

# CMI REPORT

R 2010: 1

## The Role of the Churches in Poverty Reduction in Angola

Søren Kirk Jensen  
Nelson Pestana

Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) is an independent, non-profit research institution and a major international centre in policy-oriented and applied development research. Focus is on development and human rights issues and on international conditions that affect such issues. The geographical focus is Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern and Central Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

CMI combines applied and theoretical research. CMI research intends to assist policy formulation, improve the basis for decision-making and promote public debate on international development issues.

# The Role of the Churches in Poverty Reduction in Angola

Søren Kirk Jensen  
Nelson Pestana

**R 2010: 1**

**CMI** CHR.  
MICHELSEN  
INSTITUTE



## Contents

<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Poverty reduction.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>The Churches .....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Methodology .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
SOCIAL SECTORS .....	6
<i>Health, nutrition, water and sanitation.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Education.....</i>	<i>8</i>
GOVERNANCE .....	8
THE ECONOMY .....	9
<b>THE LANDSCAPE OF CHURCHES.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Church Statistics .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Unity Versus Diversity .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Relations with the State and Legal Framework .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<b>THE CHURCHES AND POVERTY .....</b>	<b>16</b>
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH .....	16
<i>Emergency Relief:.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Development Activities: .....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Policy and Advocacy Activities .....</i>	<i>20</i>
THE EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH .....	21
<i>Emergency relief.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Development Activities.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Policy and Advocacy.....</i>	<i>24</i>
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ANGOLA .....	24
<i>Emergency relief.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Development activities.....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Policy and advocacy .....</i>	<i>26</i>
THE EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANGOLA .....	26
<i>Emergency relief.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Development activities.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Policy and advocacy .....</i>	<i>28</i>
COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN ANGOLA .....	29
SUMMARY .....	30
<b>ANALYSIS OF SURVEY .....</b>	<b>32</b>
THE PRESENCE OF CHURCHES THROUGHOUT ANGOLA .....	32
PERCEPTION OF THE LEVEL OF POVERTY AND UNDERLYING FACTORS .....	33
THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH.....	35
POOR REGISTRATION OF BENEFICIARIES .....	37
SUMMARY .....	38
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>40</b>

## List of abbreviations

AEA	Aliança Evangélica de Angola
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CEAST	Conferencia Episcopal de Angola e São Tomé
CEJP	Comissão Episcopal de Justiça e Paz
CEIC	Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica
CICA	Conselho das Igrejas Cristas de Angola
CIDSE	Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité
CIEAC	Conselho de Igrejas Evangélicas de Angola Central
COIEPA	Comité Inter-Eclesial para Paz em Angola
DASEP	Departamento de Assistência Social, Estudos e Pesquisa
IEBA	Igreja Evangélica Baptista de Angola
ICRA	Instituto das Ciências Religiosas de Angola
IECA	Igreja Evangélica Congregacional de Angola
IMUA	Igreja Metodista Unida de Angola
INAR	Instituto Nacional de Assuntos Religiosos
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
OPSA	Observatório Político Social de Angola
UCAN	Universidade Católica de Angola
UMA	Universidade Metodista de Angola
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola

# Introduction

This study was carried out as a collaborative effort between the Center of Studies and Scientific Research (CEIC) of the Catholic University of Angola (UCAN), the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) and Independent Policy Analysis. Its purpose is to critically review the role the churches in Angola play in relation to addressing poverty in the country.

The central research questions addressed are:

- What kind of interventions do churches undertake in relation to basic service delivery to the population?
- To what extent do the churches contribute to poverty reduction in Angola?

A study of the role of churches in poverty reduction in Angola is highly relevant but also challenging task. Angola has a long history of violent conflict and suffers from some of the worst social indicators on the African continent. At the same time, it is rich in natural resources, particularly oil, and has great potential for evolving into a regional power. It has been called a ‘successful failed state’<sup>1</sup> in reference to the failure in providing even basic public goods for its citizens, at the same time as providing a fairly reliable political order that is independent of international financial institutions. This situation means that there has been a need for actors that provide humanitarian relief (especially during the war) and deliver basic services to the population. Moreover, debate about policy choices has to come from within. In this context the role of the churches becomes interesting, as they are the civil society actors in Angola with the most developed organizational structures and strongest international networks.

Poverty can be addressed at many levels and the churches hold great potential for addressing all of them. Seen as a group, they have an extensive network reaching even in the most remote areas of the country. In this way, they can reach the majority of the population both in terms of providing aid but also in terms of understanding the real needs of the people and channeling this information upwards to the government. The religious institutions enjoy extensive credibility as the most trusted institution in the country. In a BBC World Service Trust survey 78.3% of the respondents said they had trust or complete trust in religious institutions. This made the churches the institutions that enjoy the highest credibility in the country with other significant institutions, such as the media and the Parliament, coming in second and third place<sup>2</sup>.

Churches have a long history in Angola, which is intertwined with the history of colonialism, the struggle for independence and the many years of civil war. This has forced them to relate and adapt to radical changes in the political, social and economic environment. Recently they have had to find their role in a country that, for the first time in its history, is experiencing a prolonged period of peace and since 2004, a veritable boom in the state’s revenues from oil and diamonds. These changes in society have sometimes made it challenging for the churches to find adequate responses to address the widespread poverty.

The churches are highly diverse and producing a report on their role in addressing poverty as a group has not been an easy task. Statistics are either non-existing or not completely reliable and it is challenging to produce data to support the analysis. Therefore this report should be seen as a starting point for further research into the many questions raised. The answers provided are not definitive. Nevertheless, the aim is to contribute with some insights and

---

<sup>1</sup> Soares de Oliveira, R. 2007. Business success, Angola-style: Postcolonial politics and the rise and rise of Sonangol. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 45: 595–619.

<sup>2</sup> BBC World Service Trust, Angola Elections Report 2008, June 30, 2008

conclusions to a field where little research has previously been carried out. This will hopefully stimulate debate and more research to challenge the conclusions of this paper.

# Analytical Framework

In order to address the two research questions it was necessary to establish an analytical framework delimiting the scope of the analysis through a definition of what we consider 'activities that contribute to poverty reduction'. This also facilitated restricting the object of the analysis as it is beyond the scope of this study to review in detail the role of all Angolan churches in addressing poverty.

## Poverty reduction

This study recognizes poverty as a multifaceted problem that can be addressed through a variety of actions of social, economic and political nature. It divides these kinds of actions into three categories: emergency relief, development activities and policy/advocacy activities, which are defined as follows:

- **Emergency relief** consists of interventions aimed at alleviating immediate suffering caused by external events such as war or natural calamities.
- **Development activities** are interventions that focus on improving the standards of living of poor people with limited or no access to basic services such as agriculture, water, sanitation, health and education amongst others, in the medium term.
- **Policy and advocacy activities** are interventions aimed at addressing structural causes for poverty such as social and economic inequalities, accountability, transparency, human rights, democracy and participation in decisions that affect peoples' lives.

This analytical definition of activities that address poverty was applied to provide an overview of the contribution churches in Angola make to poverty reduction. More attention was given to the latter two of these typologies of interventions as these are more interesting in the current context of peace.

The study did not investigate psychosocial and behavioral aspects of poverty reduction. Although these could be perceived as core areas in which churches could play a role, including them would require a theoretical discussion of the differences between religious and non-religious types of assistance for example to overcome trauma or in relation to socialization. In general that is beyond the scope of this study. The study does not attempt either to grasp the significance of religion or of churches in Angola as social units that form part of society's social fabric. The focus is on church interventions aiming more directly at poverty reduction, as defined above.

## The Churches

The churches in Angola make up a highly diverse and heterogeneous group of actors. According to the National Institute of Religious Affairs there are 83 recognized and 902 unrecognized churches of various orientations in the country<sup>3</sup>. It is beyond the scope of this report to cover the activities of this multitude of churches. The main focus is therefore on the following four churches and one church umbrella organization:

- The Catholic Church (CEAST)
- The Evangelical Congregational Church (IECA)
- The Evangelical Baptist Church (IEBA)
- The United Methodist Church (IMUA)

---

<sup>3</sup> Instituto Nacional para os Assuntos Religiosos (2008): *Panorâmica das Religiões em Angola Independente*, Luanda, p. 44.

- Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA – umbrella organization)

The selected church entities are very visible and centrally placed in relation to poverty reduction. The selection of ‘traditional’ catholic and protestant ‘mission’ churches is not made out of a lack of interest in the role of other churches or the belittle them, but only because of the need to focus the analysis. Including the Pentecostal and other charismatic movements would, however, pose particular challenges to the analysis because of their defining belief in the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues, healing and prophecy<sup>4</sup>. Through its 22 members (16 effective, 4 associated and 2 observers) CICA does indirectly bring other churches into the analysis as does the survey conducted for 39 churches described in the methodology. That being said, in-depth studies of churches such as the Adventist, Anglican, Apostolic, Messianic (Kimbanguist and Tocoist), Pentecostal (primarily Assemblies of God and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God) as well as the significance of the hundreds of small unrecognized churches is needed to shed more light on the role of churches in Angola<sup>5</sup>.

## Methodology

The methodology applied is characterized as exploratory field research based on a mix of primary and secondary sources as well as qualitative and quantitative approaches. To gather information about the activities of the churches outlined above, semi-structured interviews were carried out with Church representatives and other relevant actors. These were supplemented with reviews of a range of written sources such as strategic plans, project documents, missionary letters and reports and newspaper articles. A survey was conducted for 39 churches to gather basic information about the churches perceptions of the nature of poverty and their own role in addressing it. This complemented the qualitative information with some quantitative data of a more general nature. A detailed description of the survey and sampling methodology is presented in connection with the analysis.

The research was initiated in 2007 and only concluded in 2009 after a final revision of the report, as some difficulties were encountered in the research process that had to be ironed out<sup>6</sup>. It was not possible, with the resources available for this study, to include the beneficiaries’ perception of the social services delivered by the churches and the extent to which these help improving their living conditions.

The selection of churches outlined above could be criticized for presenting a bias towards churches that are more engaged in poverty reduction and hence for inevitably producing a positive conclusion about the contribution of churches to poverty reduction in general. The aim of the study is not to provide a general conclusion of this kind but to allow for more details about the churches that seek to play an active role in society beyond evangelization (even if it is ultimately indirectly connected to the ‘core business’ of evangelization). The varying levels of attention given to the selected churches reflect the disproportions in the sizes and levels of organization even within the limited number of churches. The Catholic Church for example claims to represent more than 13 million people whereas IEBA says it represents 90.000. The inclusion of CICA in the analysis and the references to the survey that was conducted with 39 churches in Luanda broaden the scope of the analysis somewhat, allowing us to make some tentative conclusions that reach beyond the 5 core units of analysis.

---

<sup>4</sup> From a rational point of view these beliefs must be characterized as anti-developmental as they can on occasions lead to the deprivation of basic human rights.

<sup>5</sup> Of particular interest are perhaps charismatic and pentecostal (neo-charismatic) churches that have experienced significant growth in Africa over the past few decades.

<sup>6</sup> The initial research team experienced challenges in relation to work load, timing and other issues, data was lost in the research process and the adequate programs for data processing were not available to mention some of the problems. In 2009 a research consultancy (Independent Policy Analysis) was contracted to undertake a final revision of the research and conclude the report.

Hopefully these conclusions and findings will stimulate the debate about the role of churches in Angolan society and further research into these issues.

# Context

Before moving on to the analysis of the role of the churches with regards to poverty reduction we will give a brief overview of the context within which these activities take place.

## Social sectors

Poverty is widespread in Angola and was aggravated by the prolonged period of civil war which had serious humanitarian consequences. The war displaced about 4.5 million people who fled their communities for larger urban centers in the country or neighboring countries. This left large rural areas depopulated and created densely populated peri-urban shantytowns, in particular around the capital Luanda. After the end of the war in 2002 few have returned to their areas of origin and, according to the 2001 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 66% of the population is urbanized<sup>7</sup>. Much of the country's social infrastructure such as schools and hospitals was destroyed, and Angola became one of the most heavily mined countries in the world<sup>8</sup>, during the war which only came to an end in 2002.

The population is estimated at 16.1 million of which more than two thirds (68%) live in poverty (below US\$ 1.70 per day) and a quarter (26%) live in extreme poverty (below US\$ 0.75 per day)<sup>9</sup>. These figures should, however, be interpreted with some caution.

The size of the population is based on projections and is associated with uncertainty as no nationwide census has been carried out since 1970. A

Selected social indicators	
Population	16.1 mio
Population growth	2.9%
Poverty (% below national poverty line)	68%*
Life expectancy at birth	41,7 years
Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)	154
Under-5 mortality (per 1000 live births)	260
Combined school enrollment	25.6%
Adult literacy	67.4%
Human Development Ranking (of 177 countries)	162

number of factors question the accuracy of these projections such as the high fertility rate (7 live-births per woman)<sup>10</sup>, the displacements caused by the war and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, amongst others. The 2001 MICS found that Angola is a demographically booming country with a very young population (85% under the age of 40). The numbers from the recent electoral registration process suggest that the size of the population could be close to 20 million in 2008<sup>11</sup>. This estimate would, if correct, indicate that the government's projection of a population size of 24 million in 2020<sup>12</sup> is grossly underestimated.

<sup>7</sup> INE/UNICEF (2003): MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Assessing the Situation of Angolan Children and Women at the Beginning of the Millennium – Analytical Report, May 2003, Luanda <http://www.unicef.org/angola/mics.pdf>. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) reviews progress made towards the achievement of development goals and targets for children and women. It was conducted in 68 countries between 1999 and 2001 including in Angola by the National Statistics Institute and an analytical report was published in 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Landmine Monitor, Angola: [http://lm.icbl.org/index.php/publications/display?act=submit&pqs\\_year=2008&pqs\\_type=lm&pqs\\_report=angola&pqs\\_section](http://lm.icbl.org/index.php/publications/display?act=submit&pqs_year=2008&pqs_type=lm&pqs_report=angola&pqs_section)

<sup>9</sup> Ministério de Planeamento / Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (2005): Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio - Relatório de Progresso 2005, [http://mirror.undp.org/angola/LinkRtf/Angola\\_MDG\\_Prog\\_report\\_2005.pdf](http://mirror.undp.org/angola/LinkRtf/Angola_MDG_Prog_report_2005.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> INE/UNICEF (2003): MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Assessing the Situation of Angolan Children and Women at the Beginning of the Millennium – Analytical Report, May 2003, Luanda, <http://www.unicef.org/angola/mics.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Around 8.3 million voters were registered during the electoral registration (which corresponds to only 40% of the population, according to an age breakdown which considers that 60% of it has not reached the voting age). This indicates a population of approximately 20 million.

