



Migration Profile

ANGOLA

A. Executive Summary

After a 27 year-long civil war that saw more than half million people fleeing the country, so far Angola has maintained a certain political stability. In addition to being a country of origin, destination, and transit for migrants, Angola has also experienced the return of more than 400,000 Angolans, who had previously left the country during the civil war. Angola has been hosting refugees, especially from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Angola is the second-largest oil-producing country in Sub-Saharan Africa (approximately 1.3 million barrels per day)ⁱ. The oil sector accounts for one-third of GDP and more than 90% of exportⁱⁱ. However, the fall in oil prices worldwide greatly affected Angola, and since 2016 its economy has been in recession, increasing the national debt to GDP ratio from 57.1% in 2015 to an estimated 120.3% in 2020ⁱⁱⁱ. Poverty rate stands at 41.1%, but rural poverty is much higher (57%)^{iv}; overall, an average 54% of Angolans experience multidimensional forms of poverty^v. Angola has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.581, and it is ranked at 148 out of 189 countries^{vi}.

The country continues to face massive development challenges. These include reducing its dependency on oil and diversifying the economy, rebuilding its infrastructure, and improving institutional capacity and living conditions^{vii}.

Country Profile

I. Basic Information

Angola is one of Africa's largest oil-producing countries located on the western coast of Southern Africa. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Namibia to the south, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo to the north, and Zambia to the east. It has a total surface area of 1,246,700 sq. km and a population of over 30 million people. Its ethnic composition is as follows, Ovimbundu 37%, Kimbundu 25%, Bakongo 13%, Mestiço (mixed European and native African) 2%, European 1%, and others 22%^{viii}. Due to its colonial history, Portuguese is the official language (spoken by 71.2%), but it also has several other ethnic languages, Umbundu (23%), Kikongo (8.2%), Kimbundu (7.8%), Chokwe (2.1%), Luvale (1%), and other (3.6%)^{ix}. There are two main religions in Angola, Roman Catholic

(41.1%) and Protestant (38.1%), while people belonging to other religions are 8.6%, and others with no affiliation are 12.3%^x.

II. International and Internal Migrants

Common trends of internal migration in Angola are mostly rural-urban flows, driven usually by inadequate infrastructural development, unemployment, and lack of provision of basic social services in rural areas. Poverty at the national level stands at 41%, and the incidence of poverty rate is almost three times higher in rural areas (57%) than in urban places (17.8%)^{xi}. People are, therefore, leaving rural areas and moving into the cities, such as Luanda, in search of employment opportunities^{xii}. More than 65% of the total population lives in urban centres, and the rate of urbanization in Angola stands at 4.04%^{xiii}.

Angola's oil and diamond wealth has been a source of attraction for international migrants, both skilled and unskilled. In addition to South Africa and Congo, Angola is also a country hosting the highest number of international migrants in the sub-region (Southern Africa). By mid-2020, Angola had 656,434 international migrants^{xiv}. Economic migrants usually arrive by air, but the vast majority of migrants come by land from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They use boats, walk long hours, cross forests, rivers, etc. The top five countries of origin of international migrants in Angola are the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Cabo Verde, Sao Tome, and Principe.

More than 75% of all international migrants come from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some of the challenges they face in Angola are lack of proper documentation, preventing them from being able to enroll their kids in schools, open bank accounts, have a more profitable business, and have access to public services, especially health care.

III. Emigration and Skilled Migration

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MIREX) estimates that about 400,000 Angolan nationals reside abroad, mostly in Africa. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Namibia host the largest number (respectively 80,000 and 70,000), followed by South Africa, with approximately 20,000 Angolans^{xv}. In all, Africa welcomes 230,000 Angolan citizens, followed by Europe with 95,000 migrants, of whom 50,000 are in Portugal, 20,000 in France, and the remaining ones in other European countries^{xvi}. According to MIREX data, the American continent is home to 45,000 Angolans, mostly in Brazil and in the United States, each country with about 20,000, while 30,000 are in Asia, and half of them alone are in China^{xvii}.

High population growth, high unemployment, and comparatively low salaries for professionals in Angola make the emigration of skilled professionals particularly attractive for young professionals in Angola. For example, even though Angola faces a significant shortage of physicians, with only 3,700 in the country with a doctor/patient ratio of 0.08:1,000^{xviii}, 70% of all trained physicians in Angola emigrate^{xix}. The 2021 human flight and brain drain in Africa index indicate that Angola is slightly above (6 points) from the world average of 5.25 index points.

