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STUDIES ON EMERGENCIES AND DISASTER RELIEF

No. 5

The UN Department of Humanitarian
Affairs in Angola:
A Model for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Assistance?

by

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Refugee Studies Programme
University of Oxford

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PREFACE

"Studies on Emergencies and Disaster Relief" is a series of research reports on topics of relevance to everybody working with relief and development assistance in unstable situations. Most of the studies so far have been conducted by the Refugees Studies Programme at Queen Elisabeth House, University of Oxford. Sida, in close cooperation with the Nordic Africa Institute, is publishing these reports in order to throw more light on the complex relations of today's conflicts and emergencies.

A considerable share of Swedish assistance is channelled to meet the immediate needs from all sorts of emergencies. In recent years the contributions for disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in conflicts caused by war has increased considerably and amounts today to approximately three quarters of the total disaster relief budget.

In the present two issues of special concern to Sida are covered; the emergency situation in Angola after the return to civil war in 1992 and the role of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs in dealing with the coordination of disaster relief. These are two subjects which up till today have been very little covered.

This report describes the activities of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in Angola from April 1993 to April 1995. It starts with the creation of DHA Angola in 1993 and continues to describe how relations were established with the Government and UNITA. It covers the different ways in which main concepts and roles and responsibilities could be discussed and agreed to. It presents the day-to-day activities including the crucial information exchange. It shows how DHA organised the preparation and launching of inter-agency appeals. It describes how DHA promoted and monitored the safety of humanitarian agency personnel and how capacity building was made one of the important strategies of DHA.

It is our hope that this report will contribute to the ongoing discussion on disaster relief and the different mechanisms such as the coordination of different actors during the actual conflict phase.

Carin Norberg
Director

Department for Cooperation with NGOs and Humanitarian Assistance,
Sida, and member of the Programme and Research Council of the
Nordic Africa Institute

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report describes the activities of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in Angola from April 1993 to April 1995. It does not aim to evaluate the activities undertaken or compare them to DHA's work in other countries, such as Iraq or Mozambique.

I worked for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Angola when DHA established its Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) there in April 1993. UNDP seconded me to UCAH, where I served as NGO & donor liaison officer during 1993, as the representative in Huambo during 1994, and as the interim manager of the emergency relief office from January to June 1995. I then left Angola after three years in the country and it has taken me some months to step back from the experience to write this report, which represents my own views and not those of the United Nations or DHA.

Much of the information in this paper is from UN documents, such as reports of the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council. Much of it, too, is based on my own experience garnered from holding various positions within UCAH.

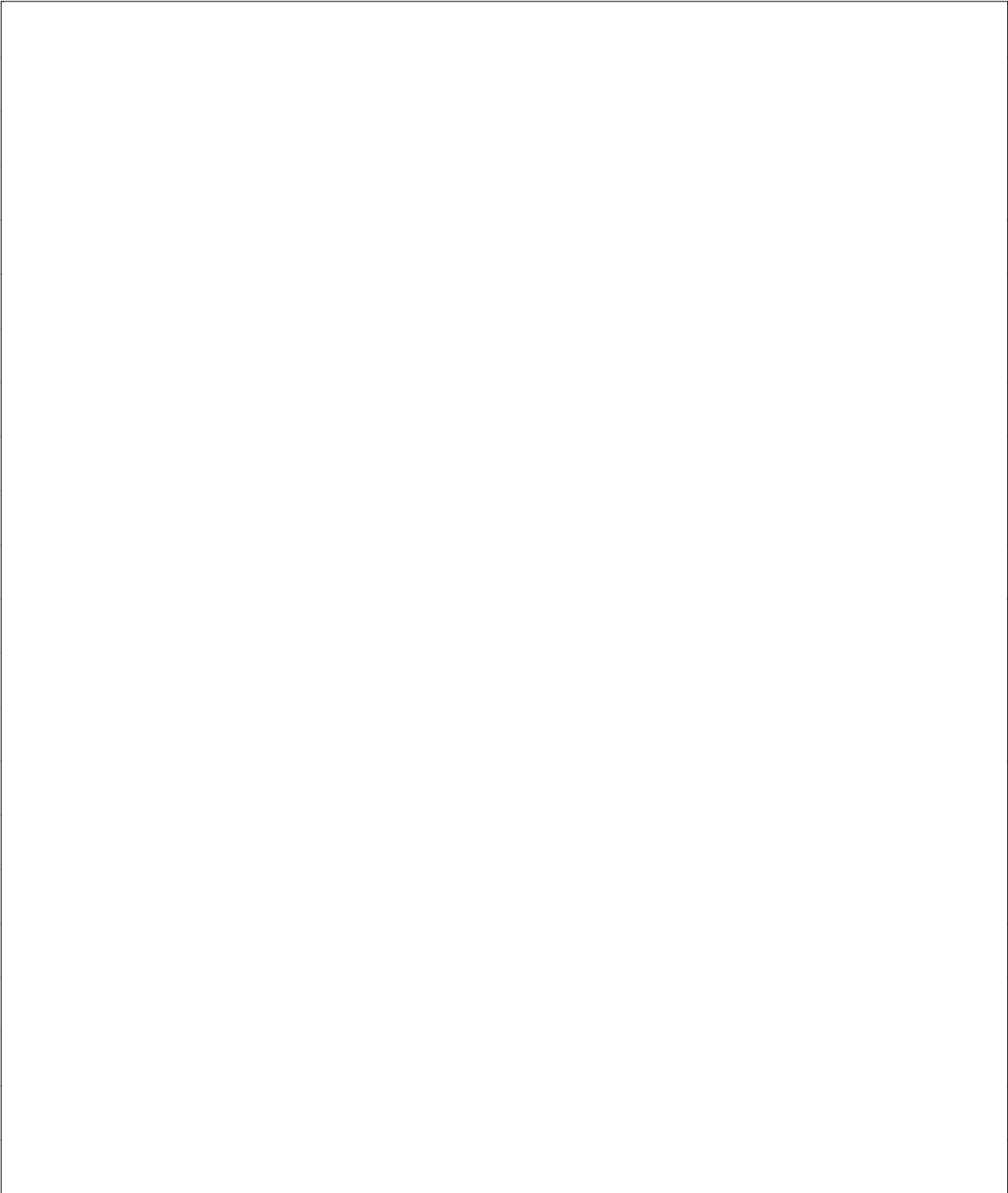
My thanks are due to Manuel Aranda da Silva, the former director of DHA in Angola and now with the department in New York, for his comments on the outline of this report. Comments on the outline also came from staff at UCAH, in particular Peter Simkin, Carlos Veloso, and Yvon Madore. Finally, I am most grateful to three people who laboured through drafts of the report and made helpful suggestions: Sarah Longford at DHA Geneva, Barbara Harrell-Bond at the University of Oxford's Refugee Studies Programme, and Harry Rutter in London. I am responsible for the contents of this report and any mistakes are, of course, mine, not theirs.

Finally, I dedicate this report to a former colleague and friend in Huambo, Alfredo "Alfa" Afonso, who served the UN and me as a loyal radio operator under some of the most difficult circumstances.

Toby Lanzer

Refugee Studies Programme
University of Oxford, December 1995

ANGOLA



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ABBREVIATIONS

ADRA	Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente
ASDI	Autoridade Sueca para o Desenvolvimento Internacional
AUM	ASDI-UCAH Mechanism
CMAO	Central Mine Action Office
DRO	Demobilisation and Reintegration Office
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECU	(UN) Emergency Coordination Unit
FAA	Forças Angolanas Armadas
FALD	Field Administration Logistics Division
FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola
GoA	Government of Angola
HCG	Humanitarian Coordination Group
HF	High Frequency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IO	International Organisation
IOV	Inter-office Voucher
MINARS	Ministerio de Assistência e Reinserção Social
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
MSF	Medecins sans Frontières
MTs	Metric Tonnes
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NKw	Novos Kwanzas (Angolan currency during the period under review)
SCAM	Sociedade Cristã de Ajuda Mutua
SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom
SRPA	(UN) Special Relief Programme for Angola
SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UCAH	Unidade de Coordenação para Assistência Humanitária
UHF	Ultra-high Frequency
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDHA	United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
VORGAN	Voz do Galo Negro
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Angola returned to civil war in October 1992, after only eighteen months of peace. The country might have thought that it knew how to cope in times of war, yet the conflict that struck shortly after Angola's first presidential and parliamentary elections was more violent than anything the population had experienced previously. Within just a few months after the outbreak of war, some two million Angolans were in need of emergency relief. This number almost doubled over the course of 1993 and 1994.¹ Heavy fighting took place in virtually all of the eighteen provincial capitals, many of which remained under siege until peace was once again established on 20 November 1994. The war touched all Angolans directly or indirectly: The economy collapsed; commercial ties broke down; social services stopped; agriculture ceased; families separated.

The humanitarian response to the suffering induced by the crisis was slow when it broke at the end of 1992. Most aid agencies, indeed nearly all Angolans, were caught by surprise by the renewal of fighting. Few had personnel with emergency experience and fewer still had the appropriate programme inputs to deal with the consequences of conflict. What the humanitarian response really lacked, however, was an organisation to provide leadership, and support implementing agencies to develop a framework with which to mount coordinated programmes to address the civil war's misery. In March 1993, DHA was called on to provide such a role. This report explains how DHA took on the task and developed different aspects of coordination from April 1993 to April 1995.

The 'Establishment of DHA Angola' shows how the calls of different actors, such as UN agencies or NGOs, led to DHA's creating a coordination unit in the country. Perhaps paramount to the whole experience was that almost every organisation involved in humanitarian assistance wanted coordination, albeit 'light and not bureaucratic'. DHA's relationship with different UN structures was clearly defined and terms of reference were compatible with the

expectations of what was needed: a small group of professionals who spent all of their time on facilitating coordination. The reasoning behind UCAH was that it be a support structure to the SRSG, whom the Security Council had endowed with the mandate to coordinate humanitarian assistance. In reality, the SRSG relied on UCAH to coordinate. Neither Dame Margaret Joan Anstee nor Maître Alioune Blondin Beye, both of whom were SRSGs at separate times during UCAH's first two years, became operationally involved in the coordination of humanitarian assistance. They did, however, advocate humanitarian issues and provide high-level diplomacy to support the cause. Further, when in Luanda, they held meetings with UN agencies, donors and NGOs. This section also highlights UCAH's internal organisation and administration. UCAH could not have been established or survived the first six months without material and personnel inputs from UNAVEM and UNDP. Too little material support was available from DHA Geneva and New York.

'Humanitarian Diplomacy & Advocacy' explains how UCAH established contact with the GoA and UNITA to address humanitarian issues, and how the unit developed the notion of advocacy. UCAH's 'open door' policy promoted dialogue between the unit, UN agencies, and donors, and NGOs so that, together, they could agree to certain principles and issues. UCAH then discussed these with both sides to the conflict.

'Humanitarian Policy and Strategies' demonstrates some of the ways in which UCAH provided an environment in which main concepts and roles and responsibilities could be discussed and agreed to. Separating humanitarian affairs as much as possible from political and military issues, and placing the 'emergency' within a development context were overriding concerns. Defining which UN agency would be responsible for particular activities and bringing together UN agencies and NGOs to work in a collaborative spirit is highlighted. Further, an ambience which promoted dialogue, analysis, and planning led to agencies being able to take sound, yet flexible, decisions throughout the period under review (April 1993–April 1995).

The 'Main Features of Coordination' presents UCAH's day-to-day activities, of which promot-

¹ For details of numbers of affected populations refer to DHA's consolidated inter-agency appeals of 1993 and 1994.

ing information exchange was crucial to the success of the humanitarian programme. Daily contact with the two parties to the conflict was part of UCAH's standard work, as was developing close working relations with and helping to build constructive links between donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. As UCAH spent all of its time on coordination, i.e. it did not implement projects, it was seen as the most appropriate organ to lead inter-agency needs assessments. These took place frequently and strove to include members of the GoA or UNITA, donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. One weakness of the assessments was the lack of a common format to conduct them, although this was resolved in early 1995 by the Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG), created in early 1995 in light of Angola's peace agreement. In preparation for peace, UCAH hired personnel to plan for an expansion of humanitarian activities to include mine action and demobilisation and reintegration. In addition, there were some 'Special Coordination Mechanisms to Enhance Operations', such as a fund for Angolan and expatriate NGOs donated by the Swedish International Development Authority and managed by UCAH.

Humanitarian assistance depended on the provision of financial and material resources. In 'Preparing and Launching Appeals', the report shows how DHA organised the preparation and launching of inter-agency appeals. These informed donors about the humanitarian crisis, the planned response to it, and the resources that would be necessary to carry out activities. Donors and NGOs became increasingly involved in the appeal process, which called for resources for both UN agencies and NGOs.

Working in a conflict often brought the safety of personnel and operations to the fore. 'Security Issues' demonstrates how UCAH promoted and monitored the safety of humanitarian agency personnel. The unit facilitated the establishment of security procedures for air and road operations. UCAH worked together with various agencies, UN and non-governmental, to ensure that programmes proceeded in the safest way possible. When staff were in danger, concerted action was taken to evacuate them. Operations in Huambo, Kuito, and Malange posed special challenges for aid workers and for UCAH's staff involved in security issues.

'Capacity Building' is discussed in this report's final section, although it became one of UCAH's most important strategies during 1994. It was clear to the unit's staff that the humanitarian

crisis afflicting Angola was not a finite event that a group of expatriates could resolve. The solution lay with Angolans and much of UCAH's task was to support them with their work. UCAH's director worked closely with the Angolan Government to encourage it to assume ever-increasing emergency management capacity. This process was enhanced within the framework of the Humanitarian Coordination Group, which incorporated members of UNITA. Long-term issues, such as mine action and demobilisation and reintegration initially were to be managed by UCAH, which worked with the GoA and UNITA to establish Angolan institutes to tackle both issues. In addition, support to Angolan NGOs so that they might be fully incorporated into emergency relief programmes was a standard part of UCAH's NGO liaison task.

