

Civil Society in Angola: Inroads, Space and Accountability

Inge Amundsen
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Without this positive appreciation by CSOs in Angola of the project and the project team, writing this report would have been impossible. They have all expressed that they are looking forward to read the report. With our appraisal, observations, criticism, and well-meant advice, we hope to contribute something back to the Angolan CSO scene.

This report is based on information received from talking to staff of NGOs in Angola and other informants, but the report and its findings are the sole responsibility of the evaluators, and do not necessarily reflect the views of persons or organisations interviewed. The opinions and judgements are also ours, not necessarily reflecting the views of the Norwegian Embassy or Government. Any remaining factual errors, inconsistencies and omissions are the sole responsibility of the authors.

Bergen and Luanda, October 2006

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1. Introduction

In Angola, civil society engagement is essential to achieve a minimum of governmental transparency and accountability, as the oil income is booming and the electoral process is still on hold. There have been no elections in Angola since 1992, and with huge future oil income increases, civil society and the international community are the only forces that can make the MPLA government exercise proper respect for human rights and redistribute the incomes from mineral resources.

With no elections for almost 15 years; the electoral channel for citizens to express their policy preferences through elections is blocked. The Government of Angola is not being held accountable through elections. Therefore, Angolan citizens have few other means to express their policy preferences but through civil society organisations, the media and direct action. Civil society in Angola will have to establish and defend their right to insight and oversight (including access to information), and to defend their right to organisation as a means of popular participation, consultation and voice. Civil society has an important role to play to establish a minimum of transparency and accountability in public affairs in Angola.

According to a recent Human Rights report by the US Department of State (2006), there are now more than 100 international NGOs operating in Angola, and approximately 350 domestic NGOs. According to a recent directory of ONGs by the government's *Unidade técnica de coordenação da ajuda humanitária* (UTCAH), there are 97 international, 78 national and 15 church organisations (UTCAH 2006). There are probably more national NGOs operating, especially at the local level, at the same time as listed NGOs can very well be insignificant and inoperative.

The numbers notwithstanding, it was not until the beginning of the 1990s that civil society became a factor of any political significance, when the long history of authoritarian and one-party rule was somewhat moderated in Angola's first democratic opening. Still, the lack of elections, one-party dominance, a historic legacy of socialist rule and a current urge by the ruling elite of full control of income from natural resources are restricting factors on civil society organisation.

The primary aim of this report is to develop an understanding of the political role of civil society organisations in contemporary Angola. More specifically we will look at the role that civil society can play in enhancing transparency and accountability in public financial management, in other words how civil society can contribute to transparency, accountability and sound management of the rapidly increasing mineral wealth of Angola.

In this study we are primarily looking at civil society organisations that have a focus on the oil revenue policies of Angola, on the petroleum sector and on pro-poor budget programming and execution. To what extent can civil society organisations in Angola have an actual and potential interest in and influence on the Government's income and budget policies and processes? This is the question of the "missing millions"; of taxation and revenues from the mineral sectors (mainly oil, gas and diamonds), of public financial management of petroleum and other minerals revenues, of the budget process itself, on redistribution and pro-poor budgeting, finance policy implementation, and the transparency and corporate social responsibility of international companies operating in Angola.

A second and broader aim of this report is to develop an understanding of the forces and actors that can possibly contribute to better governance in Angola, including more transparency in public affairs and strengthened accountability of public servants and elected officials. This broader perspective aims at identifying and categorizing the existing organisations and CSOs engaged in (or with a potential for advocacy for) good governance and accountability in Angola, including basic human rights, transparency, voice and participation at both the central and local level. This broader aim will consequently include some assessment of potential opposition to the ruling elite in Angola,

and throw some light on civil society's role as an agent of change in the process of democratisation in Angola.

1.1 Methodology

The method employed is primarily document consultation including information collected from various reviews, reports and articles, and printed material from various organisations. To this we added in-depth interviews with representatives and officials of relevant organisations in Angola, and interviews with some well-informed observers.

Our method is basically one of qualitative assessments and case studies, since hard data (statistics and numerical evidence) on issues like political will, cooptation practices, influence levels or efficiency are hard if not impossible to come by. We have mainly had to rely on anecdotal evidence, on information triangulation and our own judgment of interviewees' perceptions and statements.

Besides, the NGO and CSO scene in Angola is a mixed picture, and a universal understanding of the role of organisations cannot be accurate. For instance, some organisations are using extra-democratic means, including violence, bribes, and patronage, and some organisations are obedient tools for the government. There is a continuum from radical opposition to obedient cooperation with government, and it cannot be taken for granted that all civil society organisations will promote democratic and pro-poor principles and put pressure on the government for democratisation.

1.2 Historical background

Like in other African colonies, the colonial power (Portugal) did not allow independent political activity that could challenge or threaten the colonial order in Angola. Except for religious activity, other organisation principles like trade unionism, youth, ethnic and regional associations, or political parties were seen as destabilizing forces, resistance, and systematically suppressed.

Thus, at the event of Portuguese withdrawal and independence in 1975, civil society was feeble and underdeveloped in Angola, at the expense of the armed resistance groups that had led the resistance movements and fought the liberation war. Besides, due to liberation ideologies and strategic geopolitical alliances at the time of independence, one of the stronger liberation movements in Angola embarked on the Marxist-Leninist ideology and organisational principles, despite the rather ethnic/regional origins of the liberation movements.

1.3 Political background

In addition to the colonial, pre-independence legacy, there are at least three political factors in recent Angolan history that have been impeding the development of an active civil society movement in the country. These factors are the Marxist-Leninist ideology adopted by the post-independence MPLA government, the establishment of a highly presidential political system in Angola (even by African standards), and a clientelist system of favours and patronage.

In addition, there is a relatively closed, authoritarian, and self-confident political elite in Angola, which believes it possesses political legitimacy by having won the liberation struggle, by having won "the imperialist incursion and civil war imposed on it by UNITA, apartheid South Africa and the USA", as well as having won the elections in 1992. It believes it has the right to rule the country, without the interference of contending social forces, organised as civil society organisations, opposition parties or otherwise.

1.3.1 Communism

One of the factors that have been impeding civil society formation in Angola is the legacy of communism, or rather the Angolan version of Marxism-Leninism. This ideology was adopted by the now ruling party MPLA prior to decolonisation, as a strategic and ideological basis for its anti-colonial struggle and as a basis for its struggle with the other anti-colonial movements FNLA, UNITA and others over the control of the post-colonial state.¹

Although Marxism-Leninism was abandoned officially by MPLA as the party ideology at its third congress in late 1990, authoritarian practices still lingers on in the party structure and in the heads and minds of both party cadres and the broader public. The women's organisation *OMA*, the youth organisation *JMPLA* which were merged into the ruling party as its "mass organisations" are still party "affiliates", for instance, and the party has a "cell structure" that reaches down into local communities as well as workplaces. More importantly, the communist tradition of the communist party as superimposed on the state apparatus is still felt in Angola; several important policy discussions have not taken place in the parliament or ministries, but within the MPLA structure; party membership is still necessary to obtain and maintain most public positions of authority; and the party is still overseeing ministries, local councils and various organisations through its cell network.

There is consequently an ideological-historical legacy of single party centralism and control in Angola. Although the revised constitution of 1992, inspired by Rousseau, opened up for organisations not affiliated to the ruling party, large tracts of civil society is still controlled by the ruling party as "party affiliated organisations".²

1.3.2 Presidentialism

In formal terms, the President of the Republic is not only the Head of State, but also the Head of Government, the commander of the armed forces, and the President of the ruling party. Thus, Angola displays the features of presidentialism to a large degree (Amundsen 2005:4-6).

