

Country Profile: Angola

A history of conflict leaves one of Africa's major oil producers, also as one of the world's poorest countries.

HISTORY

Angola is tackling the physical, social and political legacy of the 27-year civil war that ravaged the country after independence. The ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the rebel group Unita were rivals even before the country gained independence from Portugal in 1975. The former Soviet Union and Cuba supported the then-Marxist MPLA, while the US and South Africa backed Unita in an attempt to barricade against Soviet influence in Africa. 16 years of fighting, which killed up to 300,000 people, led to a peace deal and eventual elections. However, Unita rejected the outcome and resumed the war. Another peace accord was signed in 1994 and the UN sent in peacekeepers. But the fighting steadily worsened again and in 1999 the peacekeepers withdrew.

RECENT SITUATION

The Luena Peace Accord was signed in 2002. Angola faces the daunting tasks of rebuilding its infrastructure, retrieving weapons from its heavily-armed civilian population and resettling tens of thousands of refugees who fled the fighting. Angola has the potential to become a thriving economy in the southern African region. Since 2002 the Angolan Government has committed substantial resources to reconstruction and resettlement. It has substantial and varied resources, railways and ports. However, landmines and impassable roads have cut off large parts of the country, and many Angolans rely on food aid. Therefore, although growing revenues from oil and diamonds have boosted the country's economy, extreme poverty is still a daily reality for 68% of Angolans.

Much of Angola's oil wealth lies in Cabinda province, where a decades-long separatist conflict is taking place. The government has sent thousands of troops to control the rebellion. Human rights groups have alleged abuses against civilians. A supplier of crude oil to the US and China, Angola denies allegations that revenues have been squandered through corruption and mismanagement. Oil exports and foreign loans have spurred economic growth and have fuelled a reconstruction boom.

FACTS

- **Full name:** The Republic of Angola
- **Population:** 17 Million (UN 2007)
- **Capital:** Luanda
- **Area:** 1.25m sq km (481,354 sq miles)
- **Major religion:** Christianity
- **Major languages:** Portuguese (official), Umbundu, Kimbundu, Kikongo
- **Internet domain:** .ao
- **International dialling code:** +244
- **HDI value*¹:** 143. Angola (0.564) [1. Norway (0.971)] (2009)
- **Human Poverty Index (HPI-1)*²:** 143. Angola (37.2) [21. UK] (2007)
- **Life expectancy at birth (years) :** 42 (UNICEF 2007)
- **Probability of not surviving past 40 (%):** 46.7%
- **Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births):** 158 (UNICEF 2007)
- **HIV prevalence (% aged 15-49):** 2.1 (2007)



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Education

- **Primary School Enrolment:** 72% in 1995 to 74% in 2000.
- **Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%):**
 - 170. Angola (25.6) [1. Australia (113.0)] (2005)
- **Adult Literacy Rate: (% ages 15 and older):** (67.4) (2007)

Economy and Trade

- **GDP per capita:** (US\$): 3,068 (UN 2007)
- **GNI Per Capita:** US \$1,350 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Gini Coefficient *³:** Angola (n/a) [126. Denmark (24.7)] (2007)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 kwanza = 100 lwei
- **Main exports:** Oil, diamonds, minerals, coffee, fish, timber
- **CO₂ emissions share of world total (%):** 7.9 (2004) [4.6 (1990)]

Water, sanitation and nutritional status

- **People without access to an improved water source (%):** 49 (UNICEF 2007)
- **Population using improved sanitation (%):** 50 (UNICEF 2006) [29 (1990)]
- **Population Undernourished (% of total population):** 35 (2002-2004) [58 (1990-1992)]

Politics

- **Government:** The Popular Movement for the People of Angola
- **President:** Jose Eduardo dos Santos
 - Presidential poll - the first since the end of civil war in 2002 - scheduled for 2009.
- **Internally displaced people (thousands, 2006):** 62
- **Year Women received right to vote:** 1975



*¹ The HDI provides a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: living a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy), being educated (measured by adult literacy and enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary level) and having a decent standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity, PPP, income).

*² The Human Poverty Index for developing countries (HPI-1), focuses on the proportion of people below a threshold level in the same dimensions of human development as the HDI.

*³ The **Gini coefficient** is most prominently used as a measure of inequality of wealth distribution. A value of 0 represents absolute equality, and a value of 100 absolute inequality.

*⁴ Rankings are out of a total of 177.