<sup>12</sup> AngoNoticias: *População angolana atingiu os 16 milhões*, posted July 11, 2008 on [http://www.angonoticias.com/full\\_headlines.php?id=20320](http://www.angonoticias.com/full_headlines.php?id=20320)

Poverty in Angola manifests itself in the persistent poor social indicators of health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation among others, which are determined by weak access to basic social services. The resettlement after the end of the war of about 4.5 million internally displaced people put the system under further pressure. This situation is summed up by Angola's ranking on the UNDP's human development index which places the country at number 162 out of 177 countries<sup>13</sup>. It should be noted, however, that the existing data on social indicators have not been kept up to date and in most instances are based on information from before the end of the war.

## Health, nutrition, water and sanitation

Angola was found to have one of the highest under-five mortality rates in the world in 2001. 15% of babies born die before the age of 1 (150 deaths per 1000 live births) and 25% loses their life before reaching the age of 5 (250 deaths in 1000 live births). Under-five mortality increased to 260 in 1000 in 2003, which is the third highest in the world and well above the average of 177 in 1000 in Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>14</sup>. Mortality rates are almost equal in rural and urban areas, which is an unusual situation reflecting the extremely poor living conditions in the peri-urban shantytowns.

The main causes behind this high figure are preventable diseases such as malaria, diarrheal diseases, and respiratory infections amongst others. Malaria alone accounts for the vast majority of deaths and efforts to bring this disease under control have been unsuccessful. Only 10% of the population used mosquito nets and of these only 2% were treated with insecticide. For pregnant women the figure is slightly better but still very low at 10% who use an impregnated net<sup>15</sup>. The incidence of malaria is reported to have increased from 16% in 2000 to 22% in 2003 which illustrates that the disease continued rampant.

Other indicators are likewise alarming such as nearly 1 in 2 children (45%) suffering from chronic malnutrition, a maternal mortality ratio of between 1400 and 1700 in 100.000 live births<sup>16</sup>. Only 19% of the population treats water before drinking<sup>17</sup>. The latter indicator might have improved after campaigns related to the cholera surge in 2006 that caused more than 1000 deaths, although nothing indicates that the overall water and sanitation situation has improved which the WHO noted as 'precarious' and making control activities difficult during the outbreak<sup>18</sup>.

On HIV/AIDS Angola enjoys a fairly low prevalence rate although, as with all other data, the figures are associated with some uncertainty. The factor most often referred to as the reason for the low prevalence rate is the long war which impeded movement of people and goods in most parts of the country. This is, however, expected to change as infrastructure is reestablished and "...Angolans have almost all of the risk factors associated with a rapid increase in sero-prevalence."<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> UNDP Human Development Report (2007/2008): Country Fact Sheet – Angola, [http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country\\_fact\\_sheets/cty\\_fs\\_ago.html](http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_ago.html)

<sup>14</sup> Ministério de Planeamento / Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (2005): Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio - Relatório de Progresso 2005, p. 40-42

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 51

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 44

<sup>17</sup> INE/UNICEF (2003): MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Assessing the Situation of Angolan Children and Women at the Beginning of the Millennium – Analytical Report, May 2003, Luanda, section 15.

<sup>18</sup> World Health Organization (2006): Cholera in Angola, [http://www.who.int/csr/don/2006\\_05\\_10/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2006_05_10/en/index.html)

<sup>19</sup> Unicef Angola, HIV/AIDS, issue overview, [http://www.unicef.org/angola/hiv\\_aids.html](http://www.unicef.org/angola/hiv_aids.html)

## Education

The main problems in the education sector have been lack of school material and infrastructure, lack of qualified school personnel, low attendance rates, late entry into school and high dropout rates. Low school attendance is highly correlated with poverty. The attendance rate of children from better-off households is twice as high as that from children from the most vulnerable households<sup>20</sup>.

In 2001, 44% of children did not attend compulsory primary education and 94% did not attend the second level of basic education<sup>21</sup>. The report on the progress towards meeting the millennium goals noted, however, a significant improvement in enrollment rates, which almost doubled between 2000 and 2003 from 1.3 million to 2.5 million<sup>22</sup>. Whereas the MICS registered “minimal difference in attendance rate between boys and girls” in 2001, the rise in enrollment between 2000 and 2003 seems to have benefitted boys substantially more than girls (the number of boys more than doubled whereas the number of girls only grew by 50%).

The MICS registered a third of the population as illiterate, with very high disparities between men and women as well as rural and urban areas where educational resources are concentrated. On a positive note it was found that a greater proportion of younger Angolans know how to read and write.

## Governance

Officially the Angolan political system is semi-presidential but in reality it is a highly presidential system<sup>23</sup>. President Eduardo Dos Santos has been Head of State since 1979.

The country held legislative elections in 2008, which were the first elections in the country since 1992. The elections resulted in a massive victory for the MPLA winning 191 of the 220 seats (86.8%) in the National Assembly<sup>24</sup>. This enables the ruling party to change the 1992 constitution without depending on other parties. Presidential elections were expected in 2009 but in November 2008 this was made conditional (by the President) on the preparation and enactment of the new constitution<sup>25</sup>. Angola was ranked 131<sup>st</sup> out of 167 countries in the Economist Intelligence Unit’s Democracy index in 2008, which leads to the classification of an authoritarian regime within this index.

One of the main efforts by the government after the end of the war was to extend the coverage of the public administration to cover the entire nation. This could possibly lead to an improvement in the delivery of social services. The government is also experimenting with a fiscal decentralization (or deconcentration i.e. no decentralization of political authority) through the allocation of funds to be administered by municipalities and the establishment of local hearing councils that are open to civil society participation<sup>26</sup>.

---

<sup>20</sup> INE/UNICEF (2003): MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Assessing the Situation of Angolan Children and Women at the Beginning of the Millennium – Analytical Report, May 2003, Luanda, section 25.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ministério de Planeamento / Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (2005): Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio - Relatório de Progresso 2005, p.30

<sup>23</sup> Christian Michelsen Institute (2006): *Civil Society in Angola- Inroads, Space and Accountability* p.2)

<http://www.cmi.no/publications/file/?2411=civil-society-in-angola-inroads>

<sup>24</sup> Comissão Nacional Eleitoral, Eleições legislativas 2008, resultados nacionais, <http://www.cne.ao/estatistica2008.cfm>

<sup>25</sup> RTP (Lusa): *Presidente condiciona data eleições presidenciais a aprovação de nova Constituição*, November 28, 2008, <http://tv1.rtp.pt/noticias/?article=150759&visual=3&layout=10>

<sup>26</sup> See Orre, Aslak (2009): *Kalandula and the CACS – Voice or accountability*, forthcoming, for an excellent discussion of the openings and limitations of the hearing councils

Despite these experiments, Angola remains a highly centralized state where the legislative and judicial powers are tightly controlled by the presidency. Global Integrity in 2008 found that Angola “suffers from one of the worst overall anti-corruption frameworks in the world”<sup>27</sup>.

## The Economy

Since 2004, Angola has experienced an explosive economic boom driven mainly by high oil prices. According to the World Bank the economy grew on average almost 18.5 percent per year in the last four years<sup>28</sup>. The IMF estimates that the gross national income reached US\$ 4,206, nearly fivefold the GNI of US\$ 848 in 2003<sup>29</sup>. There is no recent data available of the evolution of income inequality but between 1994/5 and 2000/1 it deteriorated from 0.52 to 0.62, which is very high by international standards. The economic boom of the recent years is not likely to have improved this situation as no significant redistribution mechanisms have been put in place<sup>30</sup>. A massive credit line of US\$ 2 billion to support public investments was signed with China in 2004 and this was extended with 2.5 billion in 2007<sup>31</sup>.

The positive external environment facilitated the government’s pursuit of two key policies: an interventionist macroeconomic stabilization policy that has strengthened the kwanza and brought inflation under control and an ambitious public investment program emphasizing rehabilitation of infrastructure. One of the biggest macroeconomic challenges for Angola has been how to manage the substantial oil windfall which greatly exceeds the country’s absorption capacity.

In line with the increase in GDP the national budget has also swelled. Budgeted expenditures more than doubled between 2005 and 2008 and expenditures towards the social sectors also grew substantially reaching 35% of total budget expenditures in 2007<sup>32</sup>. The limited absorption capacity of the economy, however, did not allow for these ambitious budgets to be fully executed in particular in relation to capital expenditures. In 2007 only 65% of the budgeted capital expenditures were actually spent<sup>33</sup>.

Because of its great resource base as the second biggest producer of oil in Sub-Saharan Africa and the world’s fourth biggest producer of diamonds, the long war, democratic deficit and the poor social indicators Angola is a showcase of the ‘paradox of plenty’. As we shall see in the next sections this situation has been addressed by some of the churches and it remains to be seen whether Angola will be able to overcome its resource curse.

Producing new and better statistics on social indicators will be an important part of enabling Angola to beat the curse as these are currently of very poor nature. These might not do the

---

<sup>27</sup> Global Integrity Report: Angola 2008, <http://report.globalintegrity.org/Angola/2008>

<sup>28</sup> World Bank (2009): Delegates Gather to Discuss Angola’s Economy and the Impact of the Global Financial Crisis, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/ANGOLAEXTN/0..contentMDK:21997076~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:322490,00.html>

<sup>29</sup> IMF (2009): IMF Executive Board Concludes 2008 Article IV Consultation with Angola, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2009/pn0951.htm>

<sup>30</sup> UNDP 2007/2008 Human Development Report <http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/147.html> and conversations with World Bank Lead Economist Branko Milanovic and economist at the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis, Hugo Rojas-Ramagosa.

<sup>31</sup> For an excellent overview of the relations between Angola and China see: Campos, Indira and Vines, Alex (2007): Angola and China – A Pragmatic Partnership, Working paper presented at CSIS Conference, [http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/080306\\_angolachina.pdf](http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/080306_angolachina.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Based on official data from the Ministry of Finance’ budget reports: “Relatorio de Fundamentação” (<http://www.minfin.gv.ao/docs/dspOrcaPass.htm> and <http://www.minfin.gv.ao/docs/dspPropostaOrcam.htm> and IMF (2007): Angola: 2007 Article IV Consultation, p. 17 <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.cfm?sk=21422.0>.

<sup>33</sup> Ministério das Finanças (2007): Orçamento Geral do Estado 2007 – Balanço Geral da Execução, p. 25, [http://www.minfin.gv.ao/fsys/OGE\\_BALANCO\\_2007FINAL4.pdf](http://www.minfin.gv.ao/fsys/OGE_BALANCO_2007FINAL4.pdf)

government justice and certainly doesn't help it designing strong policies to address poverty. The publication of the results of the MICS III and the IDR survey on household income and expenditure are therefore awaited with a lot of interest as they will be able to provide some answers and indications for where to focus social interventions in the coming years.

# The Landscape of Churches

In this section we describe the landscape of churches in Angola to provide an understanding of the complexity of this group of actors and the choice made to focus on the role of the traditional churches.

Providing an overview of the countless ways in which Christianity has been interpreted by different denominations in different parts of the world is not an easy task and Angola is no exception to this rule. Former missionary, Lawrence W. Henderson has described the church in Angola as a “broad river with several currents”<sup>34</sup>. As mentioned before, there are almost a thousand known churches in Angola, of which only 83 have achieved recognition by the state. According to Henderson: “...looking at the long list of recognized and nonrecognized churches in Angola, however, does not give a clear picture of the church in Angola”<sup>35</sup>. He identifies the main currents of the church in Angola as; Catholic, Protestant, Apostolic, Messianic and Pentecostal<sup>36</sup>. The main point Henderson wants to make, as a Christian and missionary for 22 years, is that despite the division of the churches in Angola the church is one. The main contribution Henderson makes to this study is, however, to help creating an overview of the complex landscape of churches in this country.

In this report we look mainly at the Catholic and Protestant churches and within the broader group of protestant churches we have chosen three of the oldest ‘mission’ churches. In addition to the three churches in the analysis, the Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA) also includes churches from some of Henderson’s other currents, such as the Kimbanguist Church in Angola (Messianic), several Apostolic churches as well as the Anglican Diocese of Angola.

The Catholic Church as a strong, worldwide church is the most visible and dominant church in Angola. It has the longest history, strongest organization and presence, and it claims the highest number of members amongst the churches. Historically, the Catholic Church was closely associated with the colonial rule through the *Concordata*, an agreement granting it recognition as the official religion with a particular set of privileges.

The United Methodist Church (IMUA) is like the Catholic part of a worldwide organization that is divided into annual conferences that corresponds to dioceses in the Catholic Church. There are two annual conferences in Angola, the Eastern and the Western. IMUA’s Eastern Conference is particularly strongly organized and the church has historic roots in the Kimbundu ethnic group.

The Evangelical Congregational Church (IECA) is the most significant protestant church in Angola. Its status as the second most important church is perhaps challenged by the rapid expansion of the Pentecostal churches but it has a much longer history. Moreover it has an explicit and very strong focus on improving the social conditions of the society of which it forms part. IECA has historically been associated with the central highlands of Angola and the Ovimbundu ethnic group.

The Evangelical Baptist Church (IEBA) is the oldest mission church in Angola and is today still quite strongly organized and present in 10 provinces. IEBA has its roots in the northern

---

<sup>34</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W (1991): *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents*, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 410

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> To that list could be included the Anglican which is also present in Angola

part of Angola and the Bakongo ethnic group and is still actively supported by the Baptist Missionary Society that founded the church in Angola.

IECA and IEBA are congregational churches. That means that they have a democratic and decentralized structure where church leadership is elected by the members of the churches. In the Catholic Church Bishops are appointed by the Holy See in Rome. IMUA seems to fall somewhere in between as it also practices elections of its Bishops but in specific cases allows election for life tenure. Both Angolan Bishops have achieved this uncommon position signaling somewhat autocratic governance<sup>37</sup>.

## Church Statistics

To add to the understanding of the churches included in this report the table below was included to provide some basic statistics about these churches. It consolidates the image of a dominant Catholic Church and much smaller protestant denominations.

**Table 1: Overview of key data on the selected churches and church associations**

	Claimed number of members	Presence out of 18 provinces	Size of clergy	Year of beginning of mission
Catholic Church	13,775,781	18	2936	1491
IECA	1,000,000	15	800	1881
IMUA	190,000	18	283	1885
IEBA	90,000	10	100	1878
CICA (combined)	5,000,000	na	na	1977 (foundation)

It is necessary, however, to be careful when interpreting statistics about the different church denominations, as these are often based on different criteria and practices. For example, the Catholic Church bases its number of members on baptisms and practices baptism of infants. The number of Catholics is hence kept up to date by subtracting the number of deaths against the number of baptized and adding the number of new baptized regardless of whether they are actively practicing the religion or not<sup>38</sup>. Other denominations have different ways of counting their members which perhaps reflect the number of people adhering to the denomination more realistically. These issues make comparison difficult.