First of all, presidentialism is displayed in how the government is composed. The President of the Republic and the National Assembly are to be elected (according to the constitution) in separate elections, for fixed terms of office. The President of the Republic is elected in direct elections for a five year term, and the Government with its ministers and vice ministers are all nominated (appointed and can be dismissed) by the President. Furthermore, the President is effectively the Head of Government (presiding over the Council of Ministers). The President cannot be voted out of office by parliamentary vote of no confidence or censure.

Besides, there is only a constitutionally weak premier, i.e. a Prime Minister who is not Head of Government and is subject to the President's exclusive powers to nominate and dismiss). The cabinet is not subject to the confidence of the legislature. The President can dissolve the Parliament, but the Parliament cannot dismiss the President. This constitutional fact is the basis for placing Angola formally in the group of presidential systems, despite the official Angolan claim that the country is semi-presidential.³

¹ For an excellent analysis of the post-colonial period, see Hodges 2004.

² These government (controlled or initiated) NGOs, called *GONGOS*, are not covered in this study although in the official language, they are part of the "organised civil society". In Angola they include the women, youth and pioneer branches of the ruling party like *Organização da Mulher Angolana* (OMA), *Juventude do MPLA* (JMPLA), and *Organização dos Pioneiros Agostinho Neto* (OPA); the President's Fund (*Fundação Eduardo dos Santos – FESA*), the First's Lady social Fund – *Fundo de Solidariedade Social - Lwini*; the party-controlled trade unions (the main union *União Nacional dos Trabalhadores Angolanos – UNTA* and its member organisations like the journalists union - *União dos Jornalistas*); and the party-controlled media.

³ The current Prime Minister Fernando da Piedade Dias dos Santos ("Nandó") is entrusted of 'directing, guiding and coordinating the general action of the Government', and 'politically responsible' before the President of the Republic under the terms of the Constitutional Law, but at the same time and in all practice the President of the Republic is the

Secondly, the President has absolute discretionary powers to nominate (and dismiss) his government; initiative for constitutional reforms and new legislation emanates largely from the presidency, and the Parliament's budgetary powers are weak. The Parliament's role in discussing, altering, formally approving and thus controlling the state budgets of Angola has only over the last three years developed from nothing to something. Although the Parliament will – according to the Constitution – discuss and approve the *National Plan* and the *General Budget* (and its execution reports), as well as contracting and granting loans, this role is limited in practical terms. Emergency and secrecy provisions, vested elite interests and high levels of corruption has restricted parliamentary insight into state income and expenditure, and much remains to be done in order to have full parliamentary oversight and an effective budget control.⁴

Thirdly, the ruling party MPLA is in full control of the parliamentary process through its absolute majority (129 of 220 deputies). Coupled with MPLA's history of one-party rule and the established informal tactics of presidential domination, it seems that Angola has instituted a political practice (tradition) in which the Parliament exercises its possibilities of checks and balances only to a limited extent.

Lastly, there is “*a high degree of presidential intervention in the day-to-day management of state affairs. Presidential advisers often have greater influence than ministers, leading to a situation where ministers are unable to assert their authority*” (Hodges 2004:56). President dos Santos has been in power for more than a quarter of a century, and does not naturally take to an open society.

1.3.3 Clientelism and patronage

The described system of presidentialism in Angola is coupled with a concentration of political and economic power on a few hands. Angola is a country of extreme economic inequalities. A prolonged civil war and sustained income from oil and diamonds has created tremendous riches for the few and extreme poverty for the majority; a small elite with access to the government's oil revenues and oil economy, and the vast majority living in an economy destroyed by war and without access to even the most basic services.

Neopatrimonialism and clientelism are characteristics of most of Africa's states, and include patronage politics, various forms of rent-seeking and prebendalism. Angola is exhibiting these features to a large degree, because the oil and diamond rent enables the regime to render material favours to clients in the exchange of political support. For instance, state control over imports enables the regime to control vested interests in the import business, and insert important allies into the patrimonial system. The excessive number of government employees (and politicians!) can also be seen as a part of the patronage logic.

In addition to a political culture of administrative secrecy and confidentiality, there is also a culture of clientelism and favouritism. This includes practices like co-optations (the buying off of political rivals, including leading members of NGOs), deliberately blurred rules and regulations (and the ensuing bureaucratic hurdles, like for instance the excessive time it will take to register a new NGO by the Ministry of Social Affairs), and a general distrust of NGOs by various government agencies.⁵

Head of Government and leading government meetings. There was even a dispute between the two men when the Prime Minister called for a government meeting without the President's knowledge, and dos Santos had to reaffirm his authority.

⁴ According to a statement of IMF Deputy Managing Director, Mr. Takatoshi Kato, upon his visit to Angola in October 2004; “*the Government needs to build upon recent advances to meet the President's objective that scarce resources are used in the best possible manner for the people of Angola who have borne immense sacrifices during the last two decades. This will involve further efforts to enhance transparency in the Government's budget and central bank operations, including the management of oil resources*” (<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2004/pr04233.htm> [02.11.04]). See also the 2004 Human Rights Watch report “Some Transparency, No Accountability” (<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/angola0104/angola0104.pdf> [100605]).

⁵ Perhaps can be added the persistent rumours in Luanda that the main “opposition” party UNITA is seeking a negotiated settlement with the ruling party MPLA in the form of a merger of the two parties; the calculation of UNITA cadres being that positions are better secured in cooperation with MPLA than in the upcoming elections.

1.4 Economic background

In economic terms, the emergence of a strong civil society in Angola has been restricted by an increasing dominance of mineral extraction industries, a lack of economic opportunities for independent businesses, and a lack of an independent middle class. The Angolan economy has been and still is highly government controlled, with the state oil company SONANGOL almost as a state within the state. The ruling ideology, strategy and the civil war excluded foreign ownership as well as private enterprise during the single party era, and the small middle class (bourgeoisie) is basically a state-dependent group of officials and state employees.⁶

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Angola has seen processes of violent accumulation and “primitive privatisation”, whereby government enterprises and resources are being privatised, but in a process that has largely transferred ownership to individuals well within the ruling elite.⁷ With government restrictions on private enterprise still in operation, the development of an independent group of business and enterprise people is severely limited, and so is consequently the development of interest organisations based on business and ownership interests as well as political parties based on these.

In addition to these economic, structural limitations in the economic base for the development of independent interest organisations, the ‘resource curse’ also limits the emergence of independent actors.

The political science theory of the ‘resource curse’ holds that regimes with easy access to mineral or other wealth will be chronically hard to democratise.⁸ These regimes can keep taxes low, and consequently citizen participation, scrutiny and control also at a low level. (There will be no ‘social contract’ between a government imposing taxes and a citizenry imposing control). Furthermore, it underdevelops the local economy and consequently also the economic interest groups by keeping the exchange rate high, imports high and local production low. Sudden and substantial mineral wealth also gives the ruling elite the financial muscle it needs to buy the military hardware and other means to defend themselves against any rivals to its power.