Finally, one often hears that an organisation is only as good as its leader. If this is true, UCAH must have been rather good for its director embodied many qualities that are important to coordination: political savvy, diplomacy, leadership, and teamwork. In addition, he understood the context in which Angola's crisis was occurring, had experience in the coordination of humanitarian emergencies, and spoke the relevant languages. UCAH was much more than just one person, however. Its corps staff had most of the following qualifications or characteristics, all of which are important: a background in development issues; previous work experience in government ministries, UN agencies, or NGOs; familiarity with Angola or a similar setting in the same region, such as Mozambique; spoken and written fluency in the relevant languages (English and Portuguese); a keen interest in and understanding of the UN and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs; team spirit; hard work and a commitment to excellence; and a participatory or 'open door' attitude toward all actors involved in humanitarian assistance.

As is shown in the body of this report, the support of UN agencies, donors, and NGOs combined with the qualifications and characteristics of UCAH's staff created an environment in which coordination could flourish. While every humanitarian emergency is unique and needs to be addressed in a particular way, many of the coordination activities that UCAH carried out might serve as a model for future humanitarian emergencies.

II. BACKGROUND

Independence, Civil War, Peace, Elections, and War

Angola has been at war almost constantly since 1961, when the armed liberation struggle against the Portuguese colonial regime started. That struggle ended in January 1975, when the leaders of the three nationalist movements (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola—FNLA, Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola—MPLA, and União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola—UNITA) and Portugal signed the Alvor Agreement establishing a coalition government and setting 11 November 1975 as independence day. The coalition collapsed in February of that year, however, and the country went to war: The FNLA and Zairean troops attacked Luanda from the north; The South African Defence Force invaded the south and pushed on toward the capital; and, Cuban troops arrived to defend the MPLA, whose leader Agostinho Neto was sworn in as the first president of the People's Republic of Angola on 11 November.

During the rest of the 1970s and much of the 1980s, civil war between the MPLA and UNITA (complicated by cold war interests and the regional power's meddling) raged in Angola's countryside, especially in the central and southern provinces. The former-USSR and Cuba backed the MPLA. The United States of America backed UNITA, which also got support from South Africa, itself interested in attacking members of the South West Africa People's Organisation in Angola. By the late 1980s, war had devastated most of the country's infrastructure and caused tremendous suffering. The UN addressed this in October 1990 by launching the Special Relief Programme for Angola (SRPA), coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme's Emergency Coordination Unit (ECU).

Portugal, the USA and the former USSR (the troika countries) brokered a peace agreement, known as the Bicesse Accords and signed on 31 May 1991. The troika invited the United Nations to observe and verify the peace agreement. The accords called for troop demobilisation and the creation of one Angolan army, political reconciliation and the extension of government to all of

Angola's provinces, based on the outcome of Angola's first multi-party elections.

SRPA expanded its operation throughout the Bicesse period and facilitated humanitarian assistance programmes in central and southern Angola. As peace was consolidated, humanitarian agencies turned their attention increasingly to rehabilitation and development activities. Development staff replaced emergency staff and UNDP decided to end the SRPA and close the ECU at the end of 1992.

Parliamentary and presidential elections took place on 28–29 September 1992. International observers monitored them and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) deemed them, 'generally free and fair'. The parliamentary election showed an overwhelming victory for the MPLA. In the presidential election, the MPLA's Jose Eduardo dos Santos did not quite manage the necessary 'fifty percent plus 1 vote' to avoid a run-off, but UNITA's Jonas Savimbi trailed him badly.

UNITA argued that the elections were rigged and refused to accept the results. During the first week of October, UNITA withdrew its generals and cadres from the recently established *Forças Armadas Angolanas* (FAA). UNITA's army began intimidating MPLA representatives in rural municipalities causing them to leave, thereby taking *de facto* control of almost three quarters of Angola's municipalities by the end of October. This left the government in control of the coastal strip and all but one of the provincial capitals, as shown on the map below. (Shaded areas and circles indicate areas under government control in late October 1992).

The MPLA could do little to stop UNITA from occupying rural municipalities: Most former MPLA soldiers had abandoned their arms and left the army during 1991 and 1992. The FAA was weak and badly equipped. Only one group, an elite corps of troops referred to as *ninjas*, could help the government defend its interests in key areas such as the provincial capitals. Before reverting to force, however, the MPLA turned to the internationally community for help.

The SRSG worked relentlessly to get the peace process back on track, but her efforts were hampered by several factors. First, UN headquarters did not know what to do. The Security Council

mission, UNAVEM II, was supposed to close its sixty-five team sites and leave Angola by 31 October 1992. In light of the post-electoral crisis, however, many people argued that the unarmed UN police and military observers should stay in the countryside to monitor the political and military situation. Even if the observers were powerless to act, they could report on the situation as it evolved. Others at headquarters felt that the observers neither had the mandate nor the equipment to stay in Angola during a conflict. Further, it would be better to withdraw most teams and maintain a small observer presence to support the SRSG with a 'UN good offices' strategy to get the GoA and UNITA back to the peace process.² Second, there was a split in the troika: Portugal and the Russian Federation recognised the MPLA as a legitimate government; but the United States did not. Third, South Africa, the most powerful nation in the region, failed to recognise the MPLA as a legitimate government. This sent a signal to the MPLA that South Africa might yet return to its historic role and support UNITA. In sum, the MPLA or Angolan Government, as it could legitimately call itself, could not rely on the international community's support.

By the end of October the government had decided to take decisive action to ensure its survival. From 31 October to 2 November 1992, conflict erupted between the MPLA and UNITA in the capital, Luanda. This resulted in UNITA's elimination from the city and the death of key figures in the party, such as the vice-president and secretary-general.³ Shortly thereafter, battles ensued in the most important provincial capitals where the government fought to maintain control by expelling UNITA. In most cases, this policy was successful. UNITA was forced out of fourteen provincial capitals, but by late November 1992 the party controlled four: Caxito, M'Banza Congo, N'Dalatando, and Uige.

² This view eventually took hold. UNAVEM teams were called to Luanda and asked to prepare to leave Angola. Indeed, fifty-nine out of the sixty-five team sites closed by 25 January 1993 leaving the UN in five sites along the coast and one in the interior town of Lubango.

³ It is not in the scope of this paper to discuss the battle in Luanda. Suffice it to say that it was the turning point in the breakdown of the Bicesse Accords. UNITA's provocation toward the population of Luanda during October and the violent response to it, both by government forces and the population at large, led to the party's political extermination as well as the incarceration or death of many personal allies and relatives of Jonas Savimbi.

During November and December 1992, the United Nations scrambled to salvage the Bicesse Accords but the battles between the government and UNITA became more serious and the hopes for peace more remote. As the new year came, any doubts that Angola had returned to war were dispelled when battles started in two additional provincial capitals, Huambo and Kuito. UNITA gained control of Huambo, Angola's second city, on 6 March 1993. (The battle for Kuito dragged on until mid-September).⁴

The nature of the civil war that erupted in Angola differed from previous wars in the country. Whereas the wars of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s mostly took place in rural areas, this conflict concentrated in the main cities. In almost all cases, if the government managed to expel UNITA from a provincial capital, government control extended no further than the city limits. UNITA usually controlled all surrounding areas, thus creating a siege situation affecting hundreds of thousands of Angolans.

The return to war surprised almost all observers and participants in Angola. The politicians dealing with the peace process were convinced that if the election went smoothly, the results would bind the political parties to peace.

However, some members of the UNDP's Emergency Coordination Unit, who travelled extensively throughout Angola during the second half of 1992, were less convinced about the country's bright future. They warned that troop demobilisation was not proceeding as planned and that war could break out again. The reports of the ECU field coordinators, however, conflicted with the main activities of the UNDP: support to the electoral process and development. The agency's attention had turned away from its ECU and its experienced staff, whose existence in Angola was no longer thought to be necessary.

Renewed fighting in Angola called for UNDP's leadership to address the situation. Little was forthcoming. The agency neither sought the necessary resources to keep core staff or hire new employees for the ECU, nor fomented a spirit of collaboration amongst the UN agencies to address the crisis. UNDP's sole contribution to keeping

⁴ UNITA spent considerable time and effort trying to convince the international community that the civil war was ethnic, i.e. that the GoA was trying to eliminate UNITA because most of its support came from the Ovimbundu people. Few members of the international community took such claims seriously, feeling instead that the war erupted because of one side's political grievance against the other's. Political ambitions, rather than ethnic tensions, were behind the war.

the ECU alive were two programme officers with no previous emergency experience. Other UN agencies and many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also found it difficult to respond to the new circumstance of war. Many organisations had personnel for development programmes, which had been planned since early 1991. Few of these employees had emergency experience and fewer still wanted to work in a conflict situation. Many organisations lost their materials during October as warehouses were looted during eruptions of violence. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) was the first UN agency to understand that Angola was back at war and quickly mobilised the resources to deal with the situation. WFP led efforts to reach civilians in need and provide them with basic assistance from November 1992 to March 1993.

By March 1993, prospects for a speedy return to peace were slim. The humanitarian crisis was expanding yet the UN agency and NGO response to the situation was weak. There was no structure in the country capable of promoting collaboration among the different agencies, thereby harnessing their work and facilitating a coordinated approach to the emergency. The Angolan Government no longer had access to most of the territory and asked the UN for help to confront the mounting humanitarian crisis.

III. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DHA ANGOLA

Calls For Coordination and the Arrival of DHA

As demonstrated above, there was a clear need for coordination by March 1993. All actors involved in humanitarian assistance in Angola understood this. The main factors that led to DHA establishing a coordination unit in Angola were:

- The Angolan Government approached the SRSG and requested the UN to coordinate humanitarian assistance throughout the country. The SRSG, a former UNDP resident representative, acknowledged that UNDP was unprepared to handle such a task in Angola and sought other solutions.
- The SRSG advised the Secretary-General of massive human suffering and asked for support to address the issue while continuing political initiatives to get the government and UNITA to return to peace.
- The Security Council became increasingly concerned about the consequences of renewed fighting and the need for coordination of humanitarian assistance. On 12 March 1993, the Security Council issued resolution 811, operative paragraph 10 of which ‘encouraged the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to coordinate humanitarian assistance, with the resources at her disposal’.
- Donor delegations from the United States and Sweden visited Angola in January and March 1993 and called for action. While the US delegation felt that the existing UNDP structure could be strengthened, the Swedes initiated informal contacts with the former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson, and encouraged him to act.
- NGOs, in particular CARE International, *Medecins sans Frontières-Belgique*, and Save the Children Fund (UK), called on the UN agencies to address humanitarian issues with coordinated policies and programmes.
- UNICEF and WFP, two of the most active agencies in Angola at the time, called for DHA to establish an office in Angola to coordinate humanitarian assistance, although both agencies cited concerns that coordination not lead to additional bureaucracy.

DHA sent a mission to Angola in March 1993 to analyse the situation and look at humanitarian coordination. The mission concluded that UN

agencies needed support as quickly as possible to harness their efforts. While the SRSG was well qualified to deal with humanitarian coordination, she did not have time to do so on a day-to-day basis because of her responsibilities trying to get the two warring sides to negotiate peace. The SRSG would need a support unit to coordinate humanitarian assistance. UNDP was neither willing nor capable of providing such a unit. DHA, therefore, assumed the task. Its links to the United Nations structures in the country would need to be clearly defined.

UCAH’s Links to the SRSG, UNAVEM, and UN Agencies

The highest ranking UN official in Angola in 1993 was the SRSG, who had the rank of under-secretary-general.⁵ While there are many under-secretaries-general and several SRSG’s worldwide, only the Secretary-General himself holds a higher position in the organisation. As such, SRSGs can have a lot of influence over other UN structures in a country even though the activities of an SRSG may differ entirely from those of the UN humanitarian agencies.

The Secretary-General assigned a special representative to Angola to head the UN Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM II). UNAVEM II was established to verify the implementation of the Bicesse Accords. Its mission was political and was carried out by civilian staff and military and police observers. UNAVEM II was widely seen, albeit incorrectly, as the cause of the failure of the Bicesse Accords. Both the government and UNITA accused UNAVEM of being partial to the other side, and UNITA often called for withdrawal of the SRSG. By February 1993, hostility towards UNAVEM became more commonplace. Demonstrations took place outside the UN building in Luanda with people hurling insults at the UN for having ‘led the country back to war’, and rocks were thrown at UNAVEM vehicles entering the capital from the mission’s compound outside Luanda.

⁵ Dame Margaret Joan Anstee served as SRSG until 30 June 1993, after which Maître Alioune Blondin Beye took over. He continued in the position throughout 1994 and 1995.

The UN agencies had been in Angola before UNAVEM's establishment and were to continue in the country when the UN mission left. Their task was to support Angolans working on emergency, rehabilitation, and development issues. To be able to carry out their work, the agencies needed to be welcome and useful. When calls for coordination of humanitarian assistance came from a number of actors and the UN Security Council endorsed the SRSG to lead the effort, UN agencies were anxious: They supported the SRSG but raised concerns that they might be brought into the UN's political activities, which were the brunt of much criticism at the time. Consequently, they distanced themselves from UNAVEM II explaining that they had nothing to do with the political process or military events. As far as the agencies were concerned, they were in Angola to carry out only their respective mandates.

When DHA established itself in Angola in April 1993, it found itself in an awkward position: called on to establish a unit to support the SRSG but having to distance itself from the UN's political activities because Angolans, the government, and UNITA, perceived them as a failure. Further, DHA was to coordinate the UN's humanitarian agencies who were wary of close involvement with the SRSG and UNAVEM II. DHA handled this in several ways.

First, it agreed that its representative in Angola report to the SRSG: this flowed from DHA's role of providing support to the SRSG with her mandate of coordinating humanitarian assistance.⁶ However, DHA insisted that its director in Angola also report to the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs at headquarters in New York. Second, there was to be no operational link between DHA Angola and UNAVEM II. While the two branches of the UN shared information, their tasks were different. Third, DHA invited the main UN agency in Angola, WFP, to second a staff member to DHA to become the director of the new coordination unit. (DHA and WFP selected a well-qualified

emergency manager, who headed the WFP in the Sudan at the time and had previously been a government minister in Mozambique. He arrived in Angola to establish and direct the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit, known by its Portuguese acronym UCAH, on 17 April 1993). Fourth, DHA asked UN agencies to second staff members to the new unit, thereby giving the agencies the chance to ensure that UCAH's staff would understand the agencies and work to add value to their programmes.