Some church leaders might also face pressures to inflate membership numbers linked directly or indirectly to the government's registration requirements (more below) or simply to gain prestige. This combined with higher or lower levels of organizational capacity to effectively register members and the lack of even basic official statistics (the last census in Angola was carried out in 1970) calls for extra caution when looking at the numbers. An interview with the president of CICA is illustrative in this respect. He estimated the combined number of members of the 22 churches in CICA to be around 5 million but admitted that currently no detailed membership lists existed in the churches that form part of CICA. He added that the organization planned to carry out a registration of members in 2010. The National Institute of Religious Affairs (INAR) also refrain from relying on this kind of statistics stating that:

“...attempting to present exact numbers in relation to the affiliation of the various religious confessions or the percentage of the institutions with the highest representativity would be risky considering the lack of official statistical data in relation to the size of the population and the volatility in the religious sphere.”<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.flumc.info/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000006/000689.htm>

<sup>38</sup> A tendency also known in the Nordic 'national' that hence register a large number of passive members as 'believers'.

<sup>39</sup> Instituto Nacional para os Assuntos Religiosos (2008): Panorâmica das Religiões em Angola Independente,

These issues are important to bear in mind especially at a time of great fluctuations of members between churches (enrollment in a church other than the one in which the person was baptized) and multiple memberships (attending more than one church at the time). This is to a large extent driven by the Pentecostal expansion on the African continent, which particularly challenges the numbers of the churches that register 'passive' members such as the Catholic Church<sup>40</sup>.

Nevertheless, this leaves us with a landscape in which the Catholic Church is highly predominant when including several indicators, not least of its relative organizational strength and international support and a protestant movement marked by a high degree of division or diversity.

## Unity Versus Diversity

One of the main defining characteristics of the landscape of churches in Angola is between the unity of the Catholic Church and the diversity of the other church denominations. The unity of the Catholic Church is due to its strongly hierarchical structure with all bishops being appointed by the Holy See in Rome, even though the Bishops Conferences do play a role in nominating candidates. At times this has led to challenges within the Catholic Church in Angola, most recently in Cabinda where local priests and members of the church protested vigorously against the appointment of a Bishop from mainland Angola as opposed to a Bishop originating from the enclave.

Some degree of diversity within the Catholic Church is created by the presence of a large number of *religious institutes* which are groups within the Church that are composed predominantly of nuns and monks (and hence divided into male and female institutes) but also priests that are not part of the geographical diocesan structure<sup>41</sup>. The principal activity of the religious institutes is to do missionary work supporting evangelization and they often have an international dimension with representations in many countries. They also have a very strong social profile running hospitals, schools, etc. The religious institutes are also sometimes called religious orders or congregations<sup>42</sup>. The latter is the most commonly used term in Angola and is therefore used in this report. It should, however, not be confused with the meaning of congregation in a protestant context where it refers to the local members of a given church.

The congregations are formally subject to the authority of the bishop of the diocese within which they operate and they support the diocesan structure (for example running parishes) but sometimes they also function as semi-autonomous units within the Catholic Church operating at an arms-length of the Bishops as they have parallel reporting systems and access to external funding.

The diversity of the churches of protestant orientation is profound and rooted both in the missionary tradition as well as interdenominational strife and discord in the process of choosing church leaders. This results in fractions of otherwise united churches with weaker outreach and organizational capacity.

Both the Methodist and Baptist churches are examples of this. The Methodist experienced such division during the process of creating the Eastern Annual conference (in a process

---

Luanda, p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> According to the PEW forum (that bases its analysis on the World Christian Database) Pentecostals represent more than 20% of the population of Angola <http://pewforum.org/surveys/pentecostal/africa/>.

<sup>41</sup> To understand the organizational structure of the Catholic Church it is important to bear in mind the fact that women cannot become priests. Liturgical activities (celebrating mass) which is the principal activity of the Church is therefore carried out by men only. This is mainly done through the diocesan structure where a Bishop presides over a geographical territory divided into parishes that are serviced by priests.

<sup>42</sup> Find explanation (something about the vows)

formally recognized by the General Conference meeting in the United States in 1984) where groups supporting other Episcopal candidates than the one chosen broke away to form dissident churches<sup>43</sup>. The dispute was fuelled by the Bishop of the Angola Annual Conference (about to be divided) who opposed the process leading to tensions with the Malanje Methodists.

The Baptist church was introduced by different missionary movements in Angola and was therefore divided from the beginning but, according to INAR, this church has also split into further fractions with dissident churches formed in 1987 and 1990<sup>44</sup>.

Diversity is not necessarily a negative attribute and, as Henderson argues, it probably allows these churches to be more adapted to Angolan culture. The disputes described in this section bear evidence of institutions challenged by their governance structures, which perhaps is a side effect of the limited democratic culture in Angola. It is necessary, however, to strengthen these structures and promote the “unity within diversity” (one of CICA’s objectives) if the aim is to contribute to poverty reduction as defined in this report. This is necessary in particular in relation to strengthening the voice of civil society and democratic checks and balances.

## Relations with the State and Legal Framework

As the last part of the characterization of the landscape of churches in Angola we shall briefly present the legal framework regulating the churches. The relations between the churches and the state were affected by the adoption of a Marxist-Leninist ideology after independence in 1975. In 1987 the church-state relations significantly improved with the formal recognition of 12 churches. Subsequently freedom of religion was enshrined in the 1992 constitution and a further 50 churches achieved recognition by the state. Simultaneously the number of churches grew significantly but between 1992 and 2000, only 20 churches were recognized and since then the process seems to have stalled. The number of churches recognized by the state today stands at 83 with an official estimate of 902 unregistered churches<sup>45</sup>.

Church recognition is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice with technical assistance from the National Institute of Religious Affairs, located within the Ministry of Culture. An actual legal framework for recognition was established in decree 46/91 which was revised and replaced in 2004 by decree 2/04. The most important requirements to be recognized are to collect 100.000 signatures of members in at least two thirds (12) of the country’s provinces. It is not clear what the advantages are for churches opting for state recognition but the INAR has some concerns that churches can exist in an “...irregular situation throughout many years” without registration and that the law does not stipulate a “...pedagogic and disciplinary function over the creation and existence of religious institutions.”<sup>46</sup> This concern derives from the observation that:

---

<sup>43</sup> GBGM News Archives: The United Methodist Church of Angola: <http://gbgm-umc.org/africa/angola/angolumc.html>. According to INAR the name of the dissident church is the *Igreja Metodista Episcopal Independente Africana Sião* (Independent African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church) which was recognized by the state in 1992 (INAR, p. 33). It is unclear whether this is the same as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church which reportedly has missionary activities in Angola <http://www.amez.org/news/index.php>.

<sup>44</sup> *Igreja Evangélica Baptista Livre em Angola* (formed in 1987 and recognized in 1992) and *União Evangélica Baptista em Angola* (formed in 1990 and recognized in 1994). INAR (2008), p. 33.

<sup>45</sup> Instituto Nacional para os Assuntos Religiosos (2008): *Panorâmica das Religiões em Angola Independente*, Luanda, p. 44.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 29.

“... some legalized churches exist whose practices constitute a veritable assault on life and human rights whereas others, with projects of interest from a social and solidarity perspective, wait for years before their authorization is determined.”<sup>47</sup>

The question is posed, however, of whether the state should not put more emphasis on establishing or clarifying the potential benefits for churches seeking formal recognition rather than opting for ‘disciplinary’ action towards the informal churches. It is necessary to find a balance in the regulation of religious activity, but for a state practicing freedom of thought and belief to turn to tight control and criteria could work against the exercise of these basic rights in practice. Churches should clearly be bound to respect other laws which should prevent the assaults referred to in the above quote. In a country like Angola with poor infrastructure and weak levels of organization the requirements for official recognition mentioned above are probably too ambitious for the majority of the informal churches to meet, which would dissuade them from attempting to achieve recognition.

For a church aiming at having a significant impact on poverty, a certain geographical presence, number of members and levels of organization might be necessary. In many instances so would a formal relation with the state. It is clear that the many small and unrecognized churches play a role in society and possibly have an impact on poverty reduction but as indicated in the section on methodology it falls beyond the scope of this study to analyze this aspect.

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 18.

# The Churches and Poverty

In this section we analyze the specific roles the churches selected for the analysis play in terms of poverty reduction as defined in the analytical framework.

## The Catholic Church

There is no doubt that the Catholic Church is the most dominant church in Angola. It outnumbers the biggest protestant denomination by 13 to 1 so if only 25% of the registered members are active it would still be three times bigger than the largest protestant denomination. It also has an organizational structure that does not compare with any of the protestant churches and has been present in Angola for more than 500 years.

In relation to the levels of organization and geographical representation there are 18 Catholic dioceses in Angola, led by a bishop (or an archbishop in three of the archdioceses; Luanda, Lubango and Huambo). The 18 dioceses are divided into 208 parishes serviced by a total of 587 diocesan priests. In addition there are 97 religious institutes counting 423 priests and 1926 nuns running 136 missions and 15 missionary centers. In total the Catholic Church has almost 3000 priests and nuns at its service in Angola<sup>48</sup>.

The religious congregations form an important parallel support structure (see the section on unity vs. diversity above) that adds significant strength to the Catholic Church, both in relation to evangelization and to social activities addressing or alleviating poverty. Some of the people interviewed as part of this study emphasized the contribution of the female congregations. The explanation provided for this in the interviews was that, since women cannot be ordained priests, and are hence not as occupied with liturgy (celebrating mass), they have a stronger focus on charity and social activities. There are also more female than male congregations, reflecting the fact that there are more males within the diocesan structure working as parish priests for example. There are 71 female and 26 male congregations represented in Angola. Our study did not investigate the work of this wealth of congregations in detail but historically they have made a significant social contribution. The missionary statistics from 1974 shows this documenting the existence of "...11 hospitals, 60 dispensaries, 12 maternity clinics and 2 treatment centers for leprosy spread out through the interior of Angola."<sup>49</sup> As part of the interviews held in March 2007, representatives of the Catholic Church were asked to name three female and three male congregations with the most active social profiles which resulted in the following selection (listed alphabetically):

Female congregations:

- Dominicanas do Rosario, MDR (Dominican Missionaries of the Rosary): This congregation works on issues such as justice and peace, education, health and social promotion.
- São José de Cluny, SJC (Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny): One of the biggest and most ancient congregations in Angola (starting its mission in 1883) working on issues such as education, health and social promotion.
- Teresianas, STJ (Teresian sisters): Working on education and health for example running the mission hospital in Cubal, Benguela Province.

Masculine congregations:

---

<sup>48</sup> Anuário Católico de Angola e São Tomé 2009 – Ano da Visita do Papa Bento XVI em Angola, Luanda.

<sup>49</sup> Muaca, Eduardo André, 2001, *Breve História da Evangelização de Angola*, Luanda, CEAST, p. 121.

- Espiritanos, CSSP (Spiritans or Holy Ghost Fathers): The most ancient male congregation arriving in 1866 where it was made responsible for the evangelization efforts. Today working on education, justice and peace amongst others.
- Salesianos de Dom Bosco, SDB (Salesians of Don Bosco): Very active presence focusing on education, health, professional training and social reintegration.
- Verbitas, Svd (Divine Word): This congregation focuses on education, health and runs orphanages for street kids.

It is necessary to add the Dominicans to this list, who are in charge of the Mosaiko Cultural Center, one of the most progressive human rights organizations in Angola.

Within the diocesan structure the Bishops create commissions to address specific issues in their dioceses and at the national level. These commissions are, however, often supported by congregations. Some of the themes of the commissions include social issues, health, education, family, youth, ecumenism, migrations and many more depending on each diocese. The most relevant for this analysis is Caritas, the Peace and Justice Commission and the movement Promotion of the Catholic Woman in Angola (Promaica). There are great differences in the level of organization and activity both between the different commissions and between dioceses, in particular in relation to the social areas. Key determining factors for this seem to be the personal commitment of the Bishop and access to funding.

### Emergency Relief:

The Catholic Church was massively involved in addressing the emergency caused by the war and displacement of more than four million people. The main instrument in this phase was Caritas, the Catholic Church's humanitarian organization. Caritas was established in Angola in 1970 and was one of the few relief organizations working throughout the 27 years of civil war. The main activities involved distribution of food, medicine, clothing and agricultural material<sup>50</sup>.

Caritas was to a large extent supported by its international sister agencies and by Caritas International to respond to the humanitarian crisis<sup>51</sup>. Whereas funding was understandably provided by external sources, the Catholic Church in this phase contributed with its network and local presence, as it stayed behind when relief workers fled. One such example is provided in a Washington Post article from 2001, merely a year before the war came to an end. The article describes the role of Sister Maria Jose who was in charge of Caritas in the diocese of Malanje in central Angola hoarding "...bags of corn, beans and rice in a church warehouse."<sup>52</sup> The article quoted the U.N. World Food Program for Caritas in Malanje caring for 15,730 of the 15,863 orphaned children and it goes as far as stating that in the leadership vacuum caused by the war, "...churches and relief agencies function as a surrogate state, providing food, jobs, housing and even orphanages *to the bulk* of Angola's 12 million people"<sup>53</sup>. The missions operated by the religious congregations played similar roles during the war. An example is the hospital of the Cubal mission in the Benguela province which is run by the Teresian sisters.

In post-war Angola there are only minor relief efforts related to recurrent floods. In 2007, Caritas Luanda responded to the heavy rain and flooding in Luanda by distributing cooking

---

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Caritas program staff: Eusébio Amarante, Paulo Abel and Laura da Costa, May 2007

<sup>51</sup> Cardinal Dom Alexandre do Nascimento was during several years President of Caritas International.

<sup>52</sup> *In Angola, Church Is Surrogate State; Missionaries Fill Void in Vital Services*, The Washington Post, March 22, 2001

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Authors emphasis

utensils amongst other things<sup>54</sup>. Caritas Ondjiva (in the southern province of Cunene) has also been involved in responding to the recent floods in that region.

Historically, the Catholic Church played a major role in responding to the humanitarian crisis created by the war and still maintains the ability to respond to minor incidents when funding is available. The church has thus mitigated the suffering of the poorest and most war affected citizens. Whether the impact reached the levels reported by the Washington Post cannot be verified here, but it was seemingly substantial in light of the absence of the state. As discussed in more detail in the section on policy and advocacy, the Bishops also contributed in a political sense to bring the conflict to an end.

### Development Activities:

The Catholic Church plays a significant role, in particular within sectors such as health and education, which are heavily supported by the religious congregations. Activities related to agriculture, water and sanitation are mainly project based and carried out by Caritas Angola and diocesan Caritas. After the end of the armed conflict Caritas has worked hard on reorienting its focus from emergency activities to development oriented activities<sup>55</sup>.