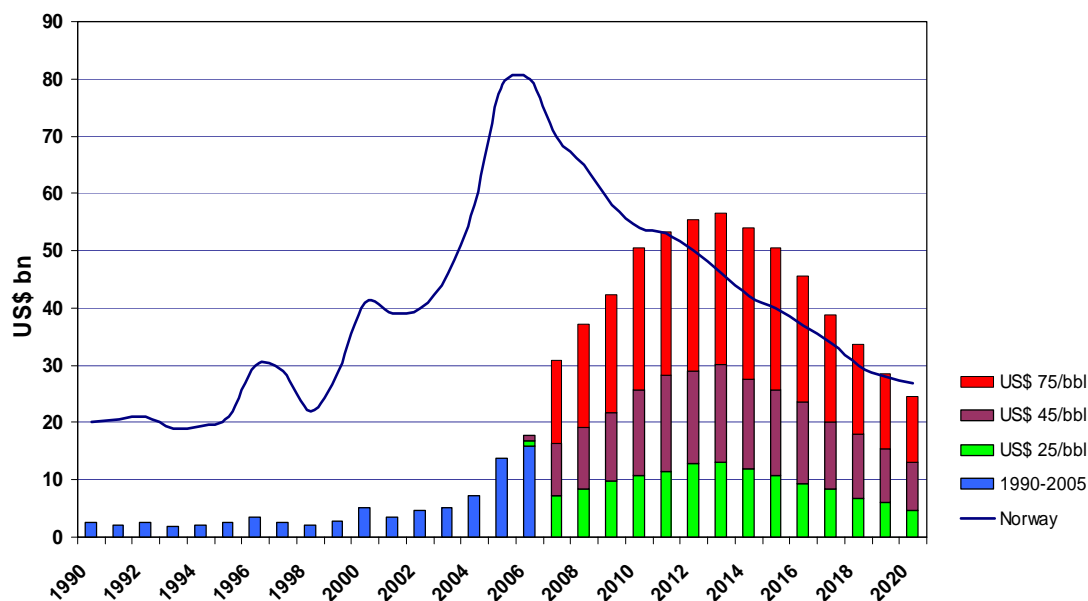
Angola probably falls within this category, and many observers will claim that it is “cursed” by oil and diamonds, and that the ruling elite has demonstrated its willingness to resort to violence to defend its resource extraction practices, if necessary.⁹

⁶ In the words of Chatham House report, the main economic agents in Angola includes the presidency (with powerful, mostly unelected officials who generally do not take orders from formal state structures), Sonangol and Endiama (the national oil and diamonds companies), the MPLA (with its own economic stakes), the finance and a few other ministries (petroleum and infrastructure), “the generals” (who made big profits during the war and remain powerful) and the “*Empresários de Confiança*” (powerful private business people, often from old MPLA families, who set up profitable monopolies and oligopolies). (Chatham House 2005, chapter 3, page 8).

⁷ This is the development of a *rentier class*, in Marxist terminology. This is a historic stage of most developing countries, accordingly, in which the state should be actively used to build a capitalist class, a national *bourgeoisie*. But, without transparency and accountability, there is a great risk that the process will degenerate into even more primitive extraction, monopolisation, corruption and social inequality.

⁸ The thesis of the “resource curse” refers to the paradox that countries with an abundance of natural resources have less economic growth than countries without these natural resources. This may happen for many different reasons, including a decline in the competitiveness of other economic sectors, underinvestment in education and mismanagement of revenues from the natural resource sector. Note that the source of the curse is not natural resources, but government mismanagement when resources are present. The term ‘resource curse’ was first used by Richard Auty in 1993 to describe how countries rich in natural resources were not able to use that wealth to boost their economies and how, counter-intuitively, these countries had lower economic growth than countries without an abundance of natural resources. However, the idea that natural resources might be more a curse than a blessing began to emerge in the 1980’s. Numerous studies, including a notable one by Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner, have shown a link between natural resource abundance and poor economic growth.

⁹ Several observers have seen the civil war, and especially the last years of it, in terms of a struggle over natural resources and a struggle over the state which is the principal avenue to controlling resources, more than as a struggle of ideology or anything else.

Table one: Projected government oil income¹⁰

Besides, ironically enough, it has been argued that the massive oil income and GNP growth in Angola will make it *less* likely that people will engage in politics in general, and in NGOs with a political purpose in particular. This we have also seen from other countries; the ambitious and enterprising individuals will rather seek a career within a rapidly expanding economy, than to challenge the political order.

1.5 Civil Society and government politics

In addition to the historical and structural factors described above that are inhibiting to civil society organisations in Angola, there is also a deliberate government policy of restricting the room for manoeuvre and the possible political impact of civil society organisations.

The MPLA government has a tradition of communist and corporatist control and use of mass organisations and the party still mobilises and controls women and youth through the sub-organisations for women, youth and “pioneers”; OMA (*Organização da Mulher Angolana*), JMPLA (*Juventude do MPLA*), and OPA (*Organização dos Pioneiros Agostinho Neto*). These and other government controlled “mass organisations” for sports, culture and social work (*Movimento Social Espontâneo*, *Associação dos Jovens provenientes da Zâmbia* (AJAPRAZ), *Fundação Eduardo dos Santos* (FESA) and *Fundo de Solidariedade Social Lwiny* of the first lady Ana Paula dos Santos, etc.) are all used to implement the Angolan regime’s strategy and to show legitimacy.¹¹

Secondly, even when the constitution was amended in 1992 to allow for NGO registration and (relatively free) activity, the laws, if implemented, can restrict NGOs by giving the government the right to determine where and what projects each NGO can implement, and by requiring them to

¹⁰ The table is taken from David Morrison’s (Wood Mackenzie) presentation at the *Angola Petroleum Revenue Management Workshops*, Luanda, May 2006. Figures are in US\$ billion, at three possible oil barrel prices. (<http://www.eitransparency.org/section/countries/angola/angolaworkshopsmay2006> [080806])

¹¹ In particular the social funds of the president and wife is promoting the first family’s public image as patrons of charity and distribution, and making them distance to the failures of service delivery by the state. What outcome of the recently established MPLA paramilitary *Civil Defence Organisation* can be more dramatic, as this kind of ruling party armed “militants” are known from several other African countries for extreme pre-electoral violence.

provide banking and financial details. Although the government does not currently enforce this law, a process of legal revision is on its way that may formalise and activate these restrictions.

Text box one: The New Law on Associations

The government has initiated a revision of the Law on Associations (the law 14/91) and the following decree (Decree 84/02). The process started in May 2006, and is coordinated by UTCAH (the Humanitarian Aid Coordination Technical Unit) of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The way this process started reveals some basic features of the Angolan institutional environment. First, it reveals the government's wish to make revisions of the legal framework so that it fits to the transitional situation after the end of the civil war. Secondly, it reveals a rather authoritarian regime's approach towards a weak civil society, and the wish of the government to (still) regulate the activities of the non-state actors.

For one thing, the Decree 84/02 (implemented in 2004) regulates and specifies in a very strict way a relatively open space created by the Law 14/91. The law takes a broad approach to associational life, but the decree is designed to address only the NGO sector of the non-state world of actors (leaving out other types of associational life and non-state actors, like the party mass-organisations, trade unions, churches, media, etc.). And more, the decree is explicitly designed to "discipline" NGOs as it establishes some requirements in terms of the accountability of NGO's to state institutions, in contrast to the general principle of associational independence, member control and internal auditing. NGOs are obliged to abstain from "political and partisan actions" and it conditions the employment of expatriates and demands detailed reporting to the governmental coordinating body UTCAH.

The Decree establishes a government guardianship of NGOs, exercised by the Ministry of Social Affairs. It strictly limits the room for manoeuvre of NGO's. The decree indicates what the government sees as the role of NGO's, namely to be partners of the government and its institutions in projects and activities determined by the government. The UTCHA representatives to CONGA and FONGA have also communicated this; the government's intention is to reduce the independence of NGOs, and to keep NGOs interventions restricted to humanitarian and emergency approaches only.

Seen from the side of the civil society organisations, the main weakness of the new decree is that it strengthens the adverse institutional environment; it limits the public space. It makes it quite difficult for NGOs to get the government and its institutions to work together in what civil society see as the needs, problems, and solutions. Unfortunately, the civil society reaction to the government's initiative is limited, which indicates a lack of understanding of the risks involved in letting the government decide the legal framework of NGOs according to its own objectives and criteria. There has been relatively little analysis of the practical and political implications of this new law, and little public debate.