UCAH's role as a coordination structure *vis-à-vis* the UNDP was defined in the following way: UCAH would coordinate all activities related to the ongoing emergency and UNDP would continue to coordinate development activities. (There were very few in Angola in 1993 and 1994). While some staff members at UNDP pushed the idea that UCAH be a support unit for UNDP, this idea was quickly rejected. The definition of UCAH's position with regard to UNDP culminated in a communiqué addressed to the UNDP Resident Representative in Angola by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the former UNDP Administrator, William Draper III, who instructed the UNDP Resident Representative to hand-over all emergency coordination to UCAH's newly appointed director. While this instruction could have been tampered with by arguing over what should or should not be considered 'emergency coordination' the UNDP Resident Representative agreed that he should not coordinate the emergency and collaborated with UCAH staff.

UCAH's Terms of Reference: Coordination not Operation

The most important concept on which the unit was based was that it would not implement programmes, but would facilitate coordination of all actors providing emergency assistance. Described as a unit to support the SRSG, its terms of reference included to:

- coordinate with all parties involved in the emergency activities and humanitarian programmes of the United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, and NGOs;
- facilitate speedy delivery of emergency commodities and increase programme efficiency by eliminating duplication of effort;
- gather, evaluate, and disseminate to all concerned parties information relevant to the humanitarian assistance programme, providing regular updates of unmet and additional needs of the affected population;

⁶ The role really became one of the SRSG relying on DHA's unit, UCAH, to handle co-ordination while the SRSG worked to resolve Angola's political problems. Upon UCAH's establishment, the SRSG was in Abidjan trying to negotiate a peace agreement with the GoA and UNITA. In late 1993 and during virtually all of 1994, the new SRSG worked in Lusaka, Zambia, where he brokered Angola's current peace agreement. While UCAH's director spoke to the SRSG daily to brief him on the humanitarian situation, the latter rarely got operationally involved, preferring instead to use high-level diplomacy to advocate humanitarian issues.

- propose policy recommendations relating to the implementation of the humanitarian assistance in cooperation with the UN operational and specialised agencies concerned, giving special attention to all aspects of the reintegration of returnees, refugees, displaced persons, and vulnerable groups;
- monitor emergency needs arising from the unforeseen displacement of populations; and
- prepare documentation for donor meetings, appeals for support, and other consultations as required.

Initial Organisation: Human Resources, Office Space, and Equipment

One of the main problems facing UCAH upon its establishment were human and financial resources. The only staff member specifically sent to Angola to work in UCAH was the director. Human resources came from UNAVEM II, from which the SRSG offered four staff on a short-term basis. UNDP seconded one expatriate staff member to the unit and agreed that UCAH absorb all of the Angolan staff administratively assigned to the ECU.

During the unit's first three months, donors who had committed funds to the former ECU, made them available to UCAH thereby allowing the unit to hire one additional expatriate. Further, in July 1993, UNICEF seconded an expatriate staff member to UCAH; hence, three months after its establishment, UCAH had four expatriates: the director, a monitoring and evaluation officer, a policy adviser, and an NGO/donor liaison officer.⁷ About a dozen locally hired staff members supported the unit with crucial secretarial, translating, and transport services. (Most of them had previous experience in the ECU and instituted important office procedures, such as a central registry and filing system). The staff on loan from UNAVEM either returned there or left Angola.

Concerning UCAH's location, the UN system used two main buildings in the capital, Luanda. The first was the site of the UN agencies and was known as the UN building. The second stood just outside the city limits and housed UNAVEM. The

⁷ The tasks of the information and public relations officer were assumed by the policy adviser and the NGO/donor liaison officer. This arrangement lasted until December 1993, when DHA hired a staff member to assume information and donor liaison. This was supplemented in late 1994, when UCAH hired two additional staff: one reporting officer and one donor liaison officer.

issue arose of whether UCAH should be located in UNAVEM II's compound outside the city or in the UN building. Both UNAVEM and UN agency staff argued that the unit should be located in their respective buildings; even though UCAH was to have no link to UNAVEM and the UN building had little available space. Donors and NGOs supported the view that UCAH should be located inside the city, not in a compound outside it. A convenient solution was found. UCAH used a former UNAVEM office in the heart of Luanda, placing the unit physically (and symbolically) between the UN agency building and the SRSG's main office in the UNAVEM II compound, and within easy reach of GoA offices, donors, and IOs/NGOs.

Concerning office and logistics equipment, UCAH relied almost entirely on UNAVEM and UNDP during its first six months.⁸ The SRSG arranged for UNAVEM to provide DHA with office furniture and material, computers and printers, phones and fax machines, and cars. UNDP lent UCAH vehicles and walkie-talkies. Without such support, it would have been impossible for DHA's office in Angola to function.⁹

Administration and Finance

The administration of UCAH's personnel and equipment was problematic during the unit's first two years. After some discussions on the different ways in which to establish UCAH's administrative and financial links, it was decided that DHA Geneva would manage UCAH and transfer financial resources to the unit via UNDP Luanda using the UN's system of inter-office vouchers (IOV). This system proved to be too slow given the urgency of the situation in Angola. If UCAH wanted to buy something locally, it could do so only after asking DHA Geneva to ask UNDP to issue a check to UCAH, with which the unit could acquire the item. This sometimes took weeks, and UCAH itself had little control over the process.

UNDP's office in Luanda also handled the hiring of UCAH's Angolan personnel, thus making many of the unit's employees depend on

⁸ Two staff members used their personal computers and one NGO lent UCAH a portable printer on several occasions for negotiation missions to Huambo.

⁹ Throughout 1994, whenever UCAH placed a field adviser in a province, such as Benguela, Huambo, or Malange, the unit was rarely able to send the officers to the field with the equipment they needed to perform their jobs. Each of the field advisers had to rely on his or her personal equipment or that of UN agencies and NGOs, such as a car, a computer, a printer, or a photocopier.

the efficiency of the UNDP office. Similarly, DHA did not hire UCAH's expatriate personnel. UNCTAD handled this in Geneva, thereby taking away DHA's control of the process. However, UNCTAD performed quite well: It hired staff and got them to the field in one month, fast by UN standards.

During 1995, UCAH's role in light of the peace agreement expanded tremendously. UCAH planned to hire and administer over 100 additional staff members to handle the coordination of the mine action and the demobilisation and reintegration programmes. Arrangements with UNCTAD and UNDP were not working well enough to cope with this challenge, so UCAH decided to split the task in two. Some staff were hired under existing procedures and others were hired by the UN mission, UNAVEM III, on behalf of UCAH. This arrangement made UCAH dependent on UNAVEM III, which in turn relied on the Field Administration and Logistics Division (FALD) in New York. In sum, UCAH's administrative 'web' included DHA and FALD in New York, DHA and UNCTAD in Geneva, and UNAVEM and UNDP in Luanda. These relations were often time-consuming and complicated, thereby putting tremendous strain on the staff working for UCAH. This decreased their effectiveness in dealing with the task at hand: complex emergency coordination.

Administrative and Management Capacity

Despite working closely with DHA Geneva and UNDP, UCAH itself compounded the administrative and finance issue by not hiring a professional to keep track of the unit's administration and finance. Rather, the unit relied on the experience of one of its most senior employees and on the hard work of three Angolan support staff. This arrangement was unfair on the employees concerned and insufficient for the unit's needs: The senior employee assigned the task of supervising finance and administration was often detracted from what he was actually hired to do, and the support staff never had a full-time manager. In January 1995, UCAH hired a staff member to become the unit's administrator, but the staff member had no previous experience in the United Nations and spoke neither English nor Portuguese, the two most important languages for the post in question.

IV. HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY & ADVOCACY

Establishing Contact with the GoA in Luanda and with UNITA in Huambo

The Angolan Government (GoA) welcomed the establishment of a United Nations coordination unit in April 1993. At the time, the government had lost control of almost eighty percent of the country to UNITA, and recognised that it was in no position to coordinate emergency relief activities on behalf of the Angolan people. The UCAH director adopted a policy of frequent consultation with the GoA's focal point for humanitarian assistance, the *Ministerio de Assistência e Reinserção Social*. (The ministry is known as MINARS and is referred to in English as the Ministry of Social Affairs). These consultations provided a forum for government-UN discussion on humanitarian affairs and enhanced information exchange on the humanitarian situation between the two bodies. An atmosphere of trust was established quickly, perhaps because the UCAH director had been a government minister in Mozambique when that country experienced similar political and military circumstances to those facing Angola in 1993.

Some doubts existed in the UN as to whether or not UNITA would accept the UCAH director given his previous links with the Mozambican government, which could have been construed as making him pro-MPLA, but UNITA never questioned this publicly or in any UN circles. Contact with UNITA was more difficult to establish because the party had no office in Luanda since its expulsion from the city in November 1992. UNITA's leadership was in Angola's second city, Huambo, where the party established its headquarters after winning a fierce battle that raged from January to March 1993. Huambo, however, was inaccessible by road from Luanda and despite constant UN, NGO, and ICRC requests to gain access to the city by air either the GoA or UNITA refused the requests during March, April, and May. In June 1993, however, the ICRC managed to send a four-person team to assess the situation in the city and speak to a UNITA delegation. Shortly thereafter, three NGOs travelled to Huambo and in mid-June, the UCAH director led the first UN mission to Huambo with the purpose of establishing dialogue on humanitarian affairs with UNITA.

This mission was vital to the United Nations humanitarian effort for two reasons. First, there

was little chance of a cease-fire or return to peace in the near future. In April 1993 just before UCAH was established, the SRSG had brought the GoA and UNITA together for the third time that year to mediate a cease-fire and to re-establish the peace process. This third meeting was held in Abidjan and lasted some six weeks, after which the talks broke down. Before the GoA returned to Luanda and UNITA went to Huambo, UCAH asked the SRSG to present both sides with an emergency relief plan which would allow humanitarian agencies to provide aid to needy civilians. (See section V below). UCAH now needed to get to Huambo to discuss humanitarian affairs and the emergency relief plan with UNITA. Second, the scale of the emergency was already large but likely to get far bigger in the near future. The war in Angola in early and mid-1993 was decidedly different from previous wars in the country in that it was urban. Cities housing hundreds of thousands of Angolans were the sites of devastating battles, or were besieged cutting commercial ties and leaving residents unable to go to their fields to cultivate. Consequently, the number of Angolans suffering from inhumane conditions was far greater than at any previous time in the country's history.

Negotiating Aid with the GoA and UNITA

During the civil war, UCAH dealt with the GoA and UNITA separately, explaining to both sides that the unit was not a mediator to bring the two sides together. UCAH aimed to discuss humanitarian issues with both sides in order to facilitate the speedy and effective delivery of aid to civilians in need, wherever they might be. Humanitarian issues were on the agenda of neither the GoA nor UNITA in mid-1993. Political and military issues occupied the time of both. However, the establishment of UCAH made both sides to the conflict more aware that their violent actions bore heavily on the population, which was suffering as it had never done so before.

To highlight the Angolans' plight, UCAH assembled the available information and calculated that *1,000 Angolans were dying daily* as a direct consequence of the war. This figure, which was initially accepted with some scepticism but upon explanation gained widespread credibility,

was perhaps the most critical factor in putting humanitarian issues on the agenda of policy makers. Suddenly, humanitarian concerns were raised on the two main nation-wide radio networks, *Radio Nacional de Angola* and *Voz do Galo Negro (Vorgan)*, and in the pro-government daily, *Jornal de Angola*, and UNITA's monthly publication, *Terra Angolana*.

Developing Principles for Humanitarian Programmes

Once the GoA and UNITA understood UCAH's role and were conscious of the scope of Angola's humanitarian disaster, UCAH concentrated on discussing conditions of work with both sides. This discussion was particularly necessary with UNITA as the party controlled the majority of Angolan territory. After consulting UN agencies and NGOs to establish common concerns on the conditions of work, UCAH explained to the GoA and UNITA that aid agencies had certain expectations that would have to be agreed to before any operations could succeed. These expectations included:

- the neutrality of humanitarian assistance, which would be made available to those in need and should not serve military purposes;
- guarantees on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and property;
- needs assessments as a basis for humanitarian programmes;
- freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel and their goods; and
- freedom for humanitarian personnel to communicate with Angolans.

UCAH negotiated humanitarian issues on behalf of the humanitarian cause and spoke about concerns and expectations of aid agencies on the whole. UCAH never mentioned any particular aid agency by name unless a UN agency or NGO asked the unit to do so on a precise issue, i.e. UCAH did not speak on behalf of an agency, rather for a collective cause. This approach became increasingly appropriate throughout 1993 as working relations between UN agencies and NGOs tightened. Two organisations, *Médecins sans Frontières-France* and the International Committee of the Red Cross, asked UCAH to mention to the GoA and UNITA that MSF and the ICRC were independent of UCAH. The two

organisations maintained separate, individual contacts with the GoA and UNITA.¹⁰

The main issue concerning humanitarian organisations following the renewal of fighting was access to civilians. Aid workers had little information from the provincial capitals, where fighting had been fierce. UN agency and NGO staff assumed that civilians were in need of assistance; but it was impossible to know how many people were suffering and what their needs were without going to each province to assess the situation. To tackle the issue, UCAH and the UN agencies presented the GoA and UNITA with a plan of action, known as the Emergency Relief Plan, in late May. The plan was approved shortly thereafter, although it faltered almost immediately because of an issue which would arise frequently until the end of the war in November 1994: linkage. (See section V below).

1993 and 1994 Linkage

Humanitarian negotiations with the GoA were reasonably straightforward. The government committed itself to the concept that aid should be provided to any Angolans who were suffering. UNITA's leadership explained that it wanted all Angolans to receive aid. That is, one side agreed to the concept that *all Angolans in need* should receive assistance while the other side wanted *all Angolans* to be provided aid.

In mid-1993, the humanitarian situation in four provincial capitals was of particular concern. In two, Huambo and Kuito, major battles had affected hundreds of thousands of people and devastated the infrastructure. While Huambo had witnessed a fierce battle, known as the 'fifty-five days', it was not under siege. Government troops fled to the coast upon losing control of the city. UNITA occupied Huambo and all of the surrounding countryside. Residents could access areas outside the city and therefore had some means with which to survive. No aid organisations had visited Kuito since late 1992, but daily reports via high frequency (HF) radio from Angolan staff in the city indicated that the situation there was disastrous. Two other provincial capitals, Malange and Menongue, were besieged by UNITA. In both cities, the population had no access to the fields around the towns and was slowly starving.