#### *Education*

Caritas Angola is carrying out a literacy project in an effort to mitigate the impact of the lack of teachers at village level. This project has been piloted in the Diocese of Malanje and aims at training people to be able to teach the local population to read and write and become integrated in the normal education system. 137 teachers were trained and have given lessons to almost 3000 pupils to become integrated in the normal schooling system<sup>56</sup>. Significant literacy programs are also carried out in the provinces of Benguela, Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul where thousands are taught to read and write every year.

The Catholic Church runs a number of orphanages throughout the country such as the Arnold Janssen Center in Luanda that was created in 1993 by the Divine Word congregation (see page 18). The Center offers shelter, food, medical treatment and schooling to the street kids of Luanda with the aim of reintegrating them into their families<sup>57</sup>.

The official education system in Angola was originally divided into four years of obligatory primary school (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade), followed by four optional years of intermediate basic education (5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and four years of secondary education (9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade)<sup>58</sup>. Throughout the country the Catholic Church, supported by the congregations, run schools at different levels<sup>59</sup>. Some of these schools are operated in conjunction with the state that finances the teacher salaries. There is no data available on how many pupils are studying in these schools.

In secondary education the Catholic Institute for Religious Sciences in Angola (ICRA) plays a notable role. It teaches 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade and educates social workers as well as teachers in Moral and Civic Education. ICRA is the only institution in Angola that offers these two courses which it does in Luanda, Kwanza Norte, Malange, Huambo and Huila. The state

---

<sup>54</sup> Cafod supported a project to help the victims of the rains in 2007

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Caritas program staff: Eusébio Amarante, Paulo Abel and Laura da Costa, May 2007

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Caritas technicians, May 2007.

<sup>57</sup> Missionarios do Verbo Divino, *Relatos da Missão, Uma passagem da rua para casa*, [http://www.verbodivino.pt/relatos\\_missao/relatos3.html](http://www.verbodivino.pt/relatos_missao/relatos3.html)

<sup>58</sup> As of 2003 this system was reformed and now comprises 6 years of obligatory primary education and 6 years of secondary education divided into two levels. INE/UNICEF (2003): MICS – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – Assessing the Situation of Angolan Children and Women at the Beginning of the Millennium – Analytical Report, May 2003, Luanda, section 25.

<sup>59</sup> It was not possible to establish the exact number of catholic run schools in the country. The *Anuário Católico de Angola e São Tomé* lists 36 schools but this seems to be far below the real number of schools.

recognizes the importance of this contribution to the educational system and co-finances the salaries of the teachers. In Lubango, the regional department of ICRA (covering the dioceses of Lubango, Namibe, Ondjiva and Menongue) took on 501 pupils between 1996 and 2004 of which 112 had graduated<sup>60</sup>. The number of graduated corresponds to 38% of the students admitted between 1996 and 2000, which suggests a fairly low completion rate. This can be attributed the low quality of primary education, high levels of absence and the high standards required by this institution. ICRA is supplemented by the John Paul II Institute (Instituto Superior João Paulo II) that provides higher level education within the same areas as ICRA. The principal of both of this institution is the Dominican monk, João Domingos.

The Catholic Church also operates the Catholic University of Angola (UCAN) which was opened in 1997 and today has 3739 students. The University has four faculties: Law, Economics and Management, Information Engineering and Human Sciences. UCAN also hosts the Centre for Scientific Study and Research (CEIC) that works in various areas including economics, social sciences, environment, poverty and human rights.

### Health

One of Caritas' flagship projects since 1996 is the *Angotrip* project aiming at combating sleeping disease (Human African Trypanosomiasis) in three provinces in the north of Angola (Zaire, Uíge and Kwanza Norte). Sleeping disease is a serious and growing threat to public health in Angola.<sup>61</sup> Controlling it is one of Angola's localized Millenium Development Goals (Goal 8.3)<sup>62</sup>. Caritas operates three out of five health centers in two of the three Northern provinces (two centers were destroyed by the war in 1998 and not rehabilitated) where approximately 100 persons are treated annually. With an estimated 8,000 new infections per year this is a limited but nevertheless important contribution to fighting the disease. Since 2006 the salaries of the project personnel have been paid by the government.

Another area addressed by Caritas Angola is HIV/AIDS. Here Caritas trains counselors and distributes anti-retroviral treatment with support from Caritas Germany. The diocesan Caritas of Benguela has also been active in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic through prevention education with support from Catholic Relief Services. Amongst other things this work included the holding of a conference supported by the Bishop of Benguela Diocese<sup>63</sup>.

As mentioned previously, the religious congregations of the Catholic Church also play an important role with regards to development activities. In the health area the Teresian sisters run the diocesan hospital of Cubal in the Benguela province. During the war this was the only hospital between Benguela and Huambo that had the ability to undertake surgery. Its specialized work on tuberculosis and nutrition employs a staff of 247 employees. Between 2001 and 2005, 24,107 persons were hospitalized and 4,168 surgeries were performed. The overall curing rate was 89.1%. 5,744 persons were treated for tuberculosis of which 56.6% were cured and 6,895 children were hospitalized of which 71.5% were cured<sup>64</sup>.

---

<sup>60</sup> Arquidiocese de Lubango, serviços pastorais, Instituto de Ciencias Religiosas de Angola: <http://www.lubangoarquidiocese.catholic.net/templates/?id=6>.

<sup>61</sup> Sleeping sickness is transmitted by the Tsetse fly and affects the central nerve system resulting in confusion, sensory disturbances and poor coordination. The disease is fatal if without treatment. In 2004 approximately 100.000 were infected and there were about 8.000 new cases per year (MinPlan/PNUD, 2005, p. 55)

<sup>62</sup> Ministério de Planeamento / Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (2005): Objectivos de Desenvolvimento do Milénio - Relatório de Progresso 2005, [http://mirror.undp.org/angola/LinkRtf/Angola\\_MDG\\_Prog\\_report\\_2005.pdf](http://mirror.undp.org/angola/LinkRtf/Angola_MDG_Prog_report_2005.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> CRS Angola and Caritas Benguela (2007): Caritas AIDS Prevention Education Project, June 2007, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PDACJ750.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACJ750.pdf)

<sup>64</sup> Hospital Diocesano Nossa Senhora da Paz (2005): Relatório final, internal project reporting to CRS Angola.

## Policy and Advocacy Activities

After the independence of Angola in 1975 the Catholic Church has played a significant role by addressing policy issues. The three main areas of focus have been peace and reconciliation, democracy and socio-economic justice. The bishops have used their Conference (CEAST) pro-actively to issue statements or Pastoral Letters. Increasingly these efforts have also been supported by congregations such as the Dominican's Mosaiko Cultural Center and the Bishops Commission for Justice and Peace (CEJP).

CEAST appealed strongly (and often together with the protestant churches) for peace and democracy throughout the conflict that lasted until 2002 and it was often met with angry reactions from the state accusing it of abusing its position in society to interfere in political issues<sup>65</sup>. In the early years of independence the Catholic Church was mainly concerned with its survival within the context of a Marxist-Leninist state but it also started expressing its concerns about the war as early as 1976<sup>66</sup>. Peace and reconciliation continued to be addressed by the bishops but from the late eighties the calls were intensified with direct appeals to the leaders of MPLA and UNITA. Throughout the nineties the Catholic Church reacted to the events of the war by applauding the peace accords and lamenting their failures. In 1999, in the context of the failure of the Lusaka protocol, the ecumenical initiative COIEPA (Inter-Church Committee for Peace) was created by a number of churches and in 2000, CEAST's Pro Pace Movement organized a major peace conference. The conference was broadcast live by the Catholic Church radio station, Radio Ecclesia, breaking the public silence on the road to peace. State media were highly critical of the conference characterizing it as a forum for "those who wanted peace at any price"<sup>67</sup>. At the same time, however, the President of the Republic, in a silent recognition of the importance of this event, also requested four of his ministers to attend the conference.

After the end of the war CEAST maintained the focus on the need for democratization, which was addressed in pastoral letters in 2005 and most recently in 2008. The latter was issued only months before the holding of legislative elections for the first time in 16 years in September 2008 and appealed for free, fair and above all peaceful elections. Increasing focus has also been given to the poor socio-economic situation of the country and the need for a better use of the country's natural resources. Milestone pastoral letters in this regard include the 2004 pastoral letter *The Path towards Hope*, which articulated the need for improvements in the living standards of ordinary Angolans. It also addressed the issue of oil and the resource curse. In 2006, the pastoral letter *Towards Economic Justice* followed up on the issue of the paradox of plenty and the resource curse putting forward figures on oil and diamond revenues and the social indicators, calling for greater transparency and increased investment in key social sectors such as health and education in the pursuit of the public good.

The Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace (CEJP), headed by a priest from the Spiritan Congregation, provided technical support on the elaboration of the latter pastoral letter and subsequently used the publication as a platform for further policy work on the national budget and extractive industries. This resulted in publications on the budget process in 2006<sup>68</sup>, a detailed analysis of the content of the 2008 budget<sup>69</sup> and a paper on the oil sector all launched in 2008<sup>70</sup>. CEJP was also responsible for the holding of a series of local Pro Pace conferences

---

<sup>65</sup> See CEAST (1998): *A Igreja em Angola Entre a Guerra e a Paz – Documentos Episcopais 1974 – 1998* and Comerford, Michael G. (2005): *O Rosto Pacifico de Angola – Biografia de um Processo de Paz (1991 – 2002)*.

<sup>66</sup> CEAST (1998): *A Igreja em Angola Entre a Guerra e a Paz – Documentos Episcopais 1974 – 1998*, p. 48

<sup>67</sup> Comerford, Michael G. (2004): *Alternative voices: the Angolan peace movement* <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/angola/alternative-voices.php>

<sup>68</sup> CEAST, CEJPM, Sector de Justiça Económica (2006): *Relatório de Análise do Processo Orçamental em Angola*, Luanda

<sup>69</sup> CEAST, CEJPM, Sector de Justiça Económica (2008): *Análise do Orçamento Geral do Estado 2008*, Luanda, Junho de 2008

<sup>70</sup> CEAST, CEJPM, Sector de Justiça Económica (2009): *Transparência no Sector Petrolífero Angolano*

aimed at raising awareness about the elections and electoral legislation to increase political tolerance in the run up to the elections. Diocesan peace and justice commissions are increasingly looking towards the newly created local hearing councils (see context section p. 9) as spaces for participation in policy processes at the local level. These kinds of activities have been funded by members of the Caritas/CIDSE Angola working group as well as the European Union.

Another key player within the Catholic Church in relation to policy and advocacy is the Dominican congregation's *Cultural Centre Mosaiko*, which specializes in the promotion of human rights to build a more peaceful Angola. Created in 1995, Mosaiko works on a range of human rights issues such as training civil society organizations and government agencies in human rights. The organization has been very involved in land right issues and uses both mediation and judicial proceedings to resolve issues<sup>71</sup>. The *Social Week*, which Mosaiko organizes in the name of CEAST, consists in the realization of a public conference at national level addressing a pertinent social issue and sub-conferences at diocesan level following up on the general theme. The event takes place every three years and has so far been held in 1999, 2003 and 2007. The latest addressed the theme social justice and brought together more than 300 participants<sup>72</sup>. Mosaiko also runs a library that is located at its headquarters in Viana on the outskirts of Luanda. The library, frequented by about 2500 users annually, is the most used library on social and human science literature in Luanda. It also produces and broadcasts about 90 radio programs on human rights issues per year<sup>73</sup>.

As we have seen in this section on the specific activities of the Catholic Church it intervenes in a number of different ways that address poverty. There is not, however, an overarching vision for poverty reduction; and coordination of the activities of the different congregations and commissions is poor. The Catholic Church could have a greater impact if such coordination existed and more attention was given to monitoring and evaluation of the outputs and impacts of activities. Some isolated external evaluations are carried out (mainly of donor supported activities) but it would help the Catholic Church to institutionalize this for all of its activities and create a clear overview of its aggregated contribution to poverty reduction in Angola. Also, a stronger approach to advocating and pursuing dialogue with the authorities around the positions adopted in the pastoral letters might produce a more significant impact.

## The Evangelical Congregational Church

The Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola (IECA) is present in 15 of the 18 provinces through provincial assemblies or synods<sup>74</sup> that are, again, subdivided into pastorates and congregations<sup>75</sup>. According to the Director of IECA's social program there are 2900 congregations serviced by 800 members of staff (160 pastors, 260 deacons and 380 deaconesses)<sup>76</sup>. IECA has a democratic structure with the superior organ being the General Assembly with the capacity to elect a General Secretary who is the head of the Church. It has close links to the United Church of Christ in the USA (formerly the American Board of Foreign Missions which founded the church in Angola) and it is a member of the World

---

2002/2006, Luanda, Abril de 2008

<sup>71</sup> ReliefWeb: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/YZHG-6ZYRY8?OpenDocument>

<sup>72</sup> Agência Angolapress: [http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/pt\\_pt/noticias/sociedade/Livro-sobre-Justica-Social-apresentado-hoje-Luanda.a212625b-4ab0-4675-a765-673c5140c1a5.html](http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/Livro-sobre-Justica-Social-apresentado-hoje-Luanda.a212625b-4ab0-4675-a765-673c5140c1a5.html)

<sup>73</sup> Centro Cultural Mosaiko (2009): Contribuição do Centro Cultural Mosaiko à promoção de uma cultura de direitos humanos em Angola.

<sup>74</sup> IECA is not present in Lunda Norte, Zaire and Uige.

<sup>75</sup> Congregation in this context is a local church group not to be confused with the use of the word in a Catholic context (see page 15).

<sup>76</sup> The number of deacons is from <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/africa/angola/evangelical-congregational-church-in-angola.html> which reports lower numbers of pastors and congregations but this could have changed since the website was only updated in January 2006.

Council of Churches, the All Africa Conference of Churches, the Council of Christian Churches in Angola and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

IECA's General Secretary, Rev. Augusto Chipesse divides the history of the church into three phases. The first goes from the foundation of the Church in 1880 by American missionaries to the outbreak of civil war after independence in 1975. This period was characterized by growth with the foundation of many mission stations, schools and hospitals through the *Melhoramento do Povo* (Improvement of the People) program. The church was fundamentally a rural church. The second period runs from 1975 and until the end of the civil war in 2002. This phase started with the departure of close to 300 missionaries and was characterized by the destruction of everything that had been built in the previous phase. The church reoriented itself and became largely an urban church. The third phase started in 2002 and is characterized by the reestablishing of the church in times of peace but also by the wish to address the extremely poor living conditions of the population. IECA prepared its first strategic plan for the 2003 to 2007 period and currently the second strategic plan will guide the work of the church in the period from 2008 to 2012<sup>77</sup>. IECA is today assisted by one missionary from the US United Church of Christ.

