9 percent. A number of factors have contributed to such increases: the good rains of the season, the flow of IDPs back to their areas of origin after April 2002, the supply of seeds and tools to farmers and the new access to markets.

Table 1 shows the total area cultivated by resident and returnee farmers during 2002/03. Tables 2 and 3 provide the same information by region and province.

Table 1 – Area under cultivation in 2001/02 and 2002/03 (hectares)

	2001/02			2002/03		
	Residents	IDPs	Total	Residents	IDPs/Returnees	Total
NORTH						
Cabinda	31 660		31 660	39 510	756	40 266
Zaire	62 973	2 865	65 838	28 098	2 629	30 727
Uige	284 589	6 402	290 991	187 605	7 569	195 174
Bengo	33 619	7 654	41 273	39 083	20 143	59 226
Luanda	10 898	6 885	17 783	79 233	2 929	82 162
Kuanza Norte						