IV. Forced Migrants (internally displaced, asylum seekers and refugees, climate displaced people)

Apart from being known as a country who has welcomed returning refugees, Angola has recently also been a refugee-hosting country. As of August 2021, Angola had 56,434 refugees^{xx}, coming from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (23,588), other countries (11,390), Guinea (9,374), Ivory Coast (6,357), and Mauritania (5,725)^{xxi}. 84% of refugees in Angola are located in urban areas, most of whom are in the capital, Luanda^{xxii}. However, 6,928 who are part of the Kasai case-load of refugees are residing in the Lóvua refugee resettlement^{xxiii}. Other areas where refugees are currently living are Lunda Norte, Moxico, Lunda Sul, Malanje, Bengo, Cuanza Sul, Zaire, Uíge, Bié, Cunene, Huambo, Cabinda^{xxiv}. The main cause of forced migration, for example from the DRC to Angola, is the political instability in their country. Due to the porous borders separating most African countries, even in Angola it is possible for some migrants to be smuggled or to cross into Angola from the DRC on foot or by bus. Refugees are often victims of arbitrary arrest, detention, and harassment^{xxv}.

Recently, natural disasters, like floods and droughts, are the main drivers of internal displacement in Angola. According to IDMC, as of December 2020 there were a total of 790 IDPs in Angola as a result of environmental disasters^{xxvi}. In 2021, there were no published statistics regarding the total number of internally displaced people in Angola; nevertheless, the country has been affected by natural disasters. For example, in 2021, flooding in Luanda affected more than 11,000 people, causing the internal displacement of more than 8,000 of them^{xxvii}.

Thousands of Angolans, who fled to Namibia from the southern part of the country because of a drought, are now returning back home^{xxviii}.

V. Victims of Human Trafficking

Angola is a Tier 2 country and does not entirely meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking despite its efforts to do so. The desire to earn money faster and poverty are some of the main drivers of human trafficking in Angola, that is a source, transit, and destination country for victims of human trafficking, especially women and children as young as 12 years old forced to labour or sex exploitation, and men subjected to forced labour, as well. The most dangerous areas for human trafficking in Angola include Luanda, Benguela, Cunene, Lunda Norte, Namibe, Uíge, and Zaire^{xxix}. Other victims of human trafficking come mainly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In 2020, the government identified 19 victims of human trafficking, involving adults and children. During the same year, the government prosecuted and convicted 13 suspected traffickers in 3 cases, 5 labour traffickers for child forced begging, 3 Congolese traffickers for child and adult sex trafficking of Congolese women, and 5 police officers for sending children abroad for forced labour^{xxx}. Identified victims are referred to religious or NGO-run shelters for clothing, food, educational, and medical care, because the local institutions provide very limited financial support to some of these shelters^{xxxi}. The Angolan government under the Ministry of Social Action, Family, and the Promotion of Women manages a national network

of safe houses for women counselling centres and child centres, accessible to victims of human trafficking located in all 18 provinces. The government also provides victims of human trafficking access to immigration relief, including temporary residence documents, the right to seek asylum, legal representation, immunity from trafficking crimes, medical and mental health services, some financial support, family tracing assistance, and access to education^{xxxii}. However, the immigration-related benefits were contingent upon the commencement of criminal investigation and the victim's testimony.

VI. National Legal Framework

The most important piece of legislation governing immigration and emigration in Angola is Law No 13/19, regulating the legal system of exit, entry, and residence of foreign citizens in Angola^{xxxiii}. Concerning human trafficking, the Presidential Decree 100/20 established the Mid-term National Strategy for Human Rights (2020-2025), outlining several measures including the elaboration of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and the creation of referral mechanisms to assist victims (Presidential Decree 31/20), and Law 1/20 creating a database on human trafficking and the approval of the victim protection law^{xxxiv}. Also, in 2015 the government of Angola established a new refugee and asylum law (Law 10/15), obliging the state to provide reception centres, where newly asylum seekers will be placed during their entire asylum process^{xxxv}. However, so far this norm has not been implemented, and many refugees lack documents or find it difficult to access their rights.