Thirdly, it can be argued that the Government's view on NGOs is that they are (basically to be) self-help and service delivery organisations; in other words citizenry without citizenship. This is contrasted to the broader, more 'political' role of NGOs as promoted by academics, activists and donors alike.

Given the limited capacity of the government and the civil war, there is a long tradition in Angola of accepting and even encouraging CSOs to engage in refugee relief and service delivery, in particular at the local level. Several NGOs have thus been granted a substantial space for local service delivery and self-help organisation, and they have protected this space through a careful management of their relations with the state.¹²

But the emerging civil society has been faced with difficulties stemming from a lack of a common understanding by the government, on the role of the non-state/civil actors. As a consequence, several incidents of social and political tension has risen lately, mainly when NGOs have made interventions in human rights advocacy, demanded interventions in the national budget preparation process, and required more transparency in the use of national revenues.

¹² The only truly non-governmental groups allowed to operate before the end of the 1980s were church organisations like Caritas Angola and the Council of Evangelical Organisations of Angola. Only with the *Bicesse* peace accords and the constitutional revisions of 1991 did non-ecumenical organisations like ADRA grow up.

Four, there is a tendency of authoritarian control of NGOs by some ministries and government agencies. Some ministers and ruling party dignitaries are directly hostile to NGOs and their activities.¹³ According to some of our informants, civil society organisations are sometimes being monitored, infiltrated and manipulated by the government (infiltration by the State Security Services), and co-optations occur.¹⁴ Most civil society actors do take precautions in their activities. It is for instance rather common for some individuals and some organisations not to be invited to discussions, or given specific information.

Besides, there has been a widespread understanding of the term “NGOs” in Angola to mean “international NGOs”. Many people still consider an NGO to have foreign managers and funding, and for many people this signifies quality and deliverability. The government, however, has sometimes been quick to discredit NGOs on the grounds that they are international players, and because some international NGOs were used for political purposes during the war.¹⁵

In sum, the Government’s approaches to civil society organisations are blurred, to put it mildly. There is a tradition of supervision, restriction and control (demonstrated among other things through the proposed new legislation on associations), but there is also a willingness to let NGOs implement some forms of service delivery and poverty alleviation (social projects within the parameters of government regulation). And, in some ministries there is a more accommodating and open attitude towards NGOs.

Thus, there is a certain room now for NGOs to operate in Angola, as partners of the government, but only within the parameters for this relation as defined by the government. This means it is only a limited room for independent action outside government’s programmes and projects, and restrictions on “political activity” on human rights, good governance, transparency, accountability, participation, and other fundamental political issues in Angola.

Several of the interviewed organisations expressed a concern that the current room for manoeuvre is vulnerable, and some said it is reversible and will be reversed if the current non-confrontational strategy of the CSOs is broken.

¹³ At a conference in Luanda hosted by the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank, the Vice Minister of Finance, Mr. Eduardo Severin de Morais, said about the possible participation of NGOs in the budget process, that there “*is technically no time for civil society to take part in the budget process*”, despite the fact that the constitution obliges the Government to consult with civil society in the budget process. Another minister, Virgílio Fontes Pereira, said in an interview in the paper *A Capital* (Sept 20, 2006) that he “*would not tolerate strangers and would use his disposition to stop NGO's that attempted to intervene in the civic education process for the next elections*”.

¹⁴ This is in contrast to the Chatham House report which says that there is “*relatively little flow of personnel in the other direction, from civil society to the MPLA. While this may suggest that not much co-optation occurs, it also makes it even harder for ideas from civil society to feed into the MPLA*” (Chatham House 2005, chapter 3, page 4).

¹⁵ It must be noted, however, that the very negative conceptualisation of NGOs are changing. The space for NGOs to operate is improving, both thematically and geographically. Some examples; when military peace was achieved in 2002, the President recommended “*all Angolan civil actors to contribute to the reconstruction and social progress*”, and also other official statements like these have been heard. Later, the President also invited NGOs to be represented in the government *Electoral Commission*.

2. Inroads

Given this challenging environment for civil society in Angola to play a meaningful political role, what are the possible inroads for civil society to be heard and to have a bearing upon policy decisions, to promote good governance and accountability in public affairs?

2.1 Two strategies

There are in the outset two main strategies for civil society organisations. On one hand, there is a basic process of long-term democratisation going on (or should be going on), in which civil society will have to struggle to create a sustainable space for civil society voice and action, including a minimum of government acceptance and understanding of their legitimate role. In the broader process of democratisation, the relevant strategy for NGOs will be to create an adequate amount of transparency in government affairs, for civil society insight and oversight, and for civil society to be accepted as a partner for dialogue and input.

Civil society organisations will have to engage in a continuous fight for recognition, information and their right to be heard. This fight will be an uphill struggle, given the limited room for manoeuvre for CSOs, the illiberal government policies on CSO political engagement, and the slim prospects of a deep and broad democratisation process in Angola (understood as a balance of contending political forces and a change of government according to free and fair elections). The primary democratisation strategy for civil society organisations will thus have to be one of setting minimum standards for the operation of civil society, transparency in government affairs and the respect for basic human rights.¹⁶

On the other hand, there is a process of more transparency in public finance management in Angola, a process that is to a large extent being pushed by international governmental organisations like the *IMF* and the *World Bank*, some international non-governmental organisations like the *Publish What You Pay*-campaign, *Human Rights Watch* and *Global Witness*, as well as some of the donors. Civil society organisations should also have a strategy of enhancing transparency and accountability in government policies of public finance management, but this is so far very limited.

The second strategy of focussing on government revenues, budgeting and accounting is pivotal given the 'resource curse' that Angola seems to be trapped in (see chapter 1.4 and footnote 9 above). This second strategy requires much more specific and elaborated knowledge and insight, technical and financial competence, and organisational aptitude of the CSOs. The government will more easily accept the legitimacy of civil society engagement on these issues if the organisations and their representatives can demonstrate some degree of literacy in public finance management, revenue collection including the details of petroleum taxation and fiscal regimes, tax administration, budget design and budget process from drafting to approval, as well as revenue monitoring, auditing and reporting.

Some of the practical challenges for civil society in pursuing these two strategies are overlapping, and partly dependent on each other. For instance, a minimum level of government acceptance of the legitimate role of civil society to have access to information and a right to express opinion is a basic requirement for both approaches although for instance the right to organise rural self-help groups is different from the right to express an opinion on public revenues. This stems from the fact that government is more willing to accept a role for civil society in service delivery and poverty alleviation, than in public finances, which is of vital interest to the regime. However, to

¹⁶ Several civil society organisations have adopted this strategy, for instance some human rights organisations' and some church based organisations' engagement for rights based development (see chapter 3.2).

accept the legitimate right of access information, to accept the right of civil society to formulate and express interest, and to have its views taken seriously, is a common denominator.

At the same time, at least theoretically, these two strategies can be conflicting, for instance when quick gains in the latter is or can be at the expense of longer term gains on the former. Thus, there should be transparency and dialogue also between different civil society organisations in order to avoid any strategic conflicts. The possible need for clear positions and direct actions in some cases must be balanced with the need for cautious and perhaps discrete approaches in other cases.

2.2 Two openings

There seems to be at least two openings or inroads for civil society to accomplish these essential responsibilities.

The first inroad is that Angolan political leaders seem to value the international reputation of the country and the government. We have seen instances where the government's respect for formal procedure and international standards has been questioned, publicly and internationally, and that this has triggered a forceful defence for its reputation. Take for instance the outbreak of cholera in Angola this year. The first reaction of the health authorities, including the responsible minister, was suppression of information and denial. When local organisations and media made a point, they were pushed off until the news broke internationally. Only then the problem was admitted and some action taken.

