

VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION OF ANGOLAN REFUGEES

2011



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)
Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)



Cover photo:

69-year-old Antonio is telling other refugees that he wants to return home to Angola. He lives in Nkondo settlement in DRC's Bas-Congo Province, UNHCR/ SELubuku, June 2011.

THE CONTEXT

Angola's 30 year brutal civil war ended in 2002. During the subsequent five years, some 450,000 of the estimated 600,000 Angolan refugees repatriated to their areas of origin, as did the majority of the more than 4 million internally displaced people. In March 2007, UNHCR officially ended its large-scale voluntary repatriation operation for Angolan refugees. Over 26,000 have returned since then, in many cases with UNHCR support. Some **146,000** Angolans still remain as refugees in neighbouring asylum countries.

Discussions are underway to bring closure to the Angolan refugee chapter and in cooperation with all governments concerned, UNHCR has renewed efforts to find a durable solution for the remaining Angolan refugees, through voluntary repatriation, local integration or an alternative status. This would create the conditions for invoking the "ceased circumstances" cessation clause for Angolan refugees, effective 31 December 2011. A series of tripartite meetings between the Republic of Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Namibia, Zambia and UNHCR, have initiated the resumption of the repatriation operation in 2011 for remaining Angolan refugees who wish to return home. UNHCR started mass information campaigns and organized go-an-see visits to enable refugees to take a well informed decision on returning to Angola.

The Angolan Government has allocated substantial funding for the procurement of "reintegration kits" – a package of non-food items, including buckets, plastic sheeting, kitchen and household items, blankets, tools and basic construction materials – and food assistance. The Government has asked IOM to assume an operational role in the establishment and operation of reception and transit centres and the in-land transportation of returnees to their final destinations and other logistics requirements, including distribution of food for 3 months and the non-food items. UNHCR and IOM will work together ensuring international protection and finding solutions for refugees through a joint programme, with a division of responsibility based upon UNHCR's mandate and respective strengths and comparative advantages of each agency.

This is a unique opportunity to bring closure to one of the most protracted refugee situations in the world. To take advantage of this window of opportunity and considering that different circumstances prevail in each of the five asylum countries, as well as in the return areas, UNHCR and IOM are appealing for flexible and additional funding. This appeal seeks to raise the necessary funds to provide humane and dignified voluntary repatriation assistance to more than 34,000 Angolan

refugees from DRC, Zambia, Republic of Congo, Namibia and Botswana who wish to return home and will be repatriated in 2011.

POPULATION OF CONCERN AND PLANNING FIGURES

Current planning figures foresee that around 34,000 Angolan refugees will return home during the remainder of 2011. The late start of the operation and seasonal factors, such as rains and planting and harvest schedules, may prevent the completion of voluntary repatriation this year, and a further 26,000 Angolan refugees are expected to return in 2012. The majority of the planned returns are from the DRC and Zambia. UNHCR is carrying out mass information campaigns to promote interest in voluntary repatriation to Angola.

Country	Current population *	Planning figures for 2011
Zambia	25,265	4,000
DRC	79,617	30,000
ROC	2,652	100
Namibia	5,920	100
Botswana	479	50
Total	113,933	34,250

* UNHCR statistics as of 31 December 2010

COORDINATION

The Angolan Executive, through the Ministry for Social Welfare and Reintegration (MINARS), will coordinate the return and reintegration process inside Angola, with support from UNHCR and IOM and in coordination with the UN Country Team. Cross-border health issues will be coordinated by WHO. Movements from the five neighbouring countries of asylum – the DRC, Zambia, Namibia, Republic of the Congo (ROC) and Botswana – will be organized in close coordination with the government authorities in each country and through implementation arrangements and modes of transportation determined by the particular circumstances on the ground. Transport will be a combination of road and air movements.

STRATEGY AND ACTIVITIES

The Angolan Executive has made a strong commitment, including financially, to assisting the repatriation of its citizens. UNHCR and IOM will be the conduit for international support and

solidarity in organizing an operation that will voluntarily repatriate Angolan refugees, in safety and dignity, from the asylum countries to their final destinations in Angola.

In the countries of asylum, UNHCR and IOM will be responsible for promoting voluntary return, and for preparing and organizing the transport of the returning refugees and their personal belongings

In **Zambia**, UNHCR will conduct information and sensitization campaigns, register and screen the refugees, prepare manifests, collect the refugees and luggage from their residences and transport them to transit centres in the settlements. The Office will carry out medical screening, identify vulnerable individuals and ensure arrangements required for people with specific needs. It will also be responsible for the management of the transit centres in the settlements, provision of hot meals in these centres as well as food packages for the journey. UNHCR will expand its current sub-agreements with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health to cover these additional requirements.