¹⁰ Nevertheless, the UCAH director and head of ICRC's delegation met weekly to share information on their own respective negotiations with both sides.

To start humanitarian operations in these four and other areas of Angola, the UN sought the agreement of the GoA and UNITA. Both sides agreed, in principle, although UNITA cited security problems affecting Kuito, Malange, and Menongue and did not think that humanitarian operations could take place safely in the cities. After much discussion between the UN and UNITA, the party agreed that humanitarian programmes start in Kuito but *stressed that Huambo must receive aid, too*. In other words, UNITA set the precedent in mid-1993 of linking aid for one city's population to that of another city's, based on the premise that if Angolans in a government area received aid, then Angolans in a UNITA area had to be provided assistance, too.

Once UNITA had set the precedent of linkage, the GoA adopted the strategy as well; although it used a different argument. For example, the GoA explained that fierce fighting had taken place in Kuito for months. GoA, UN, and NGO reports from the city highlighted the terrible suffering there. If the citizens of Kuito, who were clearly more in need of humanitarian assistance than any other Angolans, could not get it, then no Angolans should.

Linking one city to another and paralysing aid operations based on whether or not one city got assistance had disastrous effects on the suffering populations caught in any of the 'linked' areas. UCAH confronted this situation throughout much of 1993 by stressing to both sides that people in need had the right to receive assistance. UCAH explained that requiring similar amounts of aid to go to government and UNITA zones was a political argument. The distribution of aid, the unit explained, would be justified on humanitarian grounds, not political considerations.

Such discussions were complex and required concerted action. Given UCAH's position as a support structure to the SRSG, the unit often tapped on his discussing humanitarian issues with the GoA and UNITA. At times, the SRSG called on the Secretary-General himself to intervene when humanitarian negotiations reached a stalemate. In addition, UCAH's close links to donors and NGOs permitted other actors to approach the sides in the conflict with the same message. In sum, much pressure was exerted on both sides to cooperate with the humanitarian programme.

Working with UNITA within a Sanctions Regime

During 1993, several countries and the Security Council called on UNITA to stop fighting and return to the peace process. UNITA was held accountable for re-starting the conflict and creating the humanitarian disaster which had assumed catastrophic proportions. On 15 September 1993, the Security Council issued Resolution 864. Citing Chapter VII of the UN Charter the Council decided that all States should prevent the sale or supply of weapons, ammunition and military equipment as well as petroleum products to any territory in Angola not controlled by the Government of Angola.

The Security Council sanctions did not limit the ability of UNITA's war machine to function. In terms of arms acquisitions or having enough petroleum products to run its army, sanctions did not make UNITA suffer.¹¹ However, Security Council sanctions did have a political and psychological effect on the party. Sanctions confirmed the international community's view that UNITA was to blame for the breakdown of the Bicesse Accords and the renewed fighting, with its consequences for the Angolan population. Sanctions diminished UNITA's political clout amongst its followers and confirmed, in the minds of its enemies, that the international community blamed UNITA for Angola's predicament. Psychologically, this bore heavily on the UNITA leadership, which complained that sanctions had been imposed on a party, as opposed to a government, and that this was unfair.

UCAH never raised the matter of sanctions with UNITA. The party brought up the issues frequently, complaining that the party had been singled out and blamed for a problem which it did not cause. At such times, UCAH representatives (principally the director and during 1994 the Huambo field adviser) listened to UNITA and explained that the UN had different departments each of which had specific roles: DHA or UCAH's was to facilitate humanitarian assistance. After several such incidents, UNITA no longer raised the its concerns over sanctions with UCAH; perhaps the party understood that such discussion was better held with the SRSG or UNAVEM.

¹¹ Human Rights Watch, *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War since the 1992 Elections*, p. 47-58.

V. HUMANITARIAN POLICY & STRATEGIES

The Sanctity of Aid¹²

The point put across most strongly by UCAH throughout its first two years was that humanitarian issues should be considered on their own merit. While it was necessary to place the humanitarian situation within a wider, and hence, political context one should not create humanitarian policy or carry out humanitarian programmes based on political or military considerations or influences. UN agencies, donors, NGOs, and the ICRC welcomed and endorsed this approach; although some organisations questioned UCAH's capacity to stay apolitical given that it was part of DHA, a department of the UN Secretariat.

UCAH's insistence on maintaining humanitarian issues separate from political and military considerations and influences enabled it to maintain its credibility with the GoA and UNITA, and, of course, with humanitarian agencies. It also provided the humanitarian assistance programme with a safeguard: if the political process worsened or the military situation deteriorated, UCAH's access to decision makers would be assured as its purpose was to further the humanitarian cause in a non-partisan, apolitical framework.

Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development

A second pillar for the establishment of humanitarian policy was the principle that emergency relief activities be addressed context of Angola's eventual rehabilitation and development. UCAH did not subscribe to a linear continuum theory, which stressed the end of the 'emergency' and the beginning of 'rehabilitation', which would then move into 'development'. (Many of Angola's provinces had the three different activities occurring simultaneously). The key, as far as UCAH was concerned, was that emergency activities were *an* essential, not necessarily *the* essential, component in a much wider scope of humanitar-

¹² UNICEF seconded a senior staff member to UCAH, which employed him as a policy adviser. His more than twenty years development experience working for NGOs in Canada and Southern Africa provided UCAH with an invaluable 'think-tank' capacity, thereby supporting the unit's director to analyse humanitarian affairs and propose appropriate policies and strategies. This role greatly enhanced UCAH's credibility *vis-à-vis* the donors, UN agencies, and IOs/NGOs.

ian action, which included simultaneous emergency, rehabilitation, and development activities.

Consolidating the Strengths of UN Agencies and NGOs

In Angola, the challenge of implementing humanitarian programmes when resources were very scarce called for agencies to consolidate their programmes and avoid duplication of effort. Upon its establishment, UCAH met UN agencies and NGOs working in Angola to discuss humanitarian assistance. The first step was to ascertain the type of activities in which respective organisations were or planned to be involved. This led to thorough discussion on the roles and responsibilities that different types of organisations could assume. UN agencies and NGOs quickly agreed that the UN agencies' logistic and technical capabilities should be combined with the expertise of the field-based personnel of Angolan and expatriate NGOs. The UN agencies could be responsible for 'macro' issues, such as logistics or security, while the NGOs tackled 'micro' issues, such as the distribution of food in cities and towns.¹³ Amongst UN agencies, agreement was reached on the following distribution of responsibilities:

- *logistics* would be undertaken by WFP, which would transport UN and NGO equipment, property, personnel, and programme inputs by air or road to the provinces;
- *food Aid* would be cleared through Angola's three main ports, stored in warehouses, and delivered to primary distribution points, i.e. provincial capitals, by WFP;
- *nation-wide HF and Telex-over-Radio Communications* would be managed by UNDP with support from UCAH;
- *security* for humanitarian staff and property would be monitored by UCAH;
- *non-food Sector Provincial Offices* would be established by UNICEF; and
- *resource Mobilization* was the responsibility of each agency involved in the relief effort;

¹³ This discussion was supported by a group of key NGOs, brought together by the International Medical Corps and SCF-UK, which wrote a paper "NGO Emop Strategy" and shared it with UCAH.

although UCAH promoted it by organising the preparation and launching of four consolidated inter-agency appeals from April 1993 to February 1995. (See section VIII below).

Defining roles and responsibilities by sector, rather than by social group, enabled UN agencies to know precisely where their responsibilities lay and helped build a sense of collaboration, rather than competition, between the different UN agencies.

In addition to nation-wide UN agency-NGO collaboration, the four MSF sections and the ICRC launched their own respective humanitarian programmes throughout Angola. While these activities were not part of the integrated UN agency-NGO strategy, UCAH promoted information exchange between all actors to avoid duplication of effort.

The Emergency Relief Plan

From November 1992 to April 1993, the UN agencies' approach to humanitarian operations was *ad hoc*. The UN did not have a policy for humanitarian operations. There was no serious discussion between the UN agencies on which way to approach the GoA and UNITA. WFP had a several cargo aeroplanes in Luanda and had flown cargo to some destinations under government control but this was not done systematically. UNHCR had bought some hours from a commercial cargo company and flew to the northern provinces of Uige and Zaire, both under UNITA control, and to two eastern provinces under government control. Yet, there was little or no institutional discussion on an overall UN agency response to the crisis.

Upon UCAH's establishment, the UN agencies found a place in which joint policies and strategies could be discussed. The first operational plan which the agencies elaborated was known as the Emergency Plan for Humanitarian Assistance, later modified and referred to as the Emergency Relief Plan. Initially, it highlighted reaching four areas by road and ten by air. Each road or air corridor would be used on one, two, or three designated days per week. On such days, 'Both parties agreed not to take any military advantages from humanitarian operations...road and air corridors will be utilised during the agreed days of the week only for relief assistance under the UN umbrella'.

The Emergency Relief Plan was handed to both sides to the conflict on 26 May 1993, at the end of the Abidjan peace talks. The GoA and UNITA accepted the plan during the first week of

June, although UNITA suggested the inclusion of several additional corridors and cited difficulties in reaching some of the destinations because of logistic and security constraints. Among the cities that could not be reached were Kuito, Malange, and Menongue, three of the four cities harbouring the worst humanitarian situations.

The government agreed that the plan begin on 21 June but stressed that access to Kuito would be necessary to ensure success. UCAH went to Huambo for further negotiations on the same day to discuss access to Kuito and possible air dropping operations to Malange and Menongue, but UNITA reiterated that access was impossible because of damaged landing strips. Consequently, the government cancelled the plan's continuation explaining that, those Angolans most in need, the people of Kuito, should get aid as soon as any other Angolans.

The Emergency Relief Plan started again on 15 July 1993, after UCAH had held a series of meetings with UNITA and gained the party's acceptance of aid flights to Malange and Menongue. However, two events, which put an end to the plan, occurred on the same day. First, the UN had gained the agreement of both sides to fly to Kuito by helicopter. The flight had to take place via Huambo for logistics reasons. Upon arrival in Huambo, however, UNITA called a meeting with the UN team and announced that the mission should not proceed to Kuito because of intense fighting in the city. (UCAH later received independent confirmation that this was the case). Second, a UN agency flight to the capital of Zaire province, M'Banza Congo, was shot as it approached the runway. (UNITA later accepted responsibility for the incident). Based on the second event, which put into question the security of aid workers and their property, the UN stopped the Emergency Relief Plan.

The response to the plan demonstrated that four cities, Huambo, Kuito, Malange, and Menongue, were particularly sensitive to the GoA and UNITA, and that their influence on the plan's success or failure was enormous. In light of this, UCAH (in consultation with the SRSG, UN agencies, and IOs/NGOs) decided to divide the plan's destinations into two groups: non-active conflict and active-conflict. Negotiations on access to areas included in the plan were henceforth split in two in the hope that access would be available to non-active conflict zones while discussions continued on active conflict zones. However, just after UCAH proposed the amended plan to both sides, the GoA launched a six-week air attack on

the city of Huambo. One effect of this was that UCAH's communication links with UNITA were cut. The SRSG managed to arrange a meeting between UCAH and UNITA in Kinshasa, Zaire, on 23 August 1993, and on 3 September 1993 the party accepted flights to proceed to 'non-active conflict' zones.

In light of the delays caused in implementing the Emergency Relief Plan, UCAH discussed different ways in which to get aid to those in need in areas that it deemed safe. At the same time, Caritas Internationalis managed to gain the consent of both sides to fly its own relief commodities to some cities around the country in which no fighting was taking place.¹⁴ Further, two NGOs hired a commercial cargo company to fly aid to a handful of provincial capitals. Consequently, UCAH encouraged collaboration between UN agencies and Caritas, and between UN agencies and the concerned NGOs to arrange for UNICEF and WFP relief commodities to reach key, non-conflict cities. This approach lasted throughout August and part of September 1993 and was indicative of the growing collaboration between UN agencies and NGOs.

¹⁴ Caritas had its own HF radio network throughout Angola and could provide aid via the Catholic church.

VI. MAIN FEATURES OF COORDINATION

Information Exchange

Facilitating information exchange between all actors involved in emergency relief activities in Angola and providing a global view of humanitarian issues was one of UCAH's most important functions. During 1993, the unit worked to establish itself as a focal point where information could be gathered, synthesised, and disseminated. The lack of an information officer during 1993, however, hindered the unit's ability to develop many of the ideas that it had to produce and disseminate useful information. With the arrival of a full-time information officer in December 1993, UCAH increased its production of written information, much of which was disseminated to the GoA, UNITA, donors, UN agencies, IOs and NGOs.

- *Information Bulletins*, written weekly to inform readers of the main events related to humanitarian assistance and of humanitarian programmes being implemented in different parts of the country;
- *briefing notes* on key cities and provinces available to the all humanitarian actors and the press;
- *field trip reports* prepared by UCAH staff members whenever they travelled outside Luanda. These reports were often distributed to key donors, UN agencies, and NGOs working in the area of concern;
- *situation reports* sometimes prepared by UCAH's field advisers and disseminated to donors and humanitarian organisations working in the province under review;
- *needs assessment reports* of assessments led and organised by UCAH written and disseminated to donors, participants, UN agencies, and NGOs concerned;
- *provincial files* including public information produced by humanitarian organisations kept at UCAH for public consumption; and
- *special reports* on sectoral issues such as agriculture or nutrition written to highlight special programmes and outstanding needs.

UCAH produced few in-depth analyses of humanitarian issues in Angola. While this was always a concern of the unit, the lack of resources

prevented it from carrying out this role.¹⁵ However, considerable verbal analysis of the available information took place at meetings which the unit promoted.

Finally, UCAH concentrated on disseminating information about the humanitarian crisis in Angola to the national and international media. Such dissemination often highlighted the positive impact of the humanitarian programmes underway. While Angola's crisis was often referred to as the 'forgotten war' UCAH's relations with the press, especially during 1994, captured the media interest that existed and promoted the work of UN agencies and NGOs alike.

Maintaining Relations with the GoA and UNITA

Concerning actual contacts with the two sides, it was agreed that each agency, whether UN or NGO, was responsible for discussing the operational details of its particular programme with the GoA and UNITA, or only with the government if the programme was in a government-controlled area. UCAH and the UN agencies most involved in the emergency (UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP) maintained close contact with the Ministry of Social Affairs in Luanda, which was easily accessible for consultation. UCAH's frequent contacts with the ministry concentrated on the global aspects of humanitarian operations while the UN agencies sometimes went to the ministry individually to explain more programme-specific details.