Angola is a signatory to several migration-related international conventions. It signed and ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the 1969 AU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugees Problems in Africa. Angola has also ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), the 2005 SADC Protocol on Facilitation of Free Movement and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Angola is finally a signatory to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air, and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

VII. Main Actors

The State

The national immigration policy is enacted by the Migration and Foreigners Services (SME), which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior. SME is responsible for promoting, coordinating, and implementing measures related to the transit, entry, stay, residence, and exit of migrants, along with border surveillance. SME also handles the process to create the Angolan Migration Policy (AMP), that focuses on the management of migration flows; the study of migration trends, the integration of migrants and reintegration of nationals; the collection, analysis, and publication of migration data; the analysis of the effect of climate change on migration policies; the promotion of tourism; the engagement of the diaspora; the return of qualified nationals; and the prevention of transnational crime^{xxxvi}.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MIREX) provides assistance to Angolan communities abroad and also supports the reintegration of Angolan nationals returning home^{xxxvii}.

In line with the new refugee law (Law 10/15), in 2018 the National Refugee Council (CNR) was established, by replacing the Committee for Recognition of the Right of Asylum (COREDA)^{xxxviii}. CNR is responsible in Angola for Refugee Status Determination (RSD).

International Organisations

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) are the two most important international organisations dealing with migration-related issues in Angola. IOM, for instance, aids the government of Angola in providing a functional migration policy, helps in the fight against human trafficking and provides the necessary support to victims of human trafficking; supports the government to address mixed migration flows by increasing its ability to identify and assist vulnerable migrants, and to promote active engagement of diaspora to support development in Angola^{xxxix}. UNHCR assists the government with registration and documentation of asylum seekers, provides humanitarian assistance to refugees, advocates for the inclusion of refugees in the development plan, and provides support to the government to develop policies and legislations which are consistent with global commitments related to refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless people^{xl}.

Other international partners of the UNHCR in Angola are the World Food Programme (WFP), which provides food assistance, for example to the Congolese refugees in Lunda Norte, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which gives to conflict and disaster-affected children access to water, sanitation, nutrition, education, health, and protection services, the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) that provides nutrition, seeds, and water (drilling of boreholes) in affected communities, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) that protects and promotes human rights for all.

NGOs and Other Organisation

The OMUNGA Association is one of the leading NGOs in Angola that advocates for the promotion and protection of the rights of children and youth in Angola, including refugees and asylum seekers.

The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church has a variety of organisations and religious communities assisting migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people in Angola. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) holds legal workshops for government personnel, assists refugees in applying for refugee status, and provides emergency aid to refugees. JRS is present and active in the Lóvua settlement camp in Lunda Norte, where in 2016 there were sheltered more than 35,000 Congolese refugees. Even though they seek to return home, JRS is supporting them with accommodation in the departure centre, two meals a day, and a ration for the trip, as well as provides information about the repatriation process^{xli}. While involved in the study of irregular

migrants in the Alien Detention Centre, Caritas continues to assist returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Angola^{xlii}.

The Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (CEPAMI) is a commission under the Episcopal Conference of Angola and Sao Tome. CEPAMI promotes the pastoral care of migrant communities and organises workshops on the overall concept of mixed migration movement, the definitions of refugees, asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, irregular migration, and smuggled migrants. Apart from pastoral agents, migrants and refugees, participants are drawn from different departments, including the National Police, the Police and Border Guard Board, and SME. Thanks to the unreserved support of CEPAMI, the Migrant and Refugee Protection Network was established, which integrates different civil society organizations willing to work together to better accompany, serve, defend, and promote the integration of migrants and refugees in Angola, thus expanding the area of their action into the protection of migrants and refugees. In addition, CEPAMI organizes training workshops for human mobility pastoral agents, reception of migrants, the teaching of Portuguese to migrants, training in cooking, pastry, decoration, mechanics, and electricity; provides legal advice and visits the Alien Detention Centre^{xliii}. This Network also provides assistance to victims of human trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and returnees^{xliv}.

The Scalabrini Sisters (M.S.C.S), who coordinate the work of CEPAMI, are also involved in a variety of refugee and migrant assistance projects, especially in the Uíge Province at the border with DRC. They provide pastoral care for refugees (such as catechesis for children, mass in Lingala, and Portuguese language courses) settled in Uíge, as well as for former Angolan refugees.

The Salesian Missionaries are very active in Angola, especially in providing special assistance to children and families in need. They also offer technical and vocational training, rescue children facing adversities, provide youth centres and safe activities, deliver life-saving meals, essential equipment and supplies, and improve infrastructures^{xlv}. These programmes promote necessary skills for children to be productive and agents of change within their communities and families. The beneficiaries of these programmes also include refugees and their families^{xlvi}.

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