Two lessons can be derived from this. One is that civil society organisations and NGOs are taken seriously and can have some impact when they stand together and speak with one voice. Unity by NGOs in terms of one clear message presented to the government, and variety in terms of approaches through various channels, can be productive. Another lesson is that international pressure can be decisive. Angolan NGOs will in some instances have to ally with international media and international NGOs in order to be heard and make an impact.

A second inroad for CSOs to promote good governance and accountability is that despite its presidentialism, one-party dominance, and a political culture of secrecy (and some would even say a culture of fear), the Angolan government is not entirely monolithic. Some ministers, ministries and government agencies are more open and accommodating to civil society organisations than are others.

At the moment, the Ministry of the Interior (home affairs) are for instance taking human rights seriously, and is reportedly rather cooperative towards NGOs. Another case is the new Land Law. Organisations such as *Development Workshop* (DW) and *Rede Terra* (Land Network) managed to get invited by Parliament to submit their comments, and gave well-studied opinions on the draft law.¹⁷

The lesson to be derived from this is that multiple and various channels can and should be employed at the same time. When one minister or ministry is hard to get into dialogue with, civil society may seek different openings for dialogue and influence via other channels, other officials or other agencies.

2.3 Delineation

2.3.1 Political society

Given the two inroads outlined above, namely promotion of long-term democratisation on the one hand and of transparency and accountability in government economic policies and public finance

¹⁷ The NGOs complained later, however, that their opinions were not reflected in the final law. The law was actually rushed through Parliament and approved in a special session (Amundsen 2005).

management on the other, we will in the following make a typology of organisations and organisational networks, and assess their capacity to contribute to these two processes.

We will not repeat the long debate among academics and practitioners on the possible delineations and definitions of civil society organisations and NGOs. We will rather focus on the second process as delineated above, with the first process as a backdrop and a long-term aim.¹⁸

Regarding influence on broader and longer-term democratisation issues, one requirement for CSOs is the willingness to engage in broader issues than sectoral interests and advocacy work. Some organisations are quite reluctant to engage in political issues (like transparency, accountability, democracy and human rights) and in policy issues (like access to information, legal space and their recognition as legitimate interlocutors and partners), because of the relatively hostile climate for CSO work and the persistent possibilities of a backlash. Some organisations prefer to focus on their mandate and day-to-day operations, and are likely to avoid the broader issues and exposure to ‘politics’, in order not to jeopardize their core operations.

Thus, we are looking for what has been called “political society”, or formal organisations that have the willingness and ability to act as pressure groups, and an ambition to be “agents of change” on democratisation processes. In general terms (and if asked!), CSOs are all working to enhance the broad process of democratisation, but very few organisations are focussing on this directly, and even fewer are focussing on the more delineated process of public finance management and budgeting.

To influence on the second, more restricted policy process, what is required is more than an expressed will. As mentioned, this is a rather specific and sophisticated technical process that requires insight and knowledge. Organisations and their representatives will have to demonstrate literacy in public finance management, revenue collection, fiscal regimes, tax administration, and budget processes. Furthermore, relevant organisational structures, leadership, strategies, networks and resources are needed. These requirements are also an essential part of the basis for our assessment.

More specifically, we are looking at organised pressure groups that will and can influence on the processes of revenue collection, budgeting and spending. That is, we are looking for organisations with an interest in influencing the income side (on taxes, fees, user charges, VAT, loans, state company profits, including tax rates and progressive taxes), the process of drafting, presenting and approval of the state budget (including needs assessments, budget analysis and simplification, and advocacy through the parliamentary process of discussing, altering, approving and controlling the budget), as well as the implementation of spending plans and spending (pro-poor spending for instance).

2.3.2 Income and tax administration

“The missing millions” is a familiar concept for informed Angolans, and also the World Bank, IMF and other international actors have raised concern about the problems of management of government revenues in Angola. Some observers are claiming that all state income is accounted for and made transparent through the National Bank and the budget process, but others are arguing that large parts of the Government’s income, in particular from the oil and diamonds sector, are still unaccounted for.¹⁹

¹⁸ It is usually agreed, however, that a broad definition of civil society organisations will include characteristics like being distinct from the state and government apparatus, non-profitability, self-governance, and participation free of choice.

¹⁹ The IMF, for instance, had in 2002 “concerns about the handling and disposition of oil and diamond concessions, revenue flows in the oil sector, the finances of Sonangol, and external borrowing practices” (Hodges 2004:121), and the concern has been repeated in later reports at the same time as substantial improvements has been acknowledged. In a recent WB assessment, the “missing millions” (extra-budgetary expenditures) were believed to amount to 14,7% of GDP in 2002 (Francisco Carneiro, World Bank, workshop PP presentation “Quasi Fiscal Expenditures and Tax Offsets”, May 2006, page 5 (<http://www.eitransparency.org/section/countries/angola/angolaworkshopsmay2006>) [101006]).

For instance, civil society organisations can exercise some pressure on the Angolan government by repeatedly asking for information, figures and analyses, assess the accuracy of information and make inquiries about discrepancies. Organisations should continuously compile, compare, evaluate, interpret (simplify) and disseminate information on fiscal incomes. They can also wield some pressure on the government to sign international initiatives on income transparency and budget principles, and they can ask the oil companies operating in Angola to sign up to transparency principles. In this way, civil society organisations can assist the citizens of Angola to access this information and assist people in holding their government accountable for the use of these resources.²⁰

In order to do this, Angolan CSOs will need technical skills, funding and international contact networks. Organisations will have to link up with international organisations in order to be efficient, both for inspiration, technical skills and in order to increase the necessary pressure for government transparency. The pressure on international oil companies will for instance have to come also from the companies' home-countries, and figures and facts must be compared with figures from international sources.

Two international initiatives are of particular interest to Angola and highly relevant for Angolan CSOs in their role of promoting transparency and accountability in the country's tax administration, revenue management and budgeting processes; namely the Publish What You Pay (PWYP) campaign and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The first is an international NGO initiative to make pressure on international companies to publish what they pay in taxes, bonuses, fees etc. to the government of certain mineral rich countries. The second is a donor-supported initiative to make resource rich developing countries spending their revenues in a way that can contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The pressure from the international PWYP campaign is now felt in Angola. The government has signed up to the IMF General Data Dissemination System (although with an uncertain future, with China now bailing them out).²¹ However, much more is needed both in terms of collecting and disseminating information, and in terms of national and international pressure. Only Chevron Texaco has disclosed details of one payment, the other companies are hiding behind the "we will publish when the other companies do"-argument. The Angolan government has not yet signed up to the EITI initiative.²²

2.3.3 Prioritizing and budget systems

When policy alternatives in the form of credible parties with coherent programmes are largely lacking, and when the next elections are still into the future, the engagement in policy formulation and budgeting – by citizens as voters – becomes tremendously difficult. Citizens can possibly influence policies by engaging in party politics and in the coming elections, but this is a long and cumbersome avenue. However, even when citizens have little influence on the principles, priorities and policies of government spending through the electoral channel, at the moment, they can still have some direct influence on the budget process and budget priorities.

For one thing, there is a possibility at the local level through for instance the on-going "decentralised planning" initiative by the Ministry of Planning, an initiative supported by Norway,

²⁰ In the words of IMF, "an urgent priority for Angola is to improve its capacity to plan, scrutinize, execute, and monitor public expenditure" (IMF 2006).

²¹ With China taking over large parts of Angola's foreign debt, including debt to the IFIs, their leverage on Angola is reduced comparatively. And China makes no requirements on good financial management. So, for instance the promise made by the Ministry of Finance to publish budget data on their homepage is still not fulfilled; most of the time the figures are not there, and when they are they are presented in a highly technical and unprocessed way, thus incomprehensible to most people. See the ministry's website for budget data at <http://www.minfin.gv.ao/>.