As illustrated above, communication with UNITA was complicated during 1993 and 1994 by the party's location far from the capital. UCAH held negotiations with UNITA in Huambo on several occasions during June and July 1993. UNICEF and WFP often joined UCAH to promote a consolidated UN agency position. This process was interrupted during August and September 1993 because it was impossible to get to the city, but contact was re-established in Huambo in October and consolidated in November and December. In January 1994, UCAH placed a full-

¹⁵ A notable exception was the unit's demobilisation and reintegration office, which hired anthropologists and sociologists familiar with Angola to carry out several thorough studies, such as the socio-economic expectations of demobilised soldiers.

time representative in Huambo to facilitate communication with the party. This process continued uninterrupted, except for six weeks in mid-1994, until UNITA lost control of the city of Huambo in November of that year.

Coordinating with UN Agencies

Seven UN agencies (UNDP, UNFAO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO) worked in Angola when UCAH was established. Most agency representatives cited the need for a coordination unit to help the UN agencies establish common policies and better integrate their programmes. UN agency heads expressed the concern that UCAH not create an additional layer of bureaucracy, with which agencies would have to work. One agency head was quite wary of the establishment of a coordination unit and asked that it not tell agencies what to do but enhance their programmes.¹⁶

Throughout its first two years, UCAH provided UN agencies with a regular forum in which to discuss issues related to policy and programme. For example, within a few weeks of UCAH's establishment, UN agencies had reached agreement on a major division of roles and responsibilities (see section V above). UCAH promoted daily, informal consultations between UN agency heads and held formal meetings each week. Discussions included everything from quotidian operational issues to how to approach donors to raise programme resources.

Establishing and Maintaining Relations with Donors

UCAH invited donors to a meeting during the unit's first week. When asked about coordination of humanitarian assistance and whether or not donors had their own coordination mechanism to discuss humanitarian issues, two of the main donors answered '*ad hoc*' and 'You're it'. Donors expressed their hope that UCAH facilitate coordination amongst all actors.

The UCAH director, supported by the donor liaison officer, started a number of activities to foment strong relations between the donor community and UN agencies and IOs/NGOs. These included:

- *weekly meetings* held at UCAH where the unit briefed donors on overall humanitarian issues and UN agencies explained their ongoing pro-

grammes. (UCAH proposed that IOs and NGOs be allowed to attend these meetings. The proposal was accepted for the ICRC but not for NGOs). UCAH wrote notes for the file of these meetings and sent them to donors the following day;

- *individual consultations and briefings* with donors to address specific issues or provide humanitarian briefings;
- *donor participation in assessments*, organised by UCAH;
- *field trips to the provinces*, to show and explain the humanitarian situation to donors or delegations from outside Angola;
- *specific resource mobilisation* to ask donors for agency programme support.

Humanitarian assistance programmes received strong financial and in-kind support from the donors throughout 1993 and 1994. Moreover, UCAH's attention to building strong relations with donors by organising the actions cited above, encouraged donors to interact more amongst themselves. For example, four of the key donors (ECHO, Sweden, UK, and USA) met monthly to share information on which UN agency and NGO programmes they planned to support.

Working with NGOs

Throughout much of 1991 and 1992, relations between UN agencies and NGOs were awkward. NGOs felt that some UN agencies, especially UNDP, behaved in a paternal and generally haughty manner towards them. For example, SRPA appeal preparations did not include discussions with NGOs despite the document being littered with activities that the NGOs were to undertake for UN agencies. There were, of course, exceptions but the overall relationship between UN agencies and NGOs was not good.

UCAH's establishment in April 1993 provided an opportunity to enhance UN agency-NGO relations. UCAH seized the opportunity in several, straightforward ways. First, UCAH explained its role to the NGO community and told NGO representatives that the unit had no authority over or institutional link to any NGOs. Second, UCAH invited NGOs to establish open and frank dialogue with the unit so that policy or operational issues could be addressed. Third, UCAH told NGOs that it wanted strong relations between UN agencies and NGOs and that ways in which to pursue this should be discussed. Fourth, UCAH assured NGOs that the unit would not

¹⁶ The representative actually said in a meeting that the unit should consist only of the director and one secretary!

make assumptions about NGO plans or programmes without first consulting them. Fifth, UCAH promised to support NGOs, as appropriate, if they had issues to resolve with UN agencies. Sixth, UCAH offered to back NGO fund raising efforts in general terms by including them in the appeal process (see section VIII below).

Throughout UCAH's first two years, the unit invited NGOs to participate in almost all facets of its work thereby building a spirit of collaboration and trust between the UN and NGOs. NGOs themselves, of course, contributed to the process enormously. First, while NGOs lacked a strong coordination body of their own, they showed an interest and willingness in building constructive working relations with UCAH and UN agencies, such as WFP.¹⁷ Second, the representatives of important Angolan and expatriate NGOs such as ADRA, Oikos, SCAM, SCF-UK, and World Vision International, worked to encourage all non-governmental humanitarian organisations to participate in the framework which was established.

Some examples UCAH's actions *vis-à-vis* NGOs are given below:

- *letter of affiliation*: A letter of understanding between the United Nations in Angola and any NGO which chose to sign the letter. It helped to foster a spirit of collaboration and clarified what NGOs could expect from the UN, e.g. flight support, communications frequencies and identity cards;
- *strategy sessions* to discuss relevant programme issues;
- *information sharing sessions* to provide UN agencies and NGOs a forum in which information could be shared and announcements and plans could be made;
- *communications and flight support* provided to affiliated NGOs, who could use UN HF and UHF radio frequencies, and get free air transport for humanitarian personnel to and from the provinces; and
- *security meetings and support*: During 1993 and 1994, the absence of UNAVEM II observers in almost all of Angola's interior led to UN agencies and NGOs seeking UCAH's support to monitor the security situation as it related to humanitarian operations, to keep UN agencies and NGOs informed of the situation, and to

¹⁷ Two NGO co-ordination bodies existed at the time but neither were particularly effective. The *Forum das ONGs Angolanas*, known as FONGA, included Angolan NGOs and the *Confederação de ONGs em Angola*, known as CONGA, included Angolan and expatriate NGOs.

organise evacuations, when necessary. (See section IX below).

- *pigeon holes* at UCAH for all NGOs working in Angola so that they could receive information from the unit and send information to each other in a cost-effective way.

Assessing Needs

Much discussion took place among UN agencies in Angola to decide who should lead and organise needs assessments. It was agreed that the task should go to UCAH because the process was considered a coordination function, which should be led by an agency that did not implement projects.

UCAH called on the GoA and UNITA to alert the unit of areas where a population's needs were acute. When an area was identified, UCAH organised a team to visit the area. Assessment teams aimed to include government or UNITA officials, donors, UN agencies, and Angolan and international NGOs. During the war, it was impossible for GoA or UNITA members or virtually any Angolans to move from a government zone to a UNITA area, or *vice-versa*. This changed after the peace agreement, known as the Lusaka Protocol, was signed on 20 November 1994. Shortly thereafter, GoA and UNITA members and Angolans working for humanitarian organisations crossed former front-lines to help evaluate needs.

Assessments were followed by meetings to organise quick inter-agency responses to the needs that were identified. After consultation with the participants, UCAH wrote needs assessment reports according to its own format and distributed them to the GoA, UNITA, donors, UN agencies, and NGOs. However, individual UN agency assessment reports sometimes 'told a different story' which led to conflicting programme recommendations. This might have been averted if agencies had used the same format during needs assessments. Standard formats also would have allowed agencies to allocate scarce resources more efficiently, according to priority needs. In March 1995, the Humanitarian Coordination Group started developing a format that could be used by agencies during assessments and it was expected that this would help to resolve the issue.

Field Advisers

Since its establishment, UCAH stressed the need to have representatives or field coordinators at

the provincial level. However, this idea worried UN agencies, who were concerned that UCAH would become operational. Donors and NGOs agreed with UCAH and by late 1993, when access had been gained to most of the country and relief activities were expanding, UN agencies agreed that UCAH have a presence in the field on a temporary basis.

The first area to have an UCAH field adviser was Huambo. UCAH needed daily contact with UNITA as humanitarian operations could not take place nation-wide without it. Flying from Luanda to Huambo each time discussions on a particular issue were necessary was not always possible. In addition, the humanitarian programme in Huambo was expanding. UCAH was called on to facilitate the coordination of the effort and to monitor the security situation.

In addition to the Huambo field adviser, during 1994 UCAH placed field advisers in Benguela, Kwando Kubango, and Malange. Further, one officer in Luanda was dispatched to the field, as necessary. The standard functions of field advisers were to:

- represent the UCAH director at the provincial level;
- work closely with the GoA or UNITA, UN agencies, and IOs/NGOs to facilitate coordinated relief activities;
- facilitate information exchange by gathering, synthesising, and disseminating briefing notes and reports on the humanitarian situation;
- monitor the humanitarian situation and bring to light programme gaps and areas of unmet needs;
- lead and organise assessment missions;
- monitor the security situation and take measures as appropriate;
- ensure that UHF, HF, and telex-over-radio works were available to UN agencies and NGOs in the field; and
- organise field visits for donors and journalists.

The field adviser system was useful and worked, although UCAH's efforts to place the staff in the field quickly were hampered by two issues. First, donors were slow to deposit funds in the appropriate accounts. Second, it was difficult for UCAH to find qualified candidates, who spoke Portuguese.

Coordination in Times of Peace

In February 1994, it looked increasingly likely that the peace talks under way in the Zambian capital,

Lusaka, would soon bear fruit. UCAH highlighted the need for the UN agencies and NGOs to be fully prepared to confront humanitarian needs. UCAH sought donor support and hired staff so that the unit and agencies in the country would be ready to address the changing reality when the war ended. Upon peace, there would be three programme areas, supported by UCAH's policy section:

- Emergency relief, resettlement, and rehabilitation: This section would concentrate on UCAH's role of coordinating the relief operation bearing in mind three issues. First, emergency relief activities were likely to expand after a peace agreement because of increased access to towns and villages across the country. Second, internally displaced people and refugees were likely to return to their place of origin, and this programme would need careful coordination and synchronisation between the various actors. Third, as the peace process consolidated, emergency activities would diminish and rehabilitation work would most likely expand;
- Mine action, i.e. mine awareness, survey, clearing, and training: Angola, similar to Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Mozambique, was burdened with millions of mines throughout the country resulting in one of the highest 'amputee per capita' rates in the world. A concerted effort to address this issue would be necessary in post-war Angola. UCAH opened a Central Mine Action Office (UCAH-CMAO) to plan and coordinate the three-pronged strategy of mine awareness, survey, and clearance, which included training for Angolans to assume these tasks. United Nations experience outside Angola emphasised the use of local staff for mine clearing. This staff would benefit from training and special equipment. The resulting transfer of knowledge from specialised UN agencies and NGOs to citizens of the country in question would help to form the nucleus of a national mine capacity. Given the long time that would be needed to resolve the mine problem in Angola, UCAH proposed that a national institute for mine action be established to coordinate mine action throughout the country. (See section X below);
- Demobilisation and socio-economic reintegration of former combatants: The success of the peace agreement in Angola would hinge on the demobilisation and social reintegration of former combatants. To tackle this task, UNDP collaborated with UCAH by hiring a consultant to review and analyse the Angolan demobilisation experience under the auspices of the Bicesse Accords. In May 1994, UCAH hired

four consultants with demobilisation and reintegration experience in El Salvador and Mozambique. These consultants formed the embryo of what was later to become UCAH's Demobilisation and Reintegration Office (UCAH-DRO).

During the second half of 1994, UCAH-DRO sought extensive consultations with the GoA and UNITA, and carried out a series of studies, such as the social and economic expectations of demobilising soldiers. Several planning sessions were held with UNAVEM, UN agencies, and NGOs, to prepare appropriate programme options. Similar to the mine action programme, UCAH-DRO stressed the need to create an independent Angolan institute for demobilisation and reintegration, which would take on overall management of the programme. (See section X below).

Given the way in which the Angolan conflict had erupted in late 1992, the GoA and UNITA were very suspicious of each other. This complicated UCAH-DRO's task, and often led to delays in gaining access to one side or the other and in obtaining information necessary to elaborate the programme. The situation became particularly frustrating in early-1995, when the GoA and UNITA began to renegotiate the way in which troop demobilisation was to be conducted. These negotiations culminated in both sides agreeing to a concept termed 'Global Incorporation', which differed from the method originally envisaged. This change in tactic led to the necessary revision of the plans as they stood in March 1995. However, the establishment of UCAH-DRO almost one year earlier had allowed the UN to collect and analyse a wealth of information, as well as discuss it with all necessary partners, and this could only strengthen the chances for a successful programme.

VII. SPECIAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE OPERATIONS

The ASDI-UCAH Mechanism

During 1993, the Swedish International Development Authority (known in Angola by its Portuguese acronym, ASDI) wanted to fund NGO emergency relief activities. However, ASDI did not have the staff to receive, evaluate, and recommend NGO proposals for support. Further, ASDI was constrained by its bilateral agreement with the GoA which stipulated that the agency could support only Angolan or Swedish NGOs. After discussion with the GoA, which agreed to ASDI's proposal to fund NGOs that were not Angolan or Swedish, the agency approached UCAH so that together they could back NGOs working to alleviate human suffering. ASDI and UCAH created an arrangement known as the ASDI-UCAH Mechanism (AUM). It functioned in the following way:

- NGOs wrote emergency project proposals, following a simple format that was discussed and agreed to, for health, logistics, nutrition, and water and sanitation (and, later, support for street children) projects;
- during the first two weeks of each month, NGOs sent proposals to UCAH which analysed them with support from a UN technical review committee comprising members from UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO;
- UCAH and the UN technical review committee recommended to ASDI which proposals should receive financial support;
- ASDI approved UCAH's recommendations and arranged for project funds to be transferred directly from Stockholm to respective NGO headquarters;
- UCAH assumed responsibility for monitoring NGO project implementation, and ASDI remained responsible for tracking project finances; and
- NGOs sent quarterly reports and financial reports to UCAH, which reviewed them and forwarded them to ASDI.