## Emergency relief

With its heartland on the central highlands of Angola amongst the Ovimbundu people, IECA was deeply affected by the war. At the time of independence the name of the present IECA was still the Council of Evangelical Churches in Central Angola (CIEAC) and some of its principal leaders, including the General Secretary, fled to the bush with UNITA in February 1977<sup>78</sup>. Later that year, CIEAC elected a new General Secretary and changed its name to IECA which signaled a change from a regional to a national denomination, in line with most other protestant churches. IECA managed to establish itself in 15 provinces in the following years.

From the outbreak of the war until 1991 (which can be described as the cold-war phase of the Angolan civil war) IECA suspended all its social activities. In 1991, IECA decided to reinstate its social work and created the Department of Social Assistance, Studies and Projects (DASEP). DASEP started an ambitious emergency project. The emergency activities mainly addressed the consequences of the war in the provinces most heavily affected such as Huambo, Bié, Benguela; but also in other provinces such as, Kwanza Sul, Bengo, Huila, Kuando Kubango and Namibe<sup>79</sup>. In the period from 1991 to the end of the war in 2002 these activities occasionally had to be suspended due to the coming and going of ceasefires and subsequent intensification of the war. IECA also responded to floods in 2001 targeting 9.000 people with critical needs including food distribution for a six month period in Dombe Grande, Benguela with assistance from Action of Churches Together. IECA maintains emergency preparedness for mitigation of the impact of natural calamities<sup>80</sup>.

## Development Activities

A defining aspect of IECA is that it promotes a holistic mission perspective that specifically articulates social action as part of evangelization. It is a small church in comparison to the Catholic Church, but the largest protestant denomination. In contrast to the Catholic Church,

---

<sup>77</sup> Igreja Evangélica Congregacional em Angola (2007): Plano Estratégico 2008 – 2012, Lubango, September 2007, p. 6.

<sup>78</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W (1991): *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents*, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 380

<sup>79</sup> Igreja Evangélica Congregacional em Angola (2007): Plano Estratégico 2003 – 2007, Huambo, November 2002, p. 9

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Director of DASEP, Luis Samacumbi, March 2009

it has followed an overarching, coherent strategy encompassing all activities of the church since 2003. The main areas of intervention are

- Education, training and capacity building
- Health and HIV/AIDS
- Sustainable development
- Gender, women and children
- Peace, justice and reconciliation

### **Education**

IECA carries forward a proud tradition for schooling in Angola. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Currie Institute for boys and the Means School for girls in Dondi in the Province of Bié was created by missionaries of the early evangelical church in Angola. These schools were the apex of a pyramid of hundreds of village schools and attracted attention for their academic achievements and agricultural innovations<sup>81</sup>.

In the immediate post-war period from 2003 to 2008, IECA constructed and reconstructed a number of schools in cities and former rural mission sites and established agreements or protocols with the Ministry of Education to achieve government approval. Currently IECA administers 58 schools staffed by 591 teachers and paid by the government. About 21.000 pupils are enrolled in IECA primary and secondary schools<sup>82</sup>.

In respect of its tradition, IECA strives to turn its schools into models for the rest of society and currently some of these are funded by the Dille/Dunbar Fund for Schools for Angolan Young Women. Classes taught here include "...literacy, nutrition, health, sewing, agriculture, human rights, and small business operation..." Computer training is given when power is available<sup>83</sup>.

IECA also carries out literacy courses with 75 teachers targeting 1500 people in 5 provinces (Luanda, Benguela, Bie, Huila and Kuando Kubango). The target group is adults outside the formal education system who are taught to read and write in order to be able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Eight vocational training centers are also operated in 5 provinces (Kwanza Sul, Huambo, Benguela, Bie and Huila).

### **Health**

IECA's runs 5 hospitals with about 300 beds each in Huambo and Bie provinces and 8 local health posts. The health posts offer health screenings, basic medication and referrals to hospitals. Through the health posts the church also participates in vaccination campaigns and has facilitated vaccination of more than 3000 children in 20 villages<sup>84</sup>.

IECA trains health assistants in Lubango and traditional midwives in three provinces in collaboration with the government. 80 traditional midwives have been trained in the three provinces.

An increasing focus has been given to HIV & AIDS by IECA. Although the prevalence rate is low in Angola compared to surrounding countries, it is expected to rise rapidly as mobility increases with the rehabilitation of infrastructure. IECA carries out awareness raising, prevention efforts and health education using, among other things, radio call-in programs. The establishment of self-help groups for people living with HIV is planned for 2009<sup>85</sup>. To

---

<sup>81</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W (1991): *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents*, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 140-141.

<sup>82</sup> Dudley, Donna (2009): *Angola: A Time of Change*, April 7, 2009, <http://globalministries.org/africa/missionaries/angola-a-time-of-change.html>

<sup>83</sup> Global Ministries, projects: <http://globalministries.org/africa/projects/schools-for-angolan-young-women.html>

<sup>84</sup> Interview with Luis Samacumbi, Director of DASEP, March 2009

<sup>85</sup> Dudley, Donna (2009): *Another Angola Update*, May 21, 2009,

strengthen these efforts it has entered a partnership with the National Institute to fight HIV and AIDS.

## Policy and Advocacy

Through its peace and reconciliation work IECA attempts to introduce peaceful conflict resolution skills. Conferences, seminars, trainings, theater and music are used to educate communities about human rights and the disarming of civilians. IECA aims, in this way at reducing violence and reuniting the Angolan population.

IECA was involved in the preparations for the parliamentary elections that took place in September 2008, through civic electoral education and by highlighting the importance of participation in the vote. According to DASEP director Luis Samacumbi: *“There is no doubt that the strong engagement of the churches and civil society in mobilization and education during registration, contributed greatly to the decrease in the fear that reigned in the heart of the population.”*<sup>86</sup> The elections were a vital first step in the direction of reestablishing the electoral cycle in Angola.

IECA participates in the *Socio-Political Observatory of Angola (OPSA)* which has enabled the church to be part of a network that works predominantly on democracy and socio-economic issues. OPSA defines itself as a pluralist space for informed debate about just and sustainable development<sup>87</sup>. On its website, this network has published documents and position papers on the elections. The papers, however, do not bear the signatures of the member organizations to bolster their credibility and cause greater impact. It seems important that IECA formalizes its participation in this kind of networks to strengthen its profile on these issues.

## The United Methodist Church of Angola

The United Methodist Church of Angola (IMUA) is divided into two Annual Conferences that roughly resemble a diocese in the Catholic Church and Synod in other protestant denominations. The two conferences are the Eastern Angola Annual Conference and the Western Angola Annual Conference. The latter was created in 1988 in a process that also led to a split in the Church, with groups supporting other Episcopal candidates breaking away to form the Independent African Episcopal Methodist Church<sup>88</sup>. Each conference is headed by a bishop elected for lifetime. The Western conference is divided into 13 church districts with 283 churches serviced by 283 pastors. The Eastern conference covers 5 church districts with 45 churches and, among others, the traditional Methodist stronghold of Quéssua<sup>89</sup>. The Angolan Methodist conferences are part of the international United Methodist Church as two of eight Annual Conferences in the Africa Central Conference. The Eastern Conference entered a partnership with the Florida Conference of the Church (USA) in 2003 and the Western Conference has partnerships with the California-Nevada and the New England Conferences (USA).

The Methodist Church in Angola has deep roots in a self-supporting culture. The Church was founded in Angola by Rev. William Taylor in 1885 whose philosophy was to create missions that were financially independent of the mission societies in their countries of origin. The

---

<http://globalministries.org/africa/missionaries/another-angola-update.html>

<sup>86</sup> Global Ministries, Interview with Luis Samacumbi of Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola, February 2008, <http://globalministries.org/news/africa/interview-with-luis-samacumbi.html>

<sup>87</sup> Observatório Político Social de Angola: <http://www.opsa-angola.org/index.shtml>

<sup>88</sup> GBGM news archives: <http://gbgm-umc.org/africa/angola/angolumc.html> and Instituto Nacional para Assuntos Religiosos (2008): *Panorâmica das Religiões em Angola Independente (1975-2008)*, Luanda, p. 33

<sup>89</sup> Florida United Methodist News Service: *Quipungo elected for life in Central Conference*, September 22, 2004, <http://www.flumc.info/cgi-script/csArticles/articles/000006/000689.htm>

missionary activity was initiated by a group of 45 Americans (29 adults and 16 children) with different professions. The focus initially was more on establishing self-supporting missions than on evangelizing the local population. The Methodist initiated its work in Luanda and neighboring provinces of Bengo and Kwanza Norte towards Malanje establishing 5 mission stations in 6 months in Kimbundu heartland. As with the other churches, the Methodist church was also affected by the civil war, which destroyed many mission stations, such as, the Quéssua Training Center, the Methodists' equivalent to the Currie Institute and Means School at the Dondi mission with educational institutions for boys and girls from nursery to secondary courses in a technical school<sup>90</sup>.

## Emergency relief

The only information this study has been able to obtain about the Methodist Church's role in the emergency phase is that IMUA was involved in rehabilitation services for refugees and internally displaced people (IDP's) and received support from the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

## Development activities

The main focus of IMUA's development work is on education and community development through a community micro-credit arrangement. The latter is in line with the Church's self-sustainability philosophy.

## Education

Work in this area started as a literacy program for children living in poor conditions on the streets or slums of Luanda. Today this has evolved into a program called POSOCA, which encompasses 8 schools, 7 in Luanda and 1 in Benguela, with more than 2000 students. Remarkably, in relation to the poor statistics on school completion in Angola, almost all students finish school in the program. The schools are state recognized and the teachers are paid by the government<sup>91</sup>. Students pay a fee to attend school. POSOCA is supported by the Norwegian Methodist Church, which is establishing a sponsorship program for children that cannot afford to pay for school, in particular the street kids.

The schools of the Quéssua Mission Station in Malanje have been rehabilitated after the war and opened in 2007. These include an orphanage, a secondary school with 175 students and a theology school with 85 pastoral students. The Mission also focuses on agriculture to provide food for the children in the orphanage and the students<sup>92</sup>.

A Methodist University of Angola (UMA) was also started in 2007 with 10 licentiate or BA degree courses (licenciatura is equivalent to a bachelor's degree)<sup>93</sup>. Like the Catholic University, the Methodist one also includes a center for scientific investigation but specializing in engineering and the environment. Among other studies the Center has carried out research on the *Welwitschia mirabilis* plant which is found only in Angola and Namibia. Currently, a new modern 16 floor building is being constructed to expand the activities and scope of the university. The building will also host a student dormitory and a Methodist medical clinic. The value of the project is budgeted at 30 million USD and is an important component in the Church's goal of becoming self-sustainable.

---

<sup>90</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W (1991): The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 142

<sup>91</sup> Methodistkirkens Missionselskab, Posoca, <http://misjonselskap.no/sider/tekst.asp?side=97>

<sup>92</sup> Quéssua Mission, East Angola Conference, [http://www.gbgn-umc.org/quessuamission/index\\_files/Page1264.htm](http://www.gbgn-umc.org/quessuamission/index_files/Page1264.htm)

<sup>93</sup> The subjects are law, pharmaceuticals, architecture/urbanism, public health/clinical analysis, environment/territorial administration, Business management, Communications/Portuguese language, dentist medicine, engineering and theology (<http://historiadorimpossivel.blogspot.com/2008/03/universidade-metodista-amplia-instalacoes.html>)

### **Community development and agriculture<sup>94</sup>**

The community development program PRODESSA was initiated after the war to support the reintegration of the internally displaced. It is a participatory project where communities can obtain funding for the implementation of projects of their own choice. PRODESSA supports small projects by transferring resources straight to the community supporting sectors such as; fishing (such as the purchase of a boat with an 80 horsepower engine for a community) and agriculture (distribution of goats and cattle and support to pineapple production). Information technology training centers and bookstores have also been supported. There is currently a total of 10 projects and 8 more are under preparation. This program is also supported by the Methodist church in Norway and NORAD, the Norwegian development agency.

### **Policy and advocacy**

The Methodist program for justice, peace and reconciliation works to consolidate peace and aims at spiritual reconciliation and peace through the psychological reconstruction of communities that have gone through the traumas of the war.

The program focused on elections and played an active role in promoting citizen participation in the parliamentary election of September 2008. The two active bishops and the two retired ones issued a statement on behalf of the Church encouraging the population to exercise their right to vote, stating that: "Voting is a sacred and patriotic must"<sup>95</sup>. Pastors of the church were also active even prior to the bishops' statement in encouraging their congregations to become involved in the electoral process. The church also used public media to promote voter registration.

The Methodist church has a history and reputation of being closely aligned with the governing MPLA party and national elite. The MPLA and the Methodist church share the ethno-regional base in the Kimbundu people and the first president of Angola, António Agostinho Neto, was the son of a Methodist pastor. After independence the Methodist church chose to support the MPLA unconditionally thereby being the first church to officially adopt a partisan position<sup>96</sup>. In the 2008 elections, more than 30 years later, the Church did not openly endorse any of the parties. It remained neutral, describing the act of depositing votes in a ballot box as a symbol of reconciliation<sup>97</sup>.

IMUA can be characterized as a 'business-oriented' church which is rooted in its history. There is an enormous focus on self-sustainability and autonomy. In this way, the church has a somewhat different approach to reducing poverty than some of the other churches described here.

## **The Evangelical Baptist Church of Angola**

The Evangelical Baptist Church of Angola (IEBA) is the smallest of the churches selected for the analysis. It is present in 9 out of 18 provinces<sup>98</sup>, divided into 12 church districts mainly concentrated in northern Angola and counting 300 places of worship serviced by 100 pastors<sup>99</sup>. It is the only church in this sample that has an official website

---

<sup>94</sup> This study was not able to verify significant efforts related to health although the Western Conference has a department of health.

<sup>95</sup> Global ministries, the United Methodist Church: *Church Promoted Voting as Sacred "Must" Prior to Angola's Election*, October 7, 2008, [http://gbgm-umc.org/global\\_news/full\\_article.cfm?articleid=5173](http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5173)

<sup>96</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W (1991): *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents*, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 366

<sup>97</sup> Global ministries, the United Methodist Church: *Church Promoted Voting as Sacred "Must" Prior to Angola's Election*, October 7, 2008, [http://gbgm-umc.org/global\\_news/full\\_article.cfm?articleid=5173](http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=5173)

<sup>98</sup> Zaire, Uige, Luanda, Cabinda, Benguela, Bengo, Huila, Lunda Norte e Kwanza Norte

<sup>99</sup> <http://iebachurch.org/home.html>

([www.iebachurch.org](http://www.iebachurch.org)), which shows that it has made an effort to use information technology to publicize its work. This is positive in an environment where information is hard to get<sup>100</sup>. IEBA is organized as a congregational church where decisions are taken by local assemblies. The General Assembly of the local assemblies chooses a President who is seen as the head of the Church. IEBA is associated with the Baptist World Alliance and supported with missionaries by the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) World Mission, with whom it also shares strong historic ties. Currently three BMS missionaries are based in Angola<sup>101</sup>.