²² According to the EITI homepage, "The Government has agreed a program of transparency-related technical assistance with the World Bank, and is presently considering whether to implement EITI" (See <http://eitidev.forumone.com/section/countries/angola>).

the World Bank and the UNDP (as operator). At the central government level, civil society organisations can for instance have some influence in terms of transparency, monitoring and questioning.

At the central level, civil society organisations should attempt to strengthen the budget process. This can be done in several ways. Discipline and efficiency can for instance be promoted through PEM processes (*public expenditure management*, which is the approach strongly advocated by the IMF and World Bank).

Text box two: Public Expenditure Management (PEM)

PEM is an integrated approach to public financial management originating within the World Bank. It stresses above all the need for aggregate fiscal discipline (i.e. balancing the budget), as many developing countries have had difficulties in budgeting and spending within their resource constraints. The approach also emphasizes allocating public resources in accordance with strategic priorities and promoting the efficient provision of services. Criticisms of PEM point out that although these priorities should be mutually reinforcing, they can come into conflict, for example where maintaining fiscal discipline clashes with costly but important strategic objectives.

See the World Bank document by Schick, A (1998): "A Contemporary Approach to Public Expenditure Management". World Bank, Washington D.C. This paper produced for the World Bank Institute outlines the concepts of public expenditure management (PEM), explaining how PEM supplements formal budgeting process rules with behavioural norms for allocating and controlling public expenditure. PEM seeks procedures that increase the probability of achieving preferred outcomes, and its three basic themes are aggregate fiscal discipline, the allocation of public resources in accord with strategic priorities and the promotion of efficient provision of services. (http://www.worldbank.org/publicsector/pe/PEM_book.pdf [150906]). See also the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GRC) for more basic material on PEM and other public financial management and accountability issues (<http://www.gsdr.org/>).

Furthermore, accountability and transparency in the budget process also include issues like a legal framework that clearly defines the institutional roles and responsibilities of the various agencies (who needs to do what and when); the totality of the government's fiscal operations (there should be no off-budget revenue or expenditure); accurate and timely information and projections; and responsiveness to changing conditions. These are all important principles for civil society to work for. In the process of making state budget priorities, organisations can also exercise a push for the prioritization of their preferred sectors and expenditures through the parties, the Members of Parliament, the media and through the ministries. Lobbying and arguments can sometimes make a difference.

2.3.4 Budget execution and expenditure

On the execution of the budget (the expenditure side of public finance management), huge sums can be lost in corrupt practices, embezzlement and squander, if controls are weak or non-existent.

Citizens can and should, through civil society organisations, also monitor and assure the proper use of the money. The principles are relatively straightforward. For instance, private assets, liabilities and incomes of public officials and politicians ought to be monitored, to ensure the public that this wealth has been legitimately acquired (and not by abusing position and influence). Official monitoring is usually inadequate in highly corrupt countries, and the internal audits and the independent power of the Angolan Auditor General is indeed weak. Thus, the involvement of civil society is needed.

Likewise with procurement; in a corrupt environment, public control mechanisms are insufficient (someone must guard the guardians, too) and civil society engagement in supervision and control becomes necessary. Does the money allocated by budgets reaching down to the schools and local clinics they were meant to reach? Sometimes not; substantial amounts are frequently

stolen or squandered on the way. Here too, citizens can check and control, when information on expenditures are given.

Text box three: Procurement Observation in the Philippines

During the late 1990s, there was a growing feeling among concerned government officials in the Philippines that official procurement practices needed to be reformed. The appointment of a sympathetic Secretary as head of the Department of Budget and Management provided an opportunity. The new Secretary appointed a task force from within government agencies as well as private consultants to examine the problems affecting procurement practices and to suggest revisions to procurement laws. The task force eventually recommended a new law, but this failed to pass in the legislature. In response, the task force members decided they needed to involve civil society groups to build public opinion in favour of the new law.

Two private consultants from the task force joined two concerned citizens in 2001 to form a non-governmental organisation called *Procurement Watch Inc. (PWI)*. PWI was formed with the express mandate to advocate for the new procurement law and to monitor enforcement of the law after it was enacted. The government task force invited PWI to become a member of the task force and to help it in redrafting the law and in analyzing regulations promulgated after its enactment. PWI staff members used their proximity to the technical experts that comprised the task force to develop their own understanding of the nation's procurement practices and eventually became regarded as experts in their own right.

Over the next two years, PWI staff took on the task of contacting other civil society organisations — primarily groups working on anti-corruption — and mobilizing public opinion in support of procurement reforms. PWI found a key ally in the Catholic Church, widely perceived to be the most influential non-governmental institution in the country, during its efforts to mobilize public opinion on this issue. The media (newspapers, radio, and television) too became part of a strategic and well-planned awareness campaign.

In January 2003, PWI's efforts paid off when the legislature passed a new procurement law — the Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA). This was a unique victory for PWI. For the first time in the history of the Philippines, a civil society organisation was successful in advocating for a law to be enacted on a subject that required a high degree of technical expertise normally not associated with civil society initiatives.

Now widely recognized for its expertise on procurement law and practices, PWI conducts a wide variety of activities with different groups including the Ombudsman, government agencies involved in large procurements, and civil society organisations and citizens. PWI has developed very close relationships with the national Ombudsman in particular and even conducts training sessions on the Government Procurement Reform Act for officials in the office of the Ombudsman. As a partner of the Ombudsman, PWI has also established a "Feedback and Complaint-handling Mechanism" to process and respond to reports and other information provided by procurement observers.

PWI has also developed partnerships with government agencies to observe and study the systems in place for soliciting proposals and evaluating bids and awards. As part of this process, PWI conducts diagnostic exercises on procurements managed by the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) of various agencies, including the health and defense agencies. Similarly, PWI has assisted the Philippine Ports Authority in preparing the terms of reference for the bidding of its port security services. PWI also develops research papers and press releases on the subject of best practices in procurement procedures.

Source: Ramkumar and Krafchik (2005).

See also Procurement Watch Inc. (<http://www.procurementwatch.org.ph/>).

Text box four: Assets Declarations

In Uganda, independent journalists have taken the “The Leadership Code Act” of 2002 seriously. The act obliges all top and middle-ranking officials to *declare their assets*, and investigative journalists supported by NGOs have been checking the accuracy of the (publicly available) declarations, and documented assets ((farms, villas, apartments, cars ...) through photos, public registers and interviews with neighbours and tenants. Huge discrepancies have been revealed, sometimes leading to criminal investigation.

See the World Bank pages on Assets Declaration of Public Officials (<http://www.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/assets.htm>) for examples of laws, rules and procedures on assets declaration, and discussions on their application.

Text box five: Expenditure Tracking

Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) have emerged as a popular tool for identification of problems with the flow of resources between different levels of public administration and frontline service providers, and can be a useful tool for anti-corruption and civil society oversight and control of public expenditures.

PETS tracks the flow of public funds and material resources from the central government level, through the administrative hierarchy, and out to the frontline service providers. The key question that a PETS sets out to answer is: Do public funds and material resources end up where they were supposed to? If they don't, PETS will go further and ask: Why and how are funds diverted?

The first question is referred to as the diagnostic part of PETS. This part consists in identifying the actual flows of public funds in a program or a sector and establishes to what extent public funds and other resources reach the service providers, that is, the schools, teachers, health facilities and health staff. A discrepancy between the amount of funds disbursed and the amount of funds received is referred to as leakage.