From October 1993 to April 1995, UCAH received 140 NGO proposals. These were reviewed by UCAH and the UN technical review team, and together they recommended 52 or 37% for full or partial funding. During the AUM's second phase, which allowed direct funding to Angolan NGOs,

38% of the fund recipients were Angolan NGOs. Over US\$ 6 million was disbursed through this fund and *proposals were reviewed and approved or rejected in seven days.*

Project distribution by sector was wide although the health and nutrition sectors were most often represented. The majority of the projects were implemented in besieged cities, where there were virtually no basic services. A collaborative spirit existed between the donor (ASDI), the mechanism's manager (UCAH), the UN technical review team and non-governmental organisations. Project proposals and reports were kept simple yet comprehensive to enable NGOs to concentrate their efforts on project implementation while UCAH and ASDI monitored programme activities. In sum, the AUM was a powerful tool that enhanced UCAH's role because it gave the unit the means with which to encourage NGOs to work in the areas with the most critical needs.

The Seeds and Tools Working Group

Another mechanism which greatly enhanced coordination of the humanitarian programme in Angola was UCAH's seeds and tools working group. This group was based in Luanda and comprised members of the GoA, donors, UN agencies, and IOs/NGOs.¹⁸ Each month, members met to analyse the needs for Angola's two planting seasons and agree on roles and responsibilities of the various actors. (Angola has two planting seasons, one main season known as the *lavras* and one secondary season known as the *nacas*). Meetings provided the opportunity for interested parties to communicate with each other, and come to decisions on the allocation of available resources. This included:

- The GoA's Ministry of Agriculture being closely involved with UN agency and IO/NGO activities throughout the country even the ministry was not represented nation-wide;
- Donors working together to inform each other of the seeds and tools resources to be made available; and

¹⁸ Starting in January 1995, UNITA also participated in Luanda.

- UN agencies and IOs/NGOs sharing information on their assessment of needs for seeds and tools by province.

The seeds and tools working group demonstrated UCAH's concern that the provision of emergency relief items, especially food aid, not become an end in itself, and that Angolans be supported in their desire to maintain their own agriculture production, wherever possible.

Provincial Meetings

During UCAH's first two years, the unit organised and led meetings that addresses issues in specific provinces. (Ideally, these meetings would have taken place in the provinces themselves, but often this was not possible because of UCAH's lack of staff). UN agencies and IOs/NGOs were invited to participate in these meetings, which were held to allow humanitarian organisations to assess, plan, monitor, and evaluate future and ongoing programmes. UCAH thus provided operational agencies a forum in which programme issues could be discussed. (Donors sometimes attended these meetings, too). At times, UCAH used these fora to discuss security issues, including the need for evacuations, but the thrust of the initiative was to address humanitarian programmes. At different times during 1993, 1994, and 1995 working groups existed for Bie, Bengo, Huambo, Kwando Kubango, Kwanza Norte, Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, Malange, Menongue, and Moxico. (See map below.)

The Humanitarian Coordination Group

The Lusaka Protocol, signed on 20 November 1994, established an organ known as the Joint Commission to oversee the implementation of the peace agreement. The Joint Commission comprised members of the UN, GoA, and UNITA. Portugal, the Russian Federation, USA, and the ICRC sat on the commission as observers. Initially, it was thought that the Joint Commission should establish a sub-committee to deal with humanitarian issues. However, humanitarian agencies and some donors cited the continuing need to separate humanitarian issues from the political process; hence, an organ known as the Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG), was created in January 1995.

The Humanitarian Coordination Group was a mechanism through which the UN, GoA, and UNITA could discuss humanitarian affairs at the

central level in Luanda.¹⁹ Members of the GoA and UNITA were especially active in addressing two issues: First, needs assessments to areas which had not received any aid during 1993 and 1994; and, second, resolving problems in the field. For example, when there was friction between the FAA and NGOs in Matala, Huila province, UN, government, and UNITA members worked to settle the situation. Both of these activities involved government personnel travelling to areas under UNITA control and *vice-versa*, thereby contributing enormously to confidence building measures necessary to ensure the success of the peace agreement. Further, the group was replicated in some provinces, such as Moxico, to allow decisions taken at the central, policy level to be disseminated to key provinces. (The HCG is discussed in more detail in section X below).

¹⁹ UCAH decided that its parallel relations on humanitarian affairs with the GoA and UNITA should cease. There was no longer a war to justify contacting the GoA in Luanda and UNITA's leadership in Huambo. (UNITA had actually left the city of Huambo but was based in the north of the province, in Bailundo). Instead, overall humanitarian assistance coordination should include all actors and take place in the capital, Luanda.

VIII. PREPARING & LAUNCHING APPEALS

1993 Appeal Preparation and Launch

In April 1993, the humanitarian situation in Angola was dire and deteriorating quickly. It had not reached the catastrophic proportions once experienced in the southern Sudan or Somalia but it was widely felt that if concerted emergency relief activities did not reach most areas of the country within a few months, hundreds of thousands of citizens would die. To address this issue, humanitarian organisations would need significant resources.

Angola was not a household name in 1993. It was often referred to as, 'The Forgotten War'. International attention was much more fixed on events in the former-Yugoslavia and Somalia. To change this, UCAH decided to prepare a consolidated inter-agency appeal. Besides enumerating overall humanitarian needs and the proposed UN agency response, the appeal process would call attention to the humanitarian situation in Angola.

DHA Geneva and UN agencies with offices in Angola sent staff members to Luanda to support agency colleagues there prepare the appeal document. The process lasted two weeks. Despite a lack of basic information, such as the data on population movements, agencies coped and presented the humanitarian situation based on the available information.

Initially, NGOs were frustrated by the UN agencies' appeal process. NGOs felt that it did not include them. UCAH explained that it was not possible to bring NGOs fully on board in the 1993 appeal process because there were no established relations between the unit and NGOs. However, UCAH did hold several meetings with NGOs during the appeal's preparation to inform them of progress and obtain their views on their own particular relief strategy. Further, UCAH prepared a full chapter as an annex in the appeal to explain UN-NGO relations, call on donors to support NGO projects, show NGO activities by province and sector, and list NGO project proposals. While UCAH's first appeal preparations did not include NGOs as much as both groups might have wished, collaboration was greater than at any time previously in Angola.

The 1993 *United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola* was launched in Geneva on 3 June by the SRSG, UCAH director, and UN agency representatives. The document called for

US\$ 226 million in multi-sectoral aid to be used to assist almost 2 million beneficiaries, 345,000 of whom were internally displaced persons (IDPs).²⁰ Initial donor commitments totalled some US\$ 70 million with Sweden and the United States showing the largest support for the process. By January 1994, confirmed pledges had reached nearly half of the overall target—US\$ 103 million.

Revised Appeal: February 1994

By January 1994, humanitarian operations were taking place throughout Angola. UCAH had brokered access to several new areas of the country, in which UN agencies and NGOs were working together to complement each other's strengths. The ICRC, too, began a large programme in some areas, particularly in Huambo province. All of these efforts, enabled agencies to garner a far more accurate picture of the humanitarian situation, which now showed a staggering 3.3 million people in need of food or non-food assistance. Almost 1 million of these people were displaced, who had left their places of origin in search of security. Consequently, UCAH and the UN agencies decided to update the appeal to make the call for financial and material resources better reflect the situation in the country.

The revised appeal of February 1994 illustrated improved UN agency-NGO collaboration by including a chapter on non-governmental organisations and allowing NGOs to include project summary sheets to explain their respective projects. For the first time in the history of DHA consolidated appeals, NGOs were making specific project requests in the same document as UN agencies. While some UN agencies felt that allowing NGOs to advertise and ask for specific support in a UN document would lessen UN agency chances for receiving donor backing, UCAH felt that showing overall needs and the planned UN agency and NGO response would generate stronger donor support. The inclusion of NGO projects in the appeal promoted complementary action and further illustrated the shared

²⁰ This figure and remaining figures referring to appeal amounts include the value of food aid.

UN agency-NGO strategy for humanitarian intervention.

The revised appeal also introduced the concept of forward planning for mine action and demobilisation and reintegration. While war continued throughout much of the country there were signs from Lusaka, where the SRSG was negotiating a peace settlement with the GoA and UNITA, that an agreement could be signed in the near future.

In sum, the February 1994 revised appeal called for donor contributions to the tune of US\$ 179 million for six months.

Revised Appeal: September 1994

DHA issued a second revision of the consolidated inter-agency appeal in September 1994 for two reasons. First, to report on the progress and constraints of the humanitarian operation since February 1994; and, second, to extend the appeal's coverage to December 1994 thereby bringing total resource requirements to almost US\$ 188 million with a funding shortfall of just over US\$ 61 million.

While 1994 had started full of hope with many observers expecting the UN to broker a peace agreement by the middle of the year, the opposite happened. In May 1994, the war intensified and reached heights of violence never before seen in the country. In June, *all* UN-WFP cargo and flights were grounded for nearly three weeks because of the lack of security clearance. As of September 1994, almost 3.7 million Angolans or one third of the population was in need of some form of emergency assistance to stay alive. In essence, the stop-go pattern of the relief operation since May wiped out the gains in the humanitarian situation which UN agencies and NGOs achieved between October 1993 and April 1994.

The increased fighting throughout Angola during the previous months, made donors wary of providing resources for a country that looked like it was not moving towards peace. While donors had responded relatively well to the consolidated appeal process by providing 67.5 percent of the funds requested between 1 February and 31 August 1994, they wanted to see some positive results in the political process before committing themselves to further support.

1995 Appeal

The signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994 after thirteen months of negotiations in the Zambian capital brought Angola its

best chance to move away from emergency relief activities and on to long-term rehabilitation and

development. To prepare for this, UCAH developed a plan of action for the preparation of a consolidated inter-agency appeal. The 1995 appeal was, without question, the culmination of UCAH's policy of involving all actors in humanitarian assistance in Angola to tap on their respective strengths.

To reflect the new political situation, humanitarian organisations, in consultation with the GoA, agreed that a three-pronged humanitarian programme should be planned: humanitarian assistance including relief, resettlement, and repatriation; mine action; and, demobilisation and reintegration. As with the previous three appeals, the 1995 document was prepared by sector. UN agencies and NGOs were called on to select a lead UN agency and NGO for each sector: food production and basic rural capacity; food aid; nutrition and household food security; water and sanitation; health; shelter, relief, and survival; education and assistance to children in difficult circumstances; and, logistics. Each sector's UN agency and NGO representative then organised planning sessions with other humanitarian organisations involved in the respective sector to write the chapter corresponding to that sector. For example, UN agencies chose UNICEF and NGOs selected Save the Children Fund-UK to represent them in the education sector. UNICEF and SCF-UK were then responsible for organising meetings with the Ministry of Education, UN agencies and NGOs involved in the education sector so that, together, they could prepare the section explaining the current situation and the way in which to address the issue during 1995. This process was repeated for the sections on mine action, and demobilisation and reintegration, which UCAH-CMAO and UCAH-DRO led on behalf of the UN.

The 1995 appeal included the most extensive chapter on non-governmental organisations to date. Angolan and expatriate NGOs chose Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA-Angolana) and Save the Children Fund-UK to represent them, respectively. They were responsible for coordinating the production of the chapter titled, 'Non-Governmental Organisations'. NGOs decided to include the following sections in their chapter: strategy; emergency to rehabilitation; reinforcing national capacities; networking and programme extension; financing; list of NGOs and ICRC operating in

Angola; matrix showing NGO activities by sector and province; list of proposed/ongoing projects for 1995 and financial resources needed.²¹ Throughout the chapter NGOs stated their view that complementary UN-NGO humanitarian operations, based on the model developed during 1993 and 1994, should continue throughout 1995 with enhanced UN coordination and quick-disbursement funding mechanisms such as the ASDI-UCAH Mechanism.

Capacity building for the government and national NGOs was *the* recurring theme throughout the appeal process and was reflected as such in the document. UN agencies and expatriate NGOs committed themselves to expanding their programmes to include enhanced capacity building for national institutions and Angolan NGOs. The mine action chapter explained in detail the strategy to help the Angolan Government create a national institute for mine action by the end of 1995. Likewise, the demobilisation and reintegration chapter highlighted the need for UCAH-DRO to support the establishment of an Angolan institute for demobilisation and reintegration. Finally, concerning coordination, UCAH announced its hope to withdraw from Angola by mid-1996, and explained that in order to hand over coordination to the government's Ministry of Social Affairs (MINARS) by then, the unit would work closely with MINARS to enable it to carry out the task successfully.

The *1995 United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola* called for donor contributions totalling some US\$ 213 million, split amongst the three programmes: US\$ 145 million for humanitarian assistance (relief, resettlement, and repatriation); US\$ 12 million for the mine action programme; and, US\$ 56 million for demobilisation and reintegration.

A Model Launch

DHA launched the 1995 appeal on 23 February 1995. The event was termed a 'Donors' Consultation', which briefed those present on the overall situation in Angola, then allowed the UCAH director to place the humanitarian situation within that context and outline the planned UN agency and NGO response to overall humanitarian needs. Thereafter, GoA and UNITA representatives had the opportunity to speak, and this was

followed by member state delegates who announced their respective country's contribution. The consultation started at 10:00 am and finished just after 4:00 pm and included the schedule outlined below:

- Statement by the SRSG on the overall political, military, and humanitarian situation in Angola.
- Presentation of the *1995 United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola* by the UCAH director. This presentation incorporated details of the humanitarian assistance activities of all UN agencies and other humanitarian agencies active in Angola, and included a straightforward set of overhead slides to imprint the main themes of the document, as well as the key financial and food resources being requested on the minds of those present.
- Statement by the prime minister of Angola.
- Statement by the UNITA representative to the United Nations in Geneva.
- Statements by the representatives of the observer countries (Portugal, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America).
- Statements by representatives of UN member states.
- Statements by representatives of non-governmental organisations.
- Closing statement by the SRSG.

²¹ NGOs chose *not* to include project summary sheets, which briefly explain an individual agency's specific project and its cost, in the appeal. NGOs explained that, as far as they were concerned, the appeal should highlight programmes, not individual projects.