The Baptist church is the oldest protestant church in Angola. British missionaries arrived in the capital of the Kingdom of Kongo, São Salvador (M'banza-Kongo) in 1878. In 1930 there were three Baptist mission stations in the Bakongo ethno-regional area of northern Angola located in São Salvador, Kibokolo and Bembe. The Baptist church has strong ties with today's Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Kingdom of Kongo covered an area that was later divided by the Belgian, French and Portuguese colonizers and the British founders of the church established more missionary stations in Belgian than Portuguese territory. The heartland of the Baptist church was also the first to be affected by the decades of war. The hostilities in the beginning of the war for liberation in the northern provinces of Zaire and Uige in March 1961 drove an estimated 450,000, or 80%, of the local Bakongo population, into refuge in the new Republic of Zaire (now DRC)<sup>102</sup>. At this point in time, several schools, a hospital and agricultural projects were ruined and the 31 BMS missionaries were expelled. Most of the refugees returned to Angola after independence in 1975 and in 1977 the Evangelical Baptist Church of Angola (IEBA) was founded.

### Emergency relief

During the war of independence the Baptist church played a critical role distributing food and clothes, providing medical assistance, education and the training of pastors. The latter became an important factor in re-establishing the church in Angola in the late seventies<sup>103</sup>.

During the civil war the church ran a camp for orphaned and vulnerable children at Malanje and in 2003, IEBA, with the assistance of BMS, helped resettle 4810 families who returned home after the war<sup>104</sup>.

### Development activities

The aim of the Baptist church's social action has, since its beginning, been to "reduce poverty through the development of the poor"<sup>105</sup>. In addition to the work on health and education described below IEBA has also implemented activities within agriculture and community development. In the area of agricultural production, the church is involved in the distribution of seeds in the provinces of Zaire and Benguela. An installation for milling aimed to serve the farmers of the region free of cost, is also being developed in Benguela province.

### Education

In addition to normal schools IEBA also organizes pre-schools in local churches. This work is supported by BMS through the PEPE program and aims at addressing "the root causes of poverty and violence in poor communities" a program based on experience from Brazil<sup>106</sup>. The program covers both the areas of education and health because it passes health

---

<sup>100</sup> Even if the page needs to be updated with more recent information this is an example that other churches should follow.

<sup>101</sup> BMS World Mission, Angola, <http://www.bmsworldmission.org/ProfileContent.aspx?id=3931>

<sup>102</sup> Henderson, Lawrence W. (1991): *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents*, The Pilgrim Press, Cleveland, Ohio, p. 366, p. 267

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Igreja Evangélica Baptista em Angola, Acções da IEBA, <http://iebachurch.org/home.html>

<sup>105</sup> Interview with Viegas Afonso Uta, Secretary General of the IEBA, Luanda, 9th May 2007.

<sup>106</sup> BMS World Mission, Angola Close-up, <http://www.bmsworldmission.org/63486.file>

information on to the children's families. 396 children were registered in the PEPE program in 2007<sup>107</sup>

IEBA also runs schools in Luanda (15), Uige (4), Zaire (1) and Cabinda (1)<sup>108</sup>. The church has agreements with the Provincial Directories for Education. Through these cooperation agreements the wages of the teachers in these provincial schools are paid by the State. The school curricula are also established by the Ministry of Education, including Moral, Civil and Religious Education. Statistics for 14 schools in Luanda from 2003 showed that 10 schools taught 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 4 taught 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. There were 145 teachers and 5589 students, which represents a teacher student ratio of 38.5. The non-completion rate (based on the numbers provided on children completing and dropping out of the schools) was 8% which is very low. Students pay a symbolic fee to attend classes<sup>109</sup>.

IEBA also runs some vocational schools within areas such as carpentry, bricklaying/stonemasonry, mechanics, tailoring and sewing in Luanda and Kwanza Norte. These schools are mainly aimed at men and women outside the formal schooling system. There is also a Baptist Theological Seminary in Luanda, which provides four years of theological training after 12th grade education.

### **Health**

IEBA runs a relatively well developed system of health care which includes 18 health posts in 4 provinces (Luanda, Uige, Huila and Zaire). The oldest and most extensive health post is the *Centro Médico Piloto de Luanda* (Pilot Medical Centre of Luanda). This is the "mother" of the other health posts in the country and has a total number of workers of more than 25 persons in various functions. This "mini-hospital" includes the following departments: laboratory, consultancy, maternity and paediatrics, family planning, TBC, Ophthalmology, Physiotherapy and Pharmacy<sup>110</sup>.

These health posts each provide curative health care and have developed work in the fields of preventive and community health. The Extension Vaccination Programme (PAV) run by the National Health Service functions at all these health posts. They have also developed a basic medical kit and with support from BMS distribute mosquito nets to prevent malaria. Another part of their preventative care work includes education in curative medicine in local languages.

On HIV/AIDS, IEBA provides food, medical assistance and schooling to children orphaned by the HIV/AIDS endemic. It also runs voluntary testing centres in Luanda and Benguela and offers pastoral counselling and training of church leaders to fight the stigma associated with the disease.

### **Policy and advocacy**

IEBA has a number of projects related to policy and advocacy on themes such as elections, human rights, gender and HIV/AIDS. This work is supported mainly by Norwegian Church Aid.

Particular attention was given to the parliamentary elections in 2008, where the Church was involved in electoral training to strengthen political tolerance, women's participation and

---

<sup>107</sup> Brown, Lynne, Prayer letter, April 2007, <http://www.bmsworldmission.org/78864.file>

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Sr. Bila and Sr. Nsimba, IEBA Director for Diakonia and Development and assistant, Luanda, March 2009. These figures roughly correspond (slightly higher and an extra province) with the ones found on the Church website but this may be because the website seemingly has not been updated since 2004.

<sup>109</sup> Unfortunately IEBA has not kept statistics on their education program updated on their website after 2003 which would have provided a better picture of IEBA's contribution to education.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

ensuring peaceful elections. The Church had collaboration with the provincial radio of Uíge and distributed pamphlets. The program was perceived as being very successful and activities continue in the preparations for the upcoming presidential elections. As with some of the other churches described in this report the leadership also issued a statement on its position prior to the elections.

IEBA also works on human rights issues, among other things, using Christian education to form a citizenry, gender equality and children's rights through community theatre. It works with traditional authorities to promote human rights in the provinces of Uíge and Luanda.

## Council of Christian Churches in Angola

The Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA) is a network of Christian Churches founded in 1977 under the name Angolan Council of Evangelical Churches. The council has 16 effective members, 4 associated members and 2 observer members. It is the most active ecumenical church network bringing together the most important protestant churches. According to local church representatives and observers the other historically important church network, the Evangelical Alliance of Angola (AEA), has become less and less active<sup>111</sup>

The origins of CICA had two main reasons; Firstly, a need to coordinate the humanitarian interventions and the approach to the international partners during the war and secondly, to coordinate a joint appeal for peace<sup>112</sup>.

Later the aim was expanded to four general objectives:

1. Develop and streamline the cooperation amongst the Christian churches within the areas of evangelization, theological education, social services, communication and information, health and in other fields where opportunities for cooperation might emerge;
2. Safeguard and develop the *unity within the diversity* of the churches in Angola;
3. Function as the connecting link between the members and international Christian organizations;
4. Function as advocate and connecting link between the members and the state on general issues, when necessary.<sup>113</sup>

In relation to development activities CICA perceives itself as a coordinator and facilitator, not as an implementer. It focuses on education, health, training of monitors and advocacy.

---

<sup>111</sup> Many interviews with members of Evangelical churches made this observation during interviews in March 2009.

<sup>112</sup> Rev. Nguimbi, General Secretary, CICA, interview March 2009

<sup>113</sup> CICA brochure, *Knowing CICA*

### Policy and advocacy

Historically, CICA was very involved in the ecumenical peace movement. In 1992 CICA had acknowledged that the ecumenical relations were insufficient and that peace and reconciliation in Angola was dependent on a well organized ecumenical strategy with the objective of unifying the country<sup>114</sup>. Seven years later CICA became the cofounder (with CEAST and AEA) of the ecumenical peace committee, COIPA, described in the policy and advocacy section of the Catholic Church.

Currently CICA works within a broad range of areas including social assistance and development, justice, peace and reconciliation, health, HIV/AIDS and malaria. It aspires to facilitate the creation of a protestant university and establish schools for technical and professional training. It is supported by Christian NGOs such as Christian Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, ICCO and Global Ministries among others.

There is no doubt that CICA's objectives about coordinating the activities of the churches described here could potentially strengthen their contribution to poverty reduction. It is not clear, however, how well CICA fulfills this role. One church representative noted that there were "problems" with the leadership of CICA. The challenge of creating unity in a group as diverse as the Churches in Angola is significant and hard to accomplish but these efforts, especially in relation to policy and advocacy, need to be intensified if the churches are to have a real impact on poverty reduction.

### Summary

In this section we have provided an overview of the most significant activities of the selected churches in relation to addressing poverty as defined in our analytical framework. The picture that emerges is that the churches play an active role in society not only in terms of alleviating the consequences of conflict, addressing medium-term developmental issues but also addressing structural causes for poverty through the creation of an engaged citizenry. Most of the churches aim directly at improving the conditions of the poor and on creating a more just and equitable society.

There are significant deficiencies, in particular within the Catholic Church, to coordinate efforts and make the work more visible and accessible for outsiders. For example, it was not

#### Members of the Council of Christian Churches in Angola

##### *Effective members:*

United Methodist Church in Angola  
Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola  
Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola  
Evangelical Church of Angola  
Reformed Evangelical Church of Angola  
Evangelical Pentecostal Mission in Angola  
Kimbanguist Church in Angola  
Anglican Diocese of Angola  
Church Full of the Word of God in Angola  
African Apostolic Church in Angola  
Apostolic Mission of the Believers of Angola  
Apostolic Faith Church in Angola  
Mennonite community Church in Angola Church of the Twelve Apostles in Angola  
Evangelical Church of Mennonites Brothers in Angola  
Mennonite Evangelical Church in Angola

##### *Associated members:*

Army of Salvation Church  
Church of God in Angola  
Youth Christian Association (ACM)  
Superior institute Emanuel Unido

##### *Observer members:*

Union Evangelical Baptist in Angola  
Zion African Episcopal Methodist Church

<sup>114</sup> Comerford, Michael G. (2005): O Rosto Pacifico de Angola – Biografia de um Processo de Paz (1991 – 2002), p. 59

possible to find information about the exact number of churches run by the Catholic Church in Angola.

In the next section we shall complement the analysis of qualitative data with some findings from the survey that was carried out as part of the research before moving on to the conclusion.

## Analysis of survey

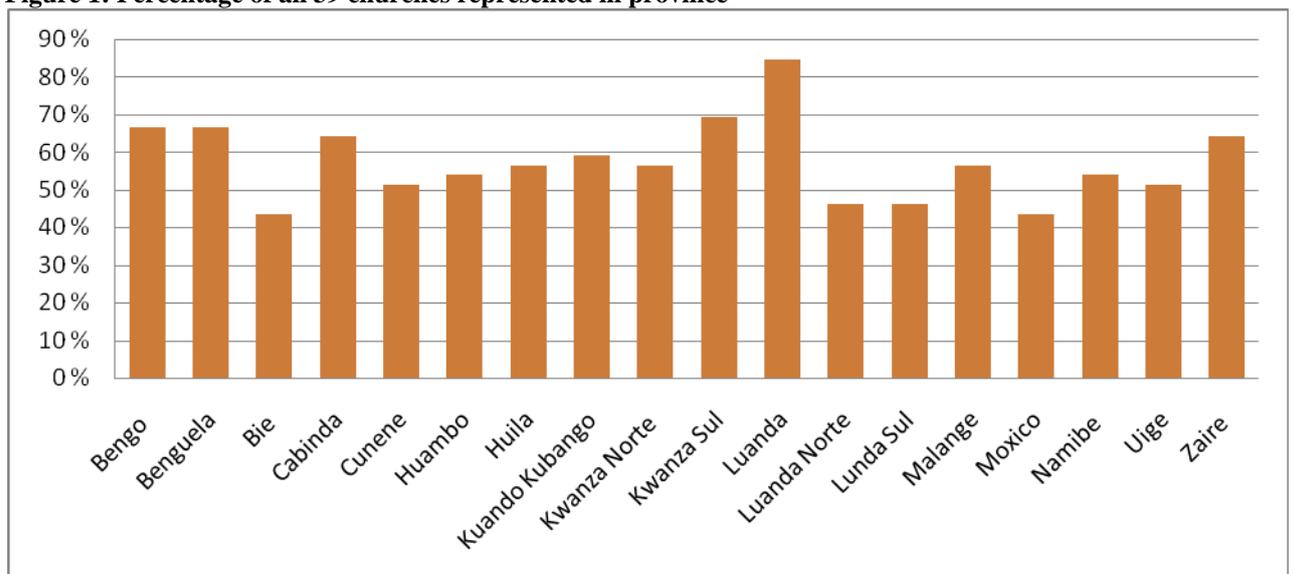
As part of the research carried out for this report a survey consisting of 47 questions was carried out with 39 churches in Luanda. The 39 churches represented 28 different denominations out of a total population of 83 registered churches and 902 unregistered. When defining the population of churches as churches with government recognition the sample ratio is 33% but if the population is defined as the total number of known churches the sample ratio is 3% (a detailed review of the quality of the data collected is available in appendix I). Amongst the churches interviewed were the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Congregational Church, the Evangelical Baptist Church and the Methodist Church, which are the predominant denominations in Angola. But the sample does also include a fair number of small and unregistered churches. Hence, it presents a reasonable picture of the diverse and unstructured nature of the churches in Angola, including a mix of big and small, international and local, officially recognized and unrecognized churches.

The intention of the study was not to carry out a survey that would allow generalization to the entire pool of churches in Angola. The churches in Angola represent such a highly diverse and heterogeneous population that any attempt to generalize about it would run into problems. The purpose of the survey is to complement the qualitative interviews carried out and the analysis of secondary sources (the complete survey is attached in annex I).

## The presence of churches throughout Angola

One of the central assumptions when discussing the quality of churches as agents in poverty reduction efforts is their vast geographical network. The churches are often expected to be present where nobody else is. The survey attempted to establish the geographical extension of the churches in the sample by asking in which of the country's 18 provinces they were active. By formulating the question this way the figures represent a measure of 'church density' in the provinces.

**Figure 1: Percentage of all 39 churches represented in province**



Unsurprisingly, the province of the capital Luanda, which is where the survey was conducted, is the province where most of the churches have a presence. A couple of churches said they

were only present in Luanda but most of the respondents added a number of provinces in which they are active. More surprisingly some said they were not active in Luanda, which is where they were identified and interviewed<sup>115</sup>. Of the churches asked, 85% said they are active in the province of the capital. Other provinces with a high representation of the churches in the sample are populous provinces close to the capital, such as Kwanza Sul (69%), Bengo (67%) and Benguela (67%). Provinces like Bie (44%) and the easternmost provinces of Moxico (44%), Lunda Sul and Lunda Norte (both 46%) on the other hand, have the lowest ‘density’ of the churches within this sample.