IOM's role will include the management of the refugees' personal belongings, road transport from the transit centres in the settlements to the airport or to the border, as will be the case with the road convoys from Meheba settlement. The Organization will also be responsible for air transport. IOM will source trucks, buses and planes and will manage related arrangements for fuel, landing rights and custom arrangements.

In **DRC**, UNHCR and IOM will work closely with the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), which will assist with repatriation formalities, including sensitization efforts, confirming the identity of the refugees who are applying for return and the issuance of birth certificates and other official documents. In close cooperation with UNHCR, IOM will manage road transportation, operate transit centres and establish way stations to provide food, drinks and sanitary facilities, as well as medical screening and assistance to vulnerable groups. IOM will also provide technical support to immigration authorities, ensure presence in the main land border crossing points with the Angolan provinces and ensure transportation assistance from the transit centres to the Angolan border points. Around a quarter of refugees returning to destinations in and around Luanda and in the far south will return by air.

In **Namibia, Botswana** and the **ROC**, UNHCR will conduct extensive sensitization campaigns, including go-and-see visits, information on the return package and updates on the prevailing situation in their country of origin to promote interest in voluntary repatriation. UNHCR will launch a repatriation registration exercise and refugees willing to repatriate will be asked to sign the voluntary repatriation

forms. Birth certificates and school documentation will be provided. Arrangements will be made with the Angolan embassy to ensure that documents are validated before departure. IOM will organize the safe and orderly transportation of refugees and their personal belongings based on UNHCR's registration data.

Upon arrival in **Angola**, returnees will be brought to reception and transit centres. MINARS and IOM will establish eight reception centres and two transit centres in the main areas of return in the provinces of Bengo, Cabinda, Huambo, Moxico, Uige and Zaire. The Government, through MINARS will provide returnees with social reintegration kits, including household items, "do-it-yourself" construction tools, plastic sheeting to cover the houses, water reservoirs, blankets, agricultural tools and other items for income generation activities. A food assistance package is offered once, and each family will receive a 3-month food ration. The Angolan Ministry of Health, in collaboration with WHO, will ensure basic healthcare, including vaccination against polio and yellow fever of all returnees who did not receive them prior to departure. Documentation and civil registration will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice, and the issuance of birth certificates to every minor under 18 years of age will be guaranteed.

All transportation arrangements in Angola will be under the direct responsibility of IOM, including transport from the reception centre to the final destinations and medical escort for vulnerable individuals. IOM will also coordinate and organize the logistics for the transport, warehousing and distribution of the social reintegration kits and food assistance packages provided by MINARS, to ensure transparency and accountability.

UNHCR will provide overall technical advice and support to the Angolan Government. Returnee monitoring will be done through field-based mobile teams, with a view to ensuring that return is taking place in a safe and dignified manner and to identify and quickly address any protection issues that may occur. UNHCR will also support the Ministry of Justice in issuing civil status documentation and conduct advocacy at the local, provincial and national levels. Portuguese language instruction will be provided by UNHCR to returnees from Zambia and the DRC, who have been educated in English or French while in their countries of asylum.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

UNHCR

The budget table below shows the requirements for the voluntary repatriation activities for Angolan refugees for 2011, which are included in the total country operations budgets in Angola, Botswana, DRC, Namibia, ROC and Zambia.

UNHCR ANGOLAN REPATRIATION BUDGET 2011		Total requirements (USD)
Fair Protection and Documentation		
	Civil registration and civil status documentation strengthened	654,564
Basic Needs and Essential Services		
	Population has optimal access to education	351,400
	Shelter and infrastructure improved	235,463
	Services for groups with specific needs strengthened	264,946
Durable solutions		
	Potential for voluntary return realized	1,514,361
Logistics and Operations Support		
	Operations Management Coordination and Support strengthened and optimized	965,886
	Logistics and supply optimized to serve operational needs	1,791,037
Total		5,777,657

IOM

IOM ANGOLAN REPATRIATION BUDGET		Total USD
Item		
STAFF & OFFICE COSTS		2,231,614
	International	669,222
	Local Staff	1,104,192
	Staff Travel	112,000
	Office costs	346,200
OPERATIONAL COSTS		11,861,000
	Refugee Camps and Departing Airports	555,000
	Transport-related costs up to final destinations	9,512,800
	Transit Centres and Way Stations	1,246,000
	Road Upgrade and security assessments	330,000
	Communication	157,200
	Evaluation	60,000
TOTAL		14,273,484
	Overhead	713,674
GRAND TOTAL		14,987,158

Angola

As of July 2011



FIGS
Field Information and
Coordinator Support Section

Sources:
UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping
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