The presence of leakage implies that some of the funds in this program or sector have not been spent according to the government policy, that is, some of the funds have been captured at some level in the administrative hierarchy, for example the district or regional administration. It has been beyond the scope of most PETS to study how captured funds have been spent and to what extent a leakage reflects corruption in the system.

The second question is referred to as the analytic part of PETS, where the aim is to explain why leakage is observed. Why is there more leakage in some districts than others? Why do some schools receive more of their entitlements than other schools? By studying variation in characteristics between different parts of the administrative structures and different service providers, PETS may contribute with knowledge about how to reduce leakage and improve the performance of the system. Local involvement at the frontline service delivery posts may result in better financial management at this level than at district and regional offices.

Almost all existing PETS track resource flows either in the education sector, in the health sector, or both. There are fewer examples of successful PETS in the health sector than in the education sector.

See the U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre webpages on Public Expenditure Tracking (PETS) for more information (<http://www.u4.no/themes/pets/main.cfm>).

2.4 Criteria

In addition to the efficiency and influence criteria given above (topic skills and insight in public finance management and budget processes; as well as international networks), we will list an additional set of criteria on which civil society organisations, NGOs and networks can be evaluated. This is a non-exhaustive list.

First, a NGO will need a membership base for legitimacy purposes. In Angola we have been told that some government agencies are regarding locally initiated organisations with a proper membership base as more legitimate than internationally initiated, financed and managed NGOs. The trade-off is of course efficiency; with international expertise and trained staff usually being more efficient in project and programme execution. A proper membership base is also necessary for

internal democracy purposes. Organisations run by and on behalf of its members, where leadership positions can be changed according to the preferences of the members, are usually more legitimate than externally directed and top-down organisations.

Administrative and managerial efficiency, quality of personnel and organisational appropriateness is also necessary for efficiency and influence purposes. However, as we will see in the following, the organisational mandate (the primary goal for the CSO or NGO) determines the organisational structure. Therefore, even an organisation that is suitable and efficient in fulfilling its mandate, is not necessarily capable of exercising any influence on government policies and issues like government transparency, accountability and public finance management. As we have seen, the willingness to take up broader policy issues can be lacking.

Is the organisation willing to try to change the rules of the game, to increase the space of CSOs for voice and influence, does it value and respect diversity, does it try to improve not only CSO room for manoeuvre but even broader democratisation issues? Is the organisation having an agenda beyond the narrow caretaking of interests, in other words does the engagement for the organisation's core activities and constituencies make the organisation engage also in wider policy questions?

A set of criteria on an organisation's ability of political influence will therefore be different from its ability to fulfil its core mandate. Its willingness to engage in broader (political) issues, the legitimacy of the organisation (in terms of membership and qualifications), and its international contacts has been mentioned. Additional qualities will include internal democracy and organisational transparency. This is necessary for an organisation to speak with authority on government affairs and good governance (but not necessarily to exercise its basic functions). The organisation has to be open for insight into its financial and management procedures, and it must be clear who is funding it and who's interests it represents.

The kind of international contacts, media and alliance building strategies of an organisation are also crucial factors for its ability to promote good governance and pro-poor policies in Angola (but still different from what it needs to exercise its basic functions). In the following, we are therefore applying criteria and looking for qualities of organisations that make them more or less capable of promoting good governance in Angola and strengthened accountability of public servants and elected officials.

This purpose is also reflected in our selection of organisations. We are not going into much detail on organisations that are basically service providers and self-help organisations. Furthermore, we have not analysed the mass-organisations of MPLA (or the party itself), although several observers suggest that there is a diversity of opinions within the party, in particular among the younger and more reform oriented members.²³

At the same time, the best should not be the enemy of the good. The ideal situation is one of an organisation with a large, knowledgeable and engaged membership base, well-informed and competent leaders, well resourced and professional, with an agenda that goes beyond sector interests into broader policy demands. However, a number of organisations are in the making, they are expressing new ideas and taking diverse initiatives, using unconventional methods, or they can be particularly engaged or connected.

²³ This claim conflicts with the view of the Chatham House report, which says that there is "a relative lack of factionalism within the MPLA (which) contrasts sharply with the experience in former Soviet-orbit countries in Eastern Europe, where pro-reform factions grew in strength in the 1980s, some aligning closely with civil society pressures" (Chatham House 2005, chapter 3, page 4)

3. Organisations

In this chapter we will categorise and typify the CSOs in Angola, and make a presentation of each of the organisations that we have found most relevant according to the criteria above.²⁴ The presentations are based on interviews with representatives, managers and staff of the organisations, plus some documents made available to us. In chapter four we will make an analysis of this, and draw some conclusions.

3.1 Types of organisations

We have divided the civil society organisations in Angola into six groups. The first group is the national NGOs, i.e. voluntary non-profit organisations that have been established by and run basically by Angolans. This group include the organisations *ADRA*, *Mãos Livres*, *AJPD*, and *ADPCI*. Others could have been included, like *SOS Habitat*, *APSHD* and *Angola 2000*, and other national organisations listed in the new UTCAH directory of ONGs as “human rights organisations”.²⁵

The second group is the international NGOs, that is non-profit organisations established by or primarily financed by international NGOs and donor money, and largely staffed (especially at the administrative level) by expatriates. We have included the organisations *APN* and *Development Workshop*. Other international organisations working on human rights could have been included.²⁶ What is called “advocacy organisations” in Angola is largely referring to these two types of organisations.

(We have also added a chapter on international government organisations, IGOs, including the *European Union*, the *World Bank* and the *UNDP*. These are not civil society organisations, but they can play a supportive role vis-à-vis national and international NGOs.)

The third group is faith-based organisations including churches, church relief and aid organisations, and church based academic institutions. We have included *CRS* and *CEIC*, although the number of faith based organisations is large and the connection to religion sometimes very relaxed.

The fourth group is the media, which is largely beyond the scope of this report, but *Rádio Ecclésia* is worth mentioning. The fifth group is the trade unions and professional organisations, including *Sinprof*, *Ordem dos Advogados*, *Sindicato dos Jornalistas* and *Associação Fiscal*. Finally, there are a number of organisational networks (“redes” or umbrella organisations). These are varying from loose meeting places for NGOs for discussions around a theme, to formalised structures with members organisations, individual members, projects and a proper secretariat. Some “networks” have developed into organisations of their own. We have included two important

²⁴ Other organisations, of all kinds, could have been mentioned, with some details, if time allowed. We are not claiming this list is exhaustive.

²⁵ This directory’s “human rights organisations” are closest to our criteria of organisations working on broad democratisation issues or narrow public finance issues. The following ONGs are listed in the UTCAH “Directório das ONG’s nacionais e internacionais” as national human rights organisations (*direitos humanos*): AAADR, AAPC, ACAPA, Acção Mulher, ACDA, ACM Ynca, ADA, ADAS, AFC, AFDER, AJAPA, AJUDPA, AMEC, APDTCL, ASSC, CAD, CNJ, INACAD, LIJUA, MOD, OKUTIUKA, ORPCRA, SCAM, SOS-CEIDA, USODEMA, CBA, ICUES, IECA, and IEU-CAA. Interestingly enough, this directory does list neither *Mãos Livres*, *SOS Habitat* nor *APSDH*.

²⁶ The following ONGs are listed in the UTCAH directory as international organisations working on human rights: ACF, ACORD, ADRA-I, ALISEI, CESVI, CRS, FES, GAS, GOAL, GVC, INTERSOS, IRI, REMAR, SC-D, SC-N, SFCG, THT, and VVAF.

network organisations, the *Rede Eleitoral* and the *Liga Jubileu 2000*, and two umbrella organisations, *FONGA* and *CONGA*.²⁷

We have also added a sub-chapter on gender relations, presenting some ideas of how gender concerns can be taken in applied budget work, and specifically what Angolan women's organisations are doing in this respect.