The provinces where fewest of churches in the sample said they were active (Bie and Moxico) still had a high degree of the sample represented and the average of representation across all the provinces was 57% (i.e. on average more than half of the churches were active in each province). In a large and logistically challenging country this result seems to confirm that the churches do have a substantial network and presence in the country. On the other hand, this does not tell us how effective this network is to address poverty.

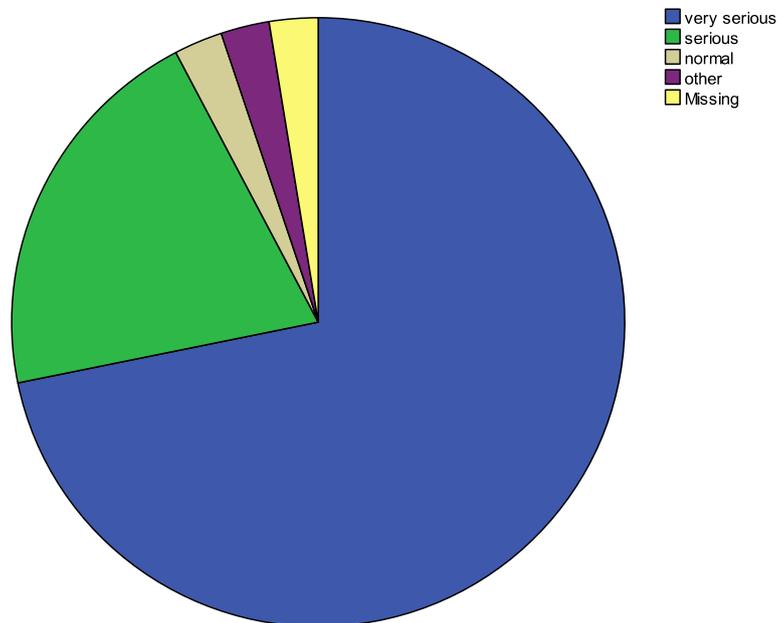
## Perception of the level of poverty and underlying factors

Perhaps the most interesting finding of the survey is the overwhelming majority of church representatives within this sample who find poverty to be a very serious problem. This is illustrated in figure 2, which shows the breakdown of respondents answering how they would classify poverty in the country from “very serious” to “serious”, “normal” or “other”. Almost three quarters of respondents answered that they see the level of poverty as “very serious”. A further 21 percent see it as “serious” and only 2.6 percent see it as normal. Only one representative answered “other” and one declined to answer the question. This shows that, among churches, poverty is perceived to be a profound problem that penetrates society.

That being said, the churches in the sample had almost no detailed knowledge of the incidence of poverty in their local area. 92 percent of the interviewed could not give an estimate of the number of poor families in their municipality. Three respondents gave an estimate of the percentage of the population living in poverty. One said that 64 percent was poor another said 80 percent and a third suggested that 88 percent of the local population live in poverty. All are fairly high estimates which support the notion of poverty being perceived as a serious issue.

Asked about the factors that reproduce poverty, the respondents were given the choice between political, economic, social, cultural or other factors. Many respondents included more than one factor indicating that they see poverty is a multifaceted problem. Political and economic factors were included by 76.9 percent of the sample, social factors were included by 71.8 percent, cultural factors were however only included by 35.9 percent and only 10.3 percent pointed to other factors than political, economic, social or cultural.

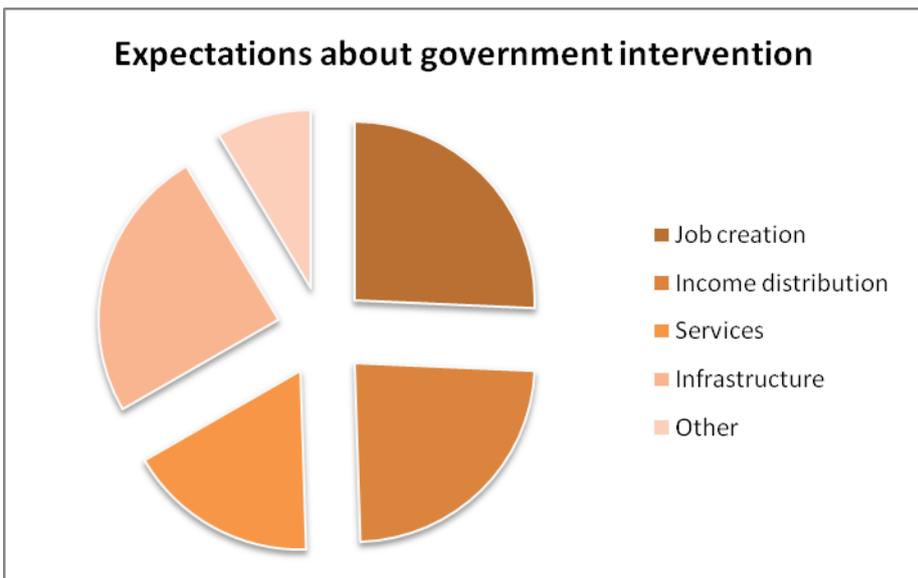
**Figure 2: Degree of poverty according to the churches interviewed**



<sup>115</sup> This might indeed indicate a misunderstanding or errors committed by the interviewers (see appendix I)

When asked subsequently which of these factors could *contribute* to poverty *reduction* the majority (76.9 percent) said that economic factors could have this impact. An equal number of respondents (66.7) said that political and social factors could reduce poverty and 38.5 percent pointed to cultural factors. Interestingly, the fact that political factors were seen as less likely to contribute to reducing poverty than causing it (a difference of 10.2 percentage points), might indicate that the church representatives have little faith in improved policies. This would correlate with the tendency of civil society in poor countries losing faith in political elites.

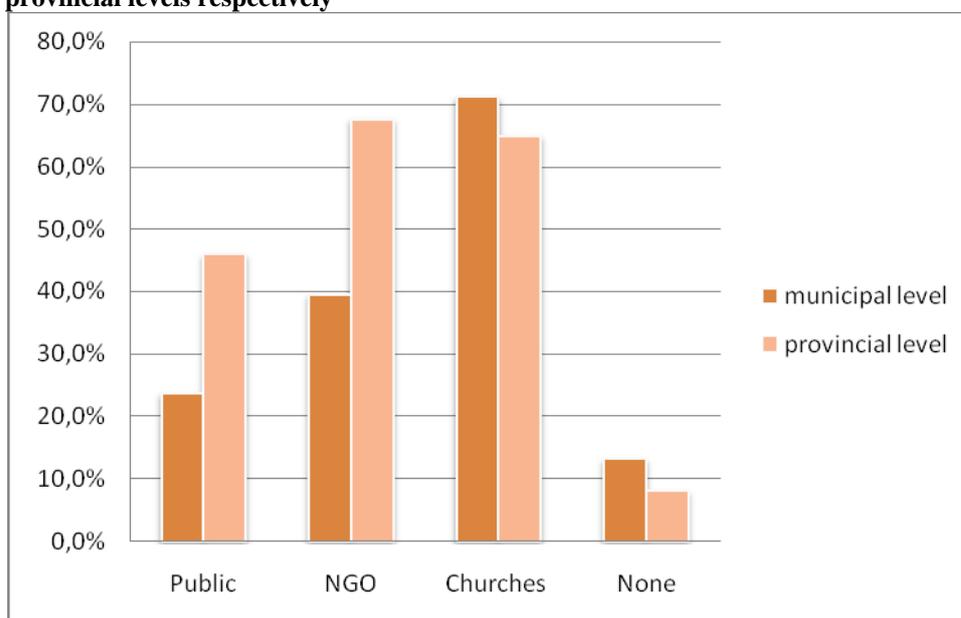
More specifically when asked about their expectations from government the areas of job creation, infrastructure and income distribution were almost equally rated. The respondents were allowed to choose more than one government intervention. 69.2 percent of the respondents said they would like to see the government create more jobs. This was the most wanted government intervention, which is supported by many respondents saying that unemployment was the single biggest problem faced by poor families. The request for better infrastructure was slightly lower rated but still requested by as many as 66.7 percent, which is understandable, taking the devastation and negligence of infrastructure during the years of war into consideration. More than 64.1 percent said they expected distribution of income, which makes sense in a country with very high and visible inequalities between rich and poor. Both job creation and income distribution are areas that would allow families to directly improve their economic situation, which corresponds with the faith in economic factors being able to improve the living conditions of the poor. As the least referenced request, 46.2 percent said they wanted service delivery. It is a bit surprising, perhaps, that service delivery (which basically means access to education, healthcare and other social services) is less wanted than better infrastructure and a rephrasing of this question might have yielded a different result. It is also a possibility that the respondents have interpreted 'infrastructure' in a general way including construction of hospitals and schools.



In relation to the availability of services at the municipal and provincial levels, it was clear that the church representatives did not see many services being delivered by the public authorities. Only slightly more than 20 percent said these were available at the municipal level, whereas more than twice as many (45 percent) said public services were available at the provincial level. This could be a reflection of the better level of organization and access to resources of the provincial administrations. The same picture appears when looking at the perception of services provided by NGOs just with higher levels. Almost 40 percent said that NGO services were available at municipal level but 67 percent or two-thirds of the respondents believed that NGOs delivered services at the provincial level. With regards to services delivered by the churches themselves the general trend of a perception of more services being available at provincial than municipal level is reversed. 70 percent of church representatives said these were available at the municipal level and slightly less, 65 percent,

said they were available at the provincial level. The nature of these answers might reflect the fact that the respondents were local churches working within their immediate parish contexts.

**Figure 3: Percentage of respondents that said the provider delivered services at municipal and provincial levels respectively**

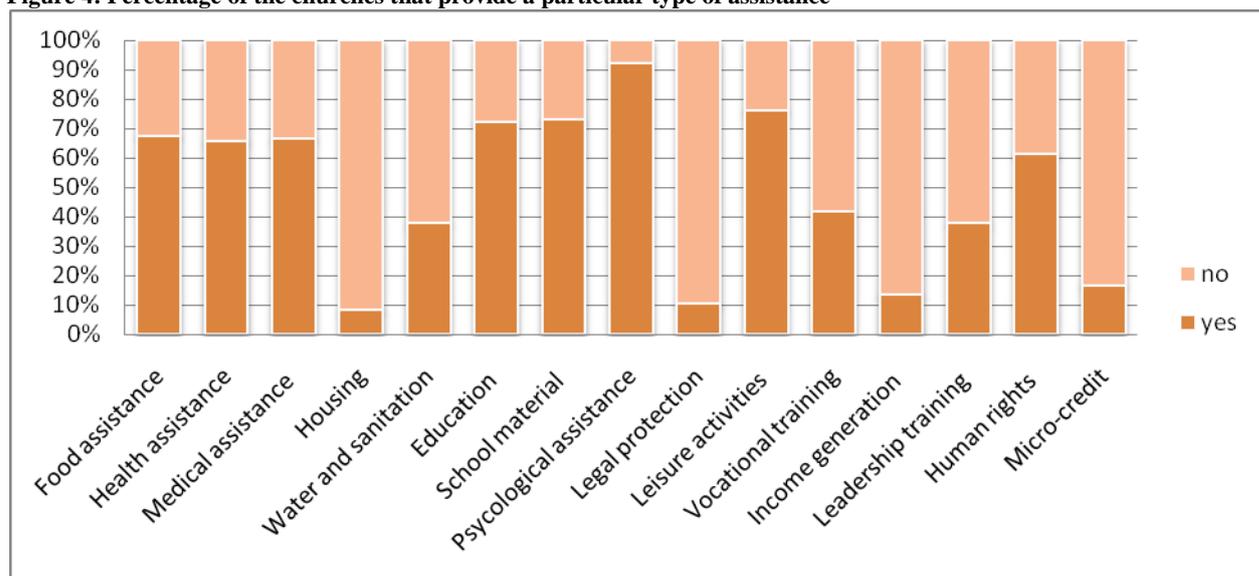


## The role of the Church

In terms of the role of the churches in actively addressing poverty there was a large variation in the types of assistance that the churches in the sample said they provided.

The most common type of assistance reported was psychological assistance, which 92 percent of the respondents said their church was engaged in. Interestingly, this can be perceived as closely related to the core activity of a church (a few even specified that this was done with basis in the gospel). This is a different kind of service, however, than a professional psychological treatment of for example post-traumatic stress. 76 percent of the respondents said that their church offered leisure activities. Education and provision of school material were provided by more than 70% of the respondents. A significant number of churches delivers food, health and medical assistance. Just under 70% of the respondents said they deliver each of these types of assistance, which must be said, are core to poverty reduction. At the other extreme were services such as housing (8 percent), legal protection (10.5 percent), activities supporting income generation skills (13.5 percent) and micro-credit (16.7 percent). It would be interesting to carry out a survey among beneficiaries or poor people in general to ask what their priorities are in terms of assistance and compare it to the types of services provided by the churches. It is noteworthy that the services provided by least of the churches are generally either capital intensive (housing, micro-credit) or require specific technical skills (legal assistance).

**Figure 4: Percentage of the churches that provide a particular type of assistance**



What the survey does not tell us is the absolute magnitude of these services, what the quality is and how consistently the services are provided. For example, since the total amount of health and education services provided is much bigger than psychological assistance, the first two are much more important than the latter although the number of churches delivering such service is higher.

The easiest and most basic type of assistance listed is food assistance. Slightly more than two-thirds of the respondents said that their church provides food assistance but a different question inquiring which types of food their church had handed out during the last week showed that less than a third of the churches within the sample had handed out the five most common food handouts (manioc flower, rice, beans, sugar and salt) within the last week. For simplicity sake (and because the data are almost identical for the other four food handouts selected) the example in table 1 illustrates the data for one of these products: beans.

**Table 1: Comparison of food assistance with distribution of beans within the last week**

		Distribuiton of beans		Total	
		yes	No		
Food assistance	yes	Count	9	15	24
		% of Total	25,7%	42,9%	68,6%
	no	Count	1	10	11
		% of Total	2,9%	28,6%	31,4%
Total		Count	10	25	35
		% of Total	28,6%	71,4%	100,0%

This example shows that the 35 valid responses were divided into 9 who said they delivered food assistance and also handed out beans during the past week and 10 who said they did not provide food assistance (and confirmed this by not having handed out beans). 15 who confirmed they provided food assistance had, however, not distributed beans during the past week. Curiously, one respondent who had said that the church did not provide food assistance had actually handed out beans). In total, 24 said that they engaged in food assistance and 11 that they did not, but data for the figures on distribution of beans within the last week were practically reversed.