IX. SECURITY ISSUES

Procedures for Airlifts & Convoys

When UCAH was established, the World Food Programme flew relief commodities and personnel to accessible government towns in Angola. The agency had no contact with UNITA therefore it could not fly to any of the areas that the party occupied. UNHCR was the only UN agency flying to UNITA zones. On occasion, the agency chartered a commercial cargo company to fly on its behalf to M'Banza Congo or Uige, in the north of Angola. Both of these agencies took strict security measures. During the third week of April, however, UNITA shot down a WFP aeroplane outside Luena, and six weeks later on 15 July 1993 UNITA attacked a second WFP aeroplane, as it came in to land in M'Banza Congo.

These two incidents led UCAH to conduct a number of policy meetings on security procedures for humanitarian operations.²² UCAH drafted the procedures, which included recommendations made by the GoA and UNITA. UCAH and UN agencies discussed the procedures and agreed to them. They acted as guidelines for what was to become one of the UN's largest relief operations by air: at the programme's peak, the WFP carried out some 200 cargo and personnel flights per week to almost thirty destinations. During 1994, the WFP delivered over 110,000 MTs of food and non-food relief by air.

Regarding road convoys, which accounted for about half of aid deliveries in Angola, UCAH and WFP worked out safety procedures. However, based on an incident on 27 August 1993 during which three Angolan truck drivers died while carrying out work for WFP in Benguela province, the SRSG called on UN agencies to enhance security procedures by combining the existing approach with UNAVEM's procedures. While the goal was to strengthen ongoing security measures, the use of UNAVEM did not achieve this. First, the mission's field presence was restricted so it rarely had primary information on the security situation; second, involving

UNAVEM in security clearances made the procedures unnecessarily bureaucratic.

The participatory elaboration of and strict adherence to security guidelines for the airlift and road convoys contributed to the lack of serious injuries or deaths sustained by aid workers during the aid operation in 1993 and 1994.

Cross-line Operations: Kuito

A fierce battle took place for the city of Kuito from January to September 1993. When it ended, the city was divided with the GoA controlling about forty percent of it and the airport, and UNITA controlling sixty percent of the city and all of the surrounding countryside. A UN staff member was in the city during all of the siege and kept almost daily radio contact with the ECU until April 1993 and UCAH thereafter. His reports and others from the city indicated terrible human loss and a humanitarian situation far worse than elsewhere in the country. As explained above, UCAH spent considerable time trying to gain access to the city and when, on 15 October 1993, a UN assessment team finally landed in Kuito it confirmed that a large operation would have to be mounted immediately.

Kuito was an operational challenge for UN agencies and NGOs. UCAH negotiated the following procedures with both sides.

- One WFP cargo aeroplane landed at Kuito airport. WFP workers unloaded the aeroplane's cargo into two trucks.
- The two trucks left the airport, directly outside of which there was an 'humanitarian committee' comprising GoA and UNITA members who verified that both trucks held only humanitarian cargo.
- UNITA controlled the road from the airport to the city and placed one checkpoint along the stretch. Both trucks stopped at the checkpoint and continued only after being waved on by the respective UNITA controllers.
- At the end of the road leading from the airport to the town centre, one truck continued straight ahead and travelled into the UNITA part of the city, while the other truck turned right and stopped at a second UNITA check-point, where it was cleared to leave the zone under the party's control. After crossing a roundabout,

²² UCAH benefited from one of its senior staff member's expertise in security matters and operational experience in Angola to allow it to take a leadership role on security.

the truck stopped at a GoA checkpoint and entered the part of Kuito under government control.

- Once in its respective part of the city, each truck proceeded to a warehouse where WFP staff unloaded it.
- NGOs working with WFP picked up the food or non-food items in one of the two warehouses and implemented projects on either the GoA side of Kuito or in an UNITA area nearby.
- Expatriate UN agency and NGO staff could work in both parts of the town but they had to cross from one zone into the other at special check-points.
- UN agency and NGO offices and houses were on the GoA side of Kuito.
- The arrival and departure of cargo and personnel aeroplanes took place after authorisation was received from Luanda and Huambo, and the commanders on the ground were aware of schedules.

The political, military, and humanitarian situation in Kuito was tense, and the slightest incident could flare into a skirmish. The GoA had managed to hold on to the city despite all odds to the contrary, and could continue to do so only if it received supplies from Luanda. The government, therefore, commissioned aeroplanes to fly over the city and drop pallets of equipment for government troops in that hope that the pallets fell in the GoA zone. Sometimes they did; at other times they did not. When they fell into UNITA's zone or areas controlled by neither the GoA or UNITA, troops fought over the spoils. This became extremely dangerous, at times.

From October 1993 to July 1994, aid workers were evacuated from Kuito on four occasions. One evacuation took place by road. Aid workers crossed from the government zone to the UNITA zone, after which the party escorted them west to the city of Huambo. Once in Huambo, the workers were flown to Luanda. Usually, however, it was impossible for aid workers to cross from the government to the UNITA zone, hence they were stuck until the skirmish ended.

The worst of such incidents started on 26 May 1994 when staff from UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC were in the city. The workers were able to gather in two bunkers which the ICRC and MSF had prepared. During more than one week, the staff members stayed in the bunkers maintaining HF contact with their respective agency and UCAH, which was planning their evacuation.

UCAH was in a strong position to organise evacuations. First, the unit's direct link to the

SRSB enabled it to benefit from his high-level contacts with both sides to the conflict. Second, the unit had instant access to the GoA in Luanda and to UNITA in Huambo and constantly kept both sides informed of the situation on the ground and how it affected aid workers stuck in dangerous circumstances. Third, UCAH's working relations with UN agencies and NGOs were good. For example, UCAH could always count on WFP's collaboration to provide the logistics for evacuations.

As soon as the 26 May crisis broke, UCAH negotiated with the GoA in Luanda and with UNITA in Huambo to gain authorisation to carry out an evacuation. After considerable discussion, both sides granted permission for 4 June. Given the tense military situation on the ground, UCAH set up a structure whereby a high-level government official could be contacted in Luanda as events unfolded. Likewise, UNITA's humanitarian affairs coordinator was with the UCAH field adviser in Huambo monitoring events so that if problems occurred, messages could be sent by the GoA and UNITA to their respective people on the ground in Kuito.

On 4 June, two small passenger aeroplanes flew to the city. While one aeroplane landed, the other circled overhead. WFP's country director travelled on the aeroplane that landed and maintained constant contact with UCAH in Luanda and Huambo via HF radio.

After the first aeroplane landed, the humanitarian staff stuck in the city began to move from the GoA part into the UNITA zone, and on to the airport. The staff got stuck at the last UNITA check-point. Someone had not instructed the soldiers at the check-point to let the staff leave the city, and without clear orders the soldiers would not do so. The agency staff in Kuito contacted the WFP country director via walkie-talkie. He in turn relayed a message via HF radio to UCAH Luanda. This message was picked up by UCAH Huambo which immediately discussed the issue with the UNITA humanitarian affairs coordinator. He contacted UNITA's military who sent a message to Kuito. Within a few minutes the problem was solved and the staff proceeded to the airport and left the city.

In sum, UCAH brokered a 'window' with both sides to the conflict so that aid workers who were in danger and could no longer work in the area could be evacuated. UCAH organised and managed such evacuations, with the full operational support of WFP logistics, almost one dozen times during 1993 and 1994 and gained a reputation for

being willing and able to support operational agencies with their primary concern: security for their staff and equipment.

Freedom of Movement Crises

One of the basic principles on which humanitarian agencies counted to carry out their programmes was freedom of movement for its personnel and property. (See section IV above). Without it, agencies could not work. This was explained to both sides to the conflict on several occasions. Despite this, three incidents during which the principle was violated occurred.

On 17 October 1993, the aid operation to Kuito was just getting under way. UNITA had approved three cargo flights to the city that day on the understanding that one cargo flight would go to Huambo in accordance with the flight plan that WFP had organised. WFP and NGO staff travelled to Kuito on the first cargo flight and were to return to Luanda on the third. After the second flight had landed in Kuito, however, and no flight had gone to Huambo, UNITA announced that the third WFP flight could not land in Kuito; hence the aid workers were stuck. At the time, the military situation in the city was extremely tense and fighting could have broken out at any moment. If aid workers could not go to and leave the city at will, it would be too dangerous to carry out programmes there. The UCAH director flew to Kuito on the third flight and negotiated with UNITA from the aeroplane, but he was unable to gain the party's authorisation to land. Consequently, UCAH travelled to Huambo the following day, with the support of UNICEF and WFP, to negotiate access for a passenger aeroplane to go to Kuito to pick-up the aid workers.

The city of Malange was under siege throughout 1993 and 1994 and probably harboured the worst malnutrition in Angola. For example, in October 1993 up to 250 children were starving per day in the city. WFP organised an airlift to the city delivering some 1,000 MTs of food and non-food aid each week for UN agency and NGO projects. On average, ten WFP cargo flights flew to Malange per day. On several occasions, particularly on 2–3 March and 16–19 May 1994, cargo and passenger flights landing or already on the ground in Malange were hit by mortar shells. These incidents led to extensive negotiations between UCAH and UNITA, which at one stage claimed responsibility for the incidents by blaming 'bad communications'; although the party later retracted the statement and denied any involvement. While UCAH's discussions on

Malange were generally successful and usually led to the resumption of programmes, aid workers frequently got stuck in the city while such negotiations took place.²³ At one stage, UCAH's field adviser in Malange, who had gone to the city on a Saturday and was due back in Luanda the following Monday, got stuck in the city for thirty-eight days.

The GoA stopped all UN and ICRC cargo flights to Huambo and Uige effective 22 May 1994 explaining that if the UN could not fly to Malange safely, it could not do so to Huambo and Uige. Personnel flights could continue, thereby allowing UN agency, NGO, and ICRC personnel the freedom to go to and leave both cities. UCAH worked hard to convince the GoA that it should allow humanitarian flights to continue to Huambo and Uige, particularly to Huambo where hundreds of thousands of Angolans needed aid to survive. However, these negotiations were unsuccessful. UNITA responded to the government's move by refusing to authorise any cargo or personnel flights nationwide, effective 13 June. Further, UNITA stopped UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC from leaving the city of Huambo by road claiming that the GoA was bombing different parts of Huambo province and that it was not safe. Information indicated, however, that the least safe place in the province was the city of Huambo itself, against which the GoA's air force was waging an air campaign. Arrangements were made to fly the UCAH director to Huambo so that he and the UCAH field adviser could negotiate with UNITA's leadership. Upon arrival, however, UNITA refused to speak to the director and insisted that he leave the city immediately. In addition, they obliged those who wished to leave the city to stay. As of that moment, the United Nations considered all UN and NGO humanitarian staff in Huambo to be there without freedom of movement. The SRSG and troika ambassadors protested vehemently and called on UNITA to allow humanitarian staff to move as necessary to carry out their work. This the party did, and UN agencies and NGOs left the city of Huambo on 17 June 1994 in protest over UNITA's actions.²⁴

²³ On several occasions, the SRSG spoke to the GoA and UNITA at the highest level about the targeting of WFP aeroplanes in Malange. This most likely helped to resolve problems.

²⁴ The ICRC and MSF did not participate in the protest and stayed in Huambo. The country director of CARE International also stayed in Huambo, although all other CARE staff left.

Security Coordination when Aid Workers are Under Threat

Huambo was Angola's second largest city and stood strategically in the centre of the country. It was occupied by UNITA in March 1993, after a fifty-five days of heavy fighting. Humanitarian needs in Huambo were acute because of the fighting and UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC placed considerable emphasis on gaining access to the city and the province and starting programmes there. Aid agencies' efforts were hampered by political and military considerations, however, and emergency relief activities only expanded in October 1993.

UCAH placed a representative in Huambo in February 1994. In addition to its main function of overall coordination of humanitarian assistance, UCAH collected and shared information related to security in order to support aid workers' safety when necessary. UCAH initiated and led many meetings in Luanda and Huambo related to security. For example, one priority was to make the Angolan Government in Luanda and UNITA in Huambo sensitive to humanitarian organisations' concerns and to keep both parties informed about security incidents affecting UN agencies and NGOs. The meetings that UCAH led enabled UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC to discuss and analyse security issues. It also allowed security information related to humanitarian affairs to be centralised and passed on to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who maintained separate contacts with the Angolan Government and UNITA. In Huambo, UCAH took the following steps on behalf of UN agencies and NGOs to improve security conditions there:

- wrote a security plan and shared it for comments with UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC. The security plan was updated every two months and handed to UNITA;
- organised the provision and maintenance of communications equipment, including a repeater for ultra-high frequency (UHF), HF radio with telex-over-radio capacity, and a satellite telephone for emergency use;²⁵

²⁵ UCAH and UNDP were slow to place communications equipment in Huambo: The HF base station was installed in March 1994; telex over radio arrived the following month; the satellite telephone was delivered in July 1994; and the UHF repeater, necessary to enable aid workers to communicate from

- built a large bunker for all UN agency and NGO staff, and encouraged NGOs to build smaller bunkers at their residences and offices; and
- monitored security events and shared security information with UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC on a regular basis.

In late October 1994, the Angolan Government's army began an advance on the city of Huambo from the west and the south. UCAH Huambo called on agencies observe the recommendations in the security plan, and coordinated meetings each morning and evening to review the situation. UCAH Luanda, in consultation with the SRSG, took measures to evacuate humanitarian staff. This included sending a UN Boeing 727 from Luanda to the city. The mission failed because UNITA did not think it safe for the aeroplane to land in Huambo.

During the first days of November, the government's advance towards the city continued. UNITA prepared to defend the city and encouraged the population to leave. This caused some panic and security events, such as theft and looting, increased. Most residents expected a battle similar to the 'fifty-five days' which rocked the city from January to March 1993.

UCAH coordinated UN agency-NGO meetings in Luanda and Huambo to analyse the situation. This led the UN agency and NGO representatives in Huambo to adopt phase III of the 'Huambo Security Plan', which indicated moving to a UN building or a previously agreed to alternative. A consensus was reached amongst UN agencies and NGOs to accept ICRC's invitation to move to the ICRC Huambo complex in Bomb Alta., about 3 km east of the city centre. The compound was not in the line of fire and was slightly outside the city. Organisations agreed that the aid workers would be safer together and by Saturday 5 November 1994 all expatriate aid workers (31 ICRC and 23 UN agency and NGO) were at Bomb Alta.

Three people were managing events at Bomb Alta: The ICRC officer-in-charge, the ICRC Geneva security adviser, and the UCAH field adviser. (The ICRC head of delegation was away). This group of three handled organisation, security, and diplomacy respectively. They maintained contact with UNITA and the FAA (once the latter had taken control of the city), and

one end of the city to the other, arrived in September. At times, UCAH had to rely on the better communications equipment of organisations, such as Concern and the ICRC, to carry out its work.

gathered as much information as possible on events as they unfolded. All of this information was passed on to UCAH Luanda, which forwarded it to the SRSG in Lusaka so that he, too, could maintain contact with the Angolan Government and UNITA on the issue.

In Luanda, UCAH became the operations centre for UN agencies and NGOs, and liaised with the UNAVEM security office and the ICRC delegation constantly. (UNAVEM did not have any personnel in Huambo). Staff worked around the clock to maintain an operations room with maps and the HF communications room. In addition, UCAH held briefings for embassies, which had nationals in Huambo.

The FAA was coordinating its advance and occupation of Huambo from Catumbela, Benguela province, hence UCAH asked two of its field advisers and the WFP country director to go there to strengthen UN contacts with the Angolan Government and its army. The three UN staff members were joined by the ICRC-Huambo head of delegation, who had been outside Angola when events started, and, together, they worked with UCAH and the ICRC in Luanda and Huambo to support the safety and evacuation of the UN agency-NGO-ICRC aid workers.

Two days after the FAA had occupied the city of Huambo, the UN and the ICRC decided on a joint evacuation of the fifty-four aid workers. The WFP country director accompanied an ICRC DC-3 aeroplane to Huambo, where the UCAH field adviser made arrangements for all aid workers to move to the airport with the FAA guaranteeing safe passage. Once at Huambo airport, the field adviser met the FAA's local commander and established communications with the WFP country director aboard the DC-3 so that the aeroplane could land safely. Having landed, the aid workers entered the aircraft and departed for Catumbela airport. Upon arrival, UN and ICRC aeroplanes flew the aid workers to Luanda where all arrived in the evening of Friday 11 November 1994.

Several lessons were learned from the events in Huambo:

- UCAH's coordination of the integrated UN-NGO-ICRC effort enabled centralised information sharing and analysis;
- UCAH promptly shared all information with the SRSG, who was in Lusaka, so that he could discuss issues with Angolan Government and UNITA representatives there;

- UCAH took advantage of all available means and capacities in Luanda, Huambo, and Benguela;
- communications equipment (including HF radios, telex-over-radio, and satellite telephones) allowed all actors in Luanda, Huambo, and Benguela to maintain contact around the clock;
- the team of UCAH field advisers and the WFP country director in Benguela, where the FAA had its operation's headquarters, enabled the UN to maintain around-the-clock relations with the FAA's decision makers;
- humanitarian staff Huambo worked as a team; and
- the UN-NGO-ICRC press black-out until the aid workers were successfully evacuated allowed decision makers to concentrate on security issues and minimised press speculation about events.

Security Recommendations for Luanda and Angola

During 1993 and 1994, government police and security forces controlled ordinary crime quite well in areas under GoA control. Luanda was a relatively safe city during most of 1993 and 1994. Shortly after the signing of the Lusaka Protocol, however, expatriates and later Angolans became the targets of organised crime. Most cases were violent and involved groups of armed men holding up expatriates outside restaurants to steal their vehicles or of following them home and entering residences to steal all of their belongings. Physical violence against expatriates and Angolans became more prevalent as 1995 progressed.

This situation led to UCAH writing and disseminating an extensive document on security measures to be taken in Luanda and the provinces to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime. The paper also included a section on correct radio use, medical evacuations, and additional security measures for staff members in the provinces.

Evacuation of Foreigners

The city of Kuito was long known to be one of Angola's gems: a colonial town surrounded by rolling hills in the country's highlands. Many Portuguese families moved to Kuito during the colonial period and decided to stay when Angola became independent.

In January 1993, the battle for Kuito began between the GoA and UNITA. UNITA was shunted out of the city initially, but laid siege to it and started to edge its way back in. UNITA had great difficulty re-entering the town and taking control of it, despite the party having won over eighty percent of the vote there in the September 1992 elections. The battle of Kuito continued mercilessly until UNITA declared a unilateral cease-fire effective 20 September 1993. The government troops in Kuito reciprocated and fighting stopped for the first time in nine months.

The Portuguese Embassy in Luanda was particularly concerned about its citizens in Kuito. It was unclear if the lull in the fighting would last so the embassy pushed for a quick evacuation of any foreigners who wished to leave. In such cases, the International Committee of the Red Cross is usually called on to organise evacuations. Indeed, three months earlier in Huambo, the ICRC had negotiated and managed the exodus of hundreds of Portuguese from that city. On 30 September, UNITA issued a communiqué explaining that, in its view, 'Conditions were fulfilled for the evacuation of foreigners...in [Kuito]', and that, 'the modalities of the evacuation will be coordinated with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General'.

In early-October, UNITA informed the SRSG that a mission to Kuito was possible. On 15 October UCAH led the first needs assessment mission to Kuito since the siege had started, and a large aid programme started the following day. The SRSG and UCAH took advantage of the positive momentum to push for the foreigners' evacuation. The GoA and UNITA gave their permission for the process to take place on 22 October 1993. On that day, UCAH and WFP organised the evacuation from Kuito to Luanda of 121 citizens: 94 Portuguese, 18 Cape Verdeans, 6 São Tomeans, and 3 Brazilians. Transport was provided from the city centre to the airport in an open truck. At the airport, the evacuees boarded a cargo aeroplane, which flew them to São Tomé, where the respective embassies assumed custody of their citizens.

Monitoring the Road Situation

Throughout the war in Angola, UCAH tried to negotiate access from the coast to the major towns in the interior along one of the two major road corridors: Luanda–N'Dalatando–Malange and Benguela/Lobito–Huambo–Kuito. Unfortunately, these negotiations did not succeed during the war, probably because both sides were concerned

that the use of such road corridors would lead to a military advantage for the other side. If the main road corridors had been open humanitarian organisations would have gained access to several communities along the corridors and saved millions of dollars that were spent on the airlift. Shortly after the Lusaka Protocol was signed, UCAH once again approached the GoA and UNITA and encouraged them to open the roads. Indeed, freedom of movement for people and goods was part of the peace agreement.

In theory, the UNAVEM was the best equipped organisation to assess and monitor the road situation in Angola after the Lusaka Protocol was signed. UNAVEM had over fifty team sites dotted around the nation by April 1995. Its observers were active, whenever possible, driving around their team site areas to assess the condition of the roads and bridges. Many of the UNAVEM observers had specific qualifications to do this and wrote useful situation reports. However, the road information from the team sites was not consolidated at UNAVEM headquarters.

In light of this, UCAH started a small data base of information on roads and bridges in Angola. The unit asked UN agencies and IOs/NGOs to provide any relevant information that they and a staff member in UCAH-CMAO collated it. UCAH also kept a map, which was updated daily, showing which roads were open, suspected of being open, and closed. This information was shared with UNAVEM whenever it came in, and with UN agencies and NGOs at Monday briefings and by way of the *Information Bulletin*. Monitoring the road situation in Angola in this way allowed UCAH to organise humanitarian missions along part or all of the two most important corridors, and to make recommendations on the logistics of current and future humanitarian assistance.

X. CAPACITY BUILDING

The Angolan Government

While UCAH did not have any specific capacity building projects for the government, the unit's staff spent considerable time and effort working with members of the government at the central and provincial levels to include them in all aspects of disaster response coordination: assessment, planning, monitoring, information exchange, and resource. As mentioned above, the GoA controlled only about twenty percent of the country when UCAH was established and the government asked the UN to coordinate humanitarian activities on its behalf. UCAH did not take this position at face value, however, and actively encouraged the government (principally the Ministry of Social Affairs, MINARS) to get as involved as possible in the coordination and implementation of emergency relief activities.

MINARS promoted government activities throughout the emergency. Although the overwhelming percentage of the government's budget was spent on defence during 1993 and 1994, the GoA did make the following contributions to humanitarian assistance: In 1993, the GoA contributed US\$ 10 million on relief items, of which US\$ 6 million went toward food aid, US\$ 3.6 million on the non-food items, and US\$ 400,000 on seeds and tools. In addition, the GoA spent Nkw 6 billion on dried fish and salt at local markets to complement the diets of IDPs. Finally, the GoA exempted humanitarian organisations from paying airport fees for their aircraft and sold fuel at subsidised prices.²⁶

The signing of the Lusaka Protocol on 20 November 1994 demanded a change in the coordination mechanism which had existed during the previous eighteen months. While war raged, UCAH maintained separate, parallel discussions with the government in Luanda and UNITA in Huambo. In times of peace, however, UCAH felt that all coordination should take place in Luanda. Consequently, the Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG) was established. This group, which was headed by the Minister for Social Affairs and the UCAH director, included members from Angolan governmental ministries, UNITA, and UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP. Observer status was granted to some donors (European Union,

Portugal, Russian Federation, and USA), NGOs (one Angolan and one international) and the ICRC. (See section VIII above). The humanitarian coordination group had the following objectives:

- improve general understanding of the humanitarian crisis in Angola by promoting needs assessments and sectoral evaluation missions;
- monitor access to civilians in need and make recommendations to the Joint Commission, as necessary;
- gather and analyse information to make recommendations concerning food security;
- track financial contributions to the 1995 *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola* and encourage donors to support NGO programmes;²⁷
- facilitate information exchange with donors and NGOs about humanitarian needs and the financial and human resource capacity to respond; and
- keep the Joint Commission informed about the humanitarian situation in the country.

The Humanitarian Coordination Group included a small secretariat, which was responsible for organising meetings, preparing briefing notes, and monitoring the implementation of decisions that were taken by the group. UCAH put considerable effort into the HCG, assigning one international staff member to work with it almost full-time in the hope that it would provide a forum in which Angolan leaders could increase their capacity to take on the task of humanitarian coordination. Further, as part of a preparedness capacity building exercise, UCAH felt that the HCG should be able to manage and coordinate any future emergencies that might affect Angola. The diagram below shows the HCG's links to various entities involved in humanitarian affairs in Angola.

Institute of Mine Action

Mine action (an overall term to cover mine awareness, survey, clearance, and training) was, as noted earlier, particularly important in Angola, a country that might have more mines than people and the record holder for 'amputees per capita'. The issue had to be dealt with comprehensively to rehabilitate the country after war and

²⁶ 1994 *United Nations Revised Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Angola*, February 1994, p. 29.

²⁷ DHA Geneva and UCAH tracked the response to previous appeals during 1993 and 1994 and worked closely with the HCG on this task.

provide a base for long-term development. While many believed mine action to be a military issue, which was normally handled by military or peace-keeping components of governments or the United Nations, the organisations involved in humanitarian assistance in Angola believed that the issue was a long-term problem that affected civilians; hence a humanitarian agency should coordinate the process.

Initial coordination of mine action was handled by UCAH, which created the Central Mine Action Office (UCAH-CMAO). The office worked closely with the government to ensure the eventual hand-over of coordination from the UN to the GoA, which was preparing to coordinate and manage the issue by creating a national institute for mine action.

Institute of Demobilisation and Reintegration

According to UCAH, the successful demobilisation and reintegration of soldiers hinged on actually 'converting' former combatants into civilians. This, in the view of the unit, could be accomplished best by allowing civilians to handle the process. As mentioned above (see section VI) much work took place during 1994 to prepare for demobilisation and reintegration, based on past experience of Angola and other countries in the world. Such experiences showed that the establishment of an Angolan institute should take place but that it should include members from the GoA and UNITA. Hence, work undertaken by UCAH's Demobilisation and Reintegration Office (UCAH-DRO) during 1994 and 1995 highlighted the need to capacitate the GoA and UNITA to assume such a responsibility.

Capacity Building for UNITA

During the war of 1993 and 1994, the United Nations considered UNITA an illegal occupant of much of Angola. UNITA was not a political equal to the Government of Angola, which was elected in a democratic process deemed 'generally free and fair'. UCAH did not approach UNITA with the same capacity building ideas that were offered to the government, for example management and coordination. However, UCAH promoted the incorporation of some of the party's members into aspects of the humanitarian programme, such as the assessment and design of agriculture and health projects throughout Huambo province. When the Lusaka Protocol was signed and the Humanitarian Coordination Group was created, UNITA was invited to participate in overall capacity building efforts.

Angolan NGOs

The nature of emergency relief, which was high profile and expensive, discriminated against Angolan NGOs. UCAH's policy was to create an environment in which Angolan and international NGOs were as equal as possible. The Letter of Affiliation, an agreement on cooperation between NGOs and the UN in Angola, provided a good basis for this. As part of the agreement NGOs received UN endorsed identity cards and access to free transport to project sites on UN personnel aircraft. Further, the unit decided that the working language with NGOs was in the Angolan national language, Portuguese. Almost all correspondence and information sent to NGOs and UCAH's NGO meetings were held in Portuguese.

UCAH encouraged Angolan NGOs to participate in humanitarian assessments and programmes. The unit provided support to national NGOs writing programme proposals and helped them establish contacts with UN agencies, such as UNICEF and WFP. UCAH addressed the resource problem encountered by Angolan NGOs in the scope of the ASDI-UCAH Mechanism. The Swedish Government, which allocated money to this fund, initially preferred that UCAH not recommend Angolan NGO projects for financing unless an expatriate NGO could oversee the project's implementation. At first, UCAH handled this by insisting that expatriate NGO projects with capacity building components for Angolan NGOs be given priority funding. Four months later, UCAH succeeded in convincing the donor to change its position so that funds could be transferred directly from the Swedish Government to Angolan NGOs.

Preparing for Transition from UCAH to UNDP

UCAH promoted the policy that relief activities be placed in a development context. The signing of the Lusaka Protocol signalled the impending 'end' of the emergency and hence UCAH's exit from Angola. Within the UN system, the United Nations Development Programme was responsible for supporting the government's efforts to develop the country. The agency developed a strategy to support the GoA design a programme for the national rehabilitation of Angola, and UCAH worked very closely with UNDP to ensure complementary UCAH/UNDP activities leading to a smooth transition from the UN's humanitarian structure to that of the Angolan Government.²⁸

²⁸ The UCAH director assumed the positions of UNDP resident representative and UN resident coordinator in September 1994 and continued all three roles until he left Angola in June 1995.

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