The variation described could suggest a slight overstatement when the respondents were asked the general question about engaging in food assistance but it could also simply be a coincidence that almost two thirds of the churches claiming to provide food assistance had not done so in the past week. In some churches it is customary to offer gifts during mass (these offerings can be of any kind but are often foodstuffs or monetary), which is sometimes handed out to the needy within the parish. Some churches might characterize this as food assistance and some might not. This could explain the one respondent answering no to engaging in food assistance but yes to handing out beans.

The church representatives in the sample were asked about the role the church plays in fighting poverty and additionally what role they thought the church *ought* to play. They were given the choice between advocacy, service delivery, information, vindication<sup>116</sup> and other, but were allowed to choose more than one role.

The most interesting finding in relation to these questions is that very few of the respondents felt that the churches should do advocacy, about half thought that the churches should engage in service delivery whereas a large majority said the churches should share information as their contribution to fighting poverty. There were not large variations in this picture in relation to what the respondents felt the role of the church *ought to be* indicating that the respondents felt they were doing the right things. The articulated preference of playing a role in relation to information might be related to this being closely aligned with what the churches generally see as their main role as preachers of the gospel. It is perhaps easier for a representative of a small church with no specific social program to identify with sharing information with its congregation than opening a health clinic or a school. This is obviously very different from operating a radio station (which is done by the Catholic Church) or running a newspaper and it is unclear to what extent the respondents made this distinction. The 50-50 division between those who felt that the church should do service delivery and those who felt it should not suggests that within this sample there is a somewhat polarized perception of the role of the church in fighting poverty between those who feel the role of the church is to evangelize and those who see a broader role for the church in society. The very low number of respondents suggesting that the church should engage in advocacy is perhaps surprising in relation to the large number pointing to political and economic reasons for the high level of poverty<sup>117</sup>.

## Poor Registration of Beneficiaries

The churches have very little notion about the number of beneficiaries from their assistance. Only 8 percent of the respondents could put a specific number to the number of beneficiaries (2, 50 and 80 respectively), 15.4 percent said that they did not have any direct beneficiaries and an overwhelming majority of 71.8 percent said that they did not monitor the number of beneficiaries. This lack of monitoring is unfortunate when trying to assess the impact the church has on poverty reduction but it might reflect that most of the churches in the sample either do not see poverty reduction as a their primary focus or that closely monitoring these efforts is not important<sup>118</sup>. Although the survey does not specifically inquire about the nature of the churches efforts towards poverty reduction, it seems to be of a charitable and benevolent nature and, in most cases, not professionalized or streamlined in line with organizations focused on poverty reduction.

---

<sup>116</sup> The Portuguese word *reivindicação* was included as one of the options for the respondents to choose from which can be translated to reclaim in English. As with any kind of questions the answers are open to the interpretation of both interviewers and respondents and in this case it is not clear how this was interpreted.

<sup>117</sup> This might be related to a lack of understanding of the concept of social advocacy which is fairly new to the Angolan context and sometimes carried out by specialized groups within the churches.

<sup>118</sup> Different answers might have been obtained if the questions had been asked to representatives of Caritas, DASEP or other technicians employed in the social departments of the bigger churches.

The seemingly low levels of professionalization in terms of monitoring the impact of activities might also have something to do with the levels of funding available for the churches. This is reportedly quite low with only 26.3 percent of the respondents saying that their church has a sponsor and only 10.5 percent saying they receive support from the state.

## Summary

Within the limitations discussed above we can conclude that the churches seem to have a fairly extensive presence throughout the country. No province has less than 17 of the 39 churches (44 percent) represented, which confirms the assumption of the vast network of the churches.

There is an overwhelming consensus among the churches in this sample about the gravity of poverty in Angola, but a lack of detailed knowledge about the extent of it. Political and economic factors are seen as the main factors reproducing poverty and most believe that economic factors can contribute to poverty reduction illustrating a lack of confidence in politicians.

The respondents want the government to create more jobs as unemployment is seen as the most serious problem faced by the poor. Secondly, creation of infrastructure and income distribution is also requested by a large number of respondents.

The church representatives interviewed generally believed that there were more resources available at provincial than at municipal level. Except for churches, who the majority said delivered services at both municipal and provincial levels. This illustrates the concern with the immediate context in the parishes the churches are usually concerned with. Very few said that public services were available with only a fifth of the respondents indicating that public services were available at the municipal level.

The churches perceive themselves as important actors in relation to poverty reduction referring to a number of activities carried out. A significant number of churches deliver food, health and education services, which are core to poverty reduction in a country where many children are malnourished, die from preventable diseases and lack access to education. Technically or financially complex activities are much less referred to as activities that are carried out, suggesting low levels of human and financial resources.

To what extent the churches are consistent in these services is brought somewhat into doubt by the discrepancy between churches indicating that they provide food assistance and the number of churches having actually done this within the last week. This highlights the limitations of this survey, which mainly addresses perceptions, as well as the need for surveys targeting the beneficiaries if a deeper understanding of the role of the churches is to be achieved.

Almost no churches believe that they ought to engage in advocacy to address structural issues. This is at odds with the findings of the qualitative data which suggests that the churches selected for that part of the research engage quite significantly in these issues. The fact that the survey was conducted prior to the legislative elections in 2008 might have had an impact on this result as this has been one of the key focus areas of this type of activities. It might also be related to a lack of technical skills to engage in political processes.

Very few churches monitor or evaluate the impact of their activities even at the most basic levels such as number of beneficiaries. This suggests a very unprofessional approach and greatly limits the impact of these activities that could be better targeted if collection of this

type of data was systematized and used. This might be related to the low levels of professionalization and access to funding.

## Conclusion

In this concluding section we return to the two research questions put forward in the beginning of the report, to discuss them in light of the outcome of the analysis presented in the previous sections.

As we saw in section 2, the context in Angola is characterized by widespread poverty and major inequalities, which calls for actions to address the difficult conditions of the majority of Angolans. This is a situation that cannot be resolved by a single group of actors, such as the churches, but requires efforts at all levels. The Angolan context is one of abundant resources and the government has not been able to fully execute its ambitious public investment programs. Moreover the contract between citizens and government is broken by the access to funds without taxation of the citizens. In such a context there is a need for actors that are capable of strengthening the democratic checks and balances and hold the government to account. This is in addition to immediate needs such as addressing hunger and malnutrition and the high infant mortality rates predominantly caused by preventable diseases. There is hence a very broad range of issues that need to be addressed to tackle poverty in Angola. The survey highlighted the awareness and gravity with which the overwhelming majority of the churches in the sample view this problem. 92 percent of the respondents perceived the levels of poverty as serious or very serious.

The churches in Angola compose a very heterogeneous and diverse group that is difficult to treat as an analytical unit. One single actor, the Catholic Church, is overwhelmingly dominant which is followed by a limited number of big to medium sized protestant churches with state recognition and numerous small, unrecognized churches. To get an adequate picture of the efforts of the churches more emphasis has to be put on the larger churches as they are more likely to mobilize resources and have an impact on poverty reduction. The unknown factor to this picture is the Pentecostal movement that seems to recruit members from all the traditional churches. Some of these churches have possibly grown very large if measured by active members, but little is known about their social profile. More research into these churches is necessary to get a full understanding of their contribution to poverty reduction.

In relation to the first question about the kind of interventions carried out by the churches we have documented that the churches investigated in detail have all, to a greater or lesser extent, been engaged in addressing the consequences of the war through emergency activities such as distribution of food and medicine, running orphanages as well as reintegrating refugees and internally displaced people after the end of the war. The Catholic Church (Caritas) and IECA have maintained the ability to respond to post-war emergencies such as flooding.

In the years after the end of the war most of the churches have rebuilt their historic role as providers of education and healthcare. All the churches investigated in detail are engaged in running schools in collaboration with the government and most also do literacy training to address the gap in education caused by the war. IEBA is engaged in establishing a pre-school system addressing broader issues than just education. At the other end of the scale Methodist and the Catholic churches run universities. The efforts on making education available are perhaps the most significant contribution the churches make to development in Angola as several generations were deprived of education.

Most of the churches investigated in detail also engage in significant health activities running health posts and hospitals in remote areas of the country. This extends to addressing specific issues such as sleeping disease, tuberculosis and malaria. HIV/AIDS has also taken centre stage. Many churches also address prevention and voluntary counselling and testing, which are crucial to mitigate the impact of the epidemic in Angola. IECA also trains traditional

midwives in remote rural districts where health services are absent, which is likely to contribute to reducing the high infant mortality rates. IMUA puts emphasis on community projects for self-help which singles it out from the other churches as a more business oriented church. The survey confirmed the emphasis on healthcare, education and food assistance, which more than 70% of the respondents said were activities they engage in.

In relation to activities that address structural issues related to poverty, the Catholic Church and CICA marked their positions as key players throughout the war where they advocated for peace and reconciliation but many protestant churches have also individually engaged in the promotion of fair, just and peaceful elections through electoral training and appeals. Catholic agencies such as the Peace and Justice Commission and the Mosaiko Cultural Centre have, however, taken more ambitious approaches to policy and advocacy work, which are far more targeted than any of the protestant churches including CICA. In most cases this might be because the churches do not have access to methods, tools and funding for this kind of activities. This also holds some explanatory power in relation to the seemingly contradictory finding of the survey where only a small number of respondents said that advocacy was an issue the churches ought to engage in<sup>119</sup>. Some churches might also wrongly assume that advocacy is about partisan politics and opposing the ruling party that has consolidated a solid hegemony after the 2008 elections, rather than about establishing checks and balances, a necessary prerequisite to any functioning democracy.

The realization of these activities is clearly dependent on funding to purchase equipment, material and paying salaries. As noted, the survey found that only a quarter of the churches in the sample have access to funding. With international donors leaving Angola it will be important to establish fundraising strategies that will maintain financial capacity and autonomy.

The question about the extent to which the churches contribute to poverty reduction in Angola is more complicated to answer and therefore the nature of the conclusion becomes more of a discussion. Due to the general lack of data and statistics on social indicators, it has not been possible to quantitatively compare the contribution of the churches and the contribution of the state (e.g. what percentage of the total number of pupils completing basic education have graduated from church run schools?). The lack of basic data prevents more complex analysis comparing the quality of the services (e.g. do church run health centres and hospitals perform better than state run ones in terms of curing preventable diseases?). The churches generally need to strengthen the monitoring of the number of beneficiaries and impact as well as coordination within and between churches. The larger the church, the greater this problem seems to become. Some of the commissions established within the diocesan structure of the Catholic Church do not function very well and there is a need to strengthen oversight and coordination by appointing and creating good working conditions for qualified leaders. As indicated by the survey the churches have a substantial network and presence in the country. The strength of this network is, however, put into doubt by the lack of skilled human resources at all levels. This becomes more and more of an issue as the complexity of the issues increases. It is easier to hoard bags of corn than it is to engage proactively in a local community hearing council where the authorities have almost a monopoly on access to information. This is a particularly challenging issue in relation to the creation of an engaged citizenship, which is one of the biggest challenges ahead of the churches in Angola. This was reflected in the large number of respondents referring to 'political' factors as an underlying reason for poverty. Both the Catholic Church and CICA have played a historic role in advocating for peace and they have a great potential to work for better governance and accountability.

---

<sup>119</sup> This also challenges the value of the survey where the answers from the churches have the same value and are not weighted against the size of the church.

It is important to bear in mind that although the churches in Angola all play a role in poverty reduction through social activities, this is not the 'core business' of the churches. The central focus remains on how to strengthen efforts towards evangelization and, as part of this, training more priests and pastors to service parishes in as much of the territory as possible. The churches are thus not simply another development organization. That being said, the churches do have a moral and theological obligation to care for the poor and challenge unjust structures which is the main driving factor behind the activities analysed in this report.

Finally the issue of commitment is important to address. As has been noted, the leadership of mainline African churches has: "...demonstrated its capacity to oppose authoritarian regimes, but there appears to be an ambiguity in its position in the newly found democratic space."<sup>120</sup> This observation compares extremely well to the capacity demonstrated by all the churches in Angola in joining efforts in an ecumenical movement for peace and the ambiguity of addressing the social and governance issues of the post-war period. The Catholic Church, which has been in the forefront of tackling this issue, has not reached out to other churches to make this an ecumenical movement and has not been able to advocate its positions effectively vis-à-vis the government<sup>121</sup>. The protestant churches are not yet sufficiently united to confront the government about structural issues that affect poverty, which might be somewhat related to their historic, ethno-regional bases.

The commitment to advocating for accountability and justice could be further challenged as state funds create more dependency when the state oil company for example finances reconstruction of churches. It therefore remains to be seen whether the churches will be able to maintain their critical voice and work towards creating an engaged citizenship.

This does not change the picture, however, of a country within which the churches have played and continue to play a highly significant role in addressing poverty.

---

<sup>120</sup> Moreno, Antonio F. (2008): *Engaged Citizenship: The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in the Post-Authoritarian Philippines*. In, Clarke, Gerard & Jennings, Michael (2008): *Development, civil society and faith-based organizations : bridging the sacred and the secular*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>121</sup> See Jensen, Soren Kirk (forthcoming): *Learning about "Equity" from Economic Justice Program in Angola*, SARO Learning Case Study 2008.

CMI REPORTS

This series can be ordered from:

CMI (Chr. Michelsen Institute)

Phone: +47 47 93 80 00

Fax: +47 47 93 80 01

E-mail: [cmi@cmi.no](mailto:cmi@cmi.no)

P.O.Box 6033,

N-5892 Bergen, Norway

Visiting address:

Jekteviksbakken 31, Bergen

Web: [www.cmi.no](http://www.cmi.no)

Price: NOK 50

Printed version: ISSN 0805-505X

Electronic version: ISSN 1890-503X

Printed version: ISBN 978-82-8062-383-6

Electronic version: ISBN 978-82-8062-384-3

This report is also available at:

[www.cmi.no/publications](http://www.cmi.no/publications)

INDEXING TERMS

Angola

Churches

Poverty

Advocacy

This study was carried out as a collaborative effort between the Center of Studies and Scientific Research (CEIC) of the Catholic University of Angola (UCAN), the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) and Independent Policy Analysis. Its purpose is to critically review the role the churches in Angola play in relation to addressing poverty in the country. Central questions addressed are the kinds of interventions the churches undertake and to what extent the churches contribute to poverty reduction in Angola?

Churches have a long history in Angola, which is intertwined with the history of colonialism, the struggle for independence and the many years of civil war. This has forced churches to relate and adapt to radical changes in the political, social and economic environment.

The churches are the civil society actors in Angola with the most developed organizational structures and strongest international networks. Yet, the strength of this network is weakened by the lack of skilled human resources.

Making education available is perhaps the most significant contribution the churches make to development in Angola. Most of the churches also run health posts and hospitals in remote areas of the country.