3.2 NGOs

3.2.1 National NGOs

The number of national NGOs (organisations initiated, managed and run by Angolans), with an actual and potential impact on governance and public finance issues, is relatively limited. We have chosen for some scrutiny those we believe live up to this, although a few others could have been mentioned.

3.2.1.1 ADRA

ADRA (*Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiental*; Action for Rural Development and Environment) is one of the oldest NGOs in Angola, established in 1990. Its basic aim is poverty alleviation and sustainable rural development through projects on food security, micro credit, land, civic education and organisation of the poor. It is basically a social services organisation; and an advocacy, volunteer and consultancy organisation that is trying to reach out to the marginalised and disfavoured rural population. Empowerment of the poor is sought through a rights-based (citizenship based) approach.

ADRA is an organisation with 140 members, offices and projects in 6 provinces, 26 municipalities and 62 communes. Its headquarters is in Luanda. ADRA has around 250 employees and an annual turnover of about 5 million US\$.

The five main goals and principles are all integrated in each of the about 40 projects. Food security is sought achieved through projects on employment, water supplies, seed production, commercialisation, transportation and distribution, and local production (processing). Micro credit comprises projects on community funds, savings schemes, and monetisation through working with local finance institutions.

The land issue is important. Access to and the uses of land, as well as the new land law, are crucial questions. In Huambo ADRA has a pilot project on mapping and authorization of land. The civic education objective has projects on capacity enhancement, sensitisation on rights and the use of public and private systems and institutions. In Huambo, ADRA has for instance assisted the rural population in suing the government over the use of communal land (as the government had planned a project on communal land without the consent of the population). Rural organisation is also about harmonising and organising groups of actors in cooperation with local authorities and civil society organisations.

ADRA is administered by an advisory board, an executive board and a secretariat. Its highest body is the General Assembly, meeting once a year. The broad visions and decisions are

²⁷ Some of our informants in Angola made the distinction between three other types of organisations. First, they said there are those that are too close to the Government, including some foundations and other organisations initiated and established the President, the ruling party MPLA or MPLA MPs. These do not have political and economic independence. Secondly, there are those that are deemed "too radical" because they are taking every possibility to oppose and confront the government. These are regarding the current government as illegitimate and hostile. (*SOS Habitat* is frequently mentioned as one of these "radical" organisations, sometimes also APSHD and Angola 2000). *SOS Habitat* has for instance been publicly accused by the Angolan Prime Minister Fernando Dias Dos Santos of inciting unrest and promoting land invasions (sic!). (<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/stories/060512s.htm>). The rest, the organisations in-between, are regarded as true and sensible NGOs.

taken by the General Assembly which is presided over by a President, a deputy president and a secretary. The decisions of the General Assembly are binding for all members and are implemented by the directive council, constituted by 7 effective members and 2 substitute members.

Besides those bodies, there is a Council of Representatives, a kind of consultative body for the directive council, which is composed by all members and workers of the ADRA's executive bodies. The Council of Representatives is embodied with the functions to balance the association's activities, discuss the programmes and activity plans, and the respective budgets. It also pronounces about political issues concerning ADRA's development.

There is also Circle of Members, constituted by local initiative with the minimum 3 associate members; their existence is promoted in order to increase the internal dynamics of the associational life within the organisation.

The executive bodies of the association are the Implementation Agency (ADRA-AD) and the Development Promotion Agency (PROMODES). Those bodies respond to the directive council in what concern their activities. As a body responsible for the strategic orientation and connection between the headquarters and the provincial "Antennas", ADRA has created the Management Council, constituted by the general Director of the Central Agency, the Directors of the provincial Antennas, the directors of the Financial Management Units, programme coordinators (ONDJILA, ONJANGO, SKN), and the coordinator of the Documentation and Information Centre (CID).

There is also a Coordination Council (CC), which assists the general Director in the planning of the activities at headquarters in Luanda and comprises all the coordinators of the distinct areas, and there is an internal Fiscal and Auditing council, which is constituted by 3 members; a president, a secretary and a speaker, who are not members of any of the executive bodies of the association.

There is furthermore a Project and Development Unit responsible for the reflection related with the intervention, the quality of the projects and for the methodological support to provincial antennas, also responsible for internal monitoring; the main areas involved are: credit, food security and training. Another Unit for Financial Management is responsible for the accounts, internal audits and coordinate external audits. The CDI (Information and Documentation Unit) is responsible for the production and distribution of information, and the central Programmes (Ondjila, working with children at school) and Onjango (dedicated to civic education).

Internal reporting of the activities is done at distinct levels: from the technical level to the project coordinator, from the project level to the Director of the Antenna and funders, from the Antenna/headquarters level to the General Director), from ADRA-AD and PROMODES to the Directive Council, and from the Directive Council to the General Assembly. In terms of transparency, ADRA is working to promote internal monitoring (top – down), participation of the staff in the decision making process (down – up), on reports of balance and accounts, and on the distribution of the reports to donors, partners and state institutions.

Over the last three years, ADRA has been through a process of administrative reform to strengthen its capacity of strategic planning. The organisation seems well established and efficiently organised, although some problems persist. There is now a strengthened focus on strategic planning, through three overarching programmes; institutional development (strengthening of the organisation and its administration), rural development (with the development projects described above), and formal education. The latter is a pilot programme, with projects inside the formal school system, aiming at strengthening the quality of formal education through four components; teacher support, physical infrastructures, community and parents' participation, and better institutional relations (between school administrations and the Ministry of Education and local authorities).

The internal organisational development programme has five units; human resources, financial management, administration services, communication and information, and institutional relations (cooperation).

In terms of administration, there has been an insufficient control and management of documents, there has been deficient communication with other parts of the organisation, and a deficient control of management of funds and material resources. However, the administrative

reform has produced some results; the registration and circulation of information and registration of documentation is achieved with few delays, there has been a reduced spending on communications, and physical assets, equipment and archives has been regularised. There is still a need to secure resources for acquisition of material and equipment.

Some of the problems ADRA has seen in the area of human resources are people moving on (only two people are left in the department, and one is to assume a government position), and an unsound working climate. As with most organisations in the Angolan setting of rapid economic growth and a dynamic job market, ADRA is suffering somewhat from brain drain. In terms of human resources, ADRA is seeking to rectify the instability of staff, the non-adequate number of staff and lack of control of the human resources by contracting a new HR deputy director, by finishing a new HR manual, by capacity building among staff, and by regular reporting to the central office. There are still problems in the payment of salaries for 2005, uncertainty in relation to funds that can guarantee future projects, and a general lack of staff.

Some of the problems ADRA has seen in the area of financial resources have been that directors and coordinators have been insufficiently involved in financial management, and that accounting has been delayed. The reform process have corrected some of this by finalising the accounts and audits for 2005, a better supervision by the management of decentralised units (Antennas' quarterly reports), by better accounting and financial information procedures (monthly balance sheets), and revisions according to previous audits. Some areas are under way, like the implementation of the new financial management instruments and financial policies, and a revision of the fund raising strategy. Some persistent problems is that wages of some technical personnel is not competitive, that there is a lack of funds that can guarantee future operations, and reduced funds for the administrative component.

Communication with reference groups as well as the broader public is secured through an information centre (supported specifically by some donors). ADRA cooperates through various channels with a number of civil society networks (CSO umbrella organisations), and government institutions. As an example of the latter is found in the *Kwanza Norte* province, where ADRA gives advice to the local government.

ADRA has only two information bulletins currently, the *Humbi-Humbi* and the *Onjila*. The programme on the promotion of children produces the *Onjila* bulletin. The *Humbi-Humbi* has a circulation of about 1000 copies, but has been irregular because of financial difficulties and because of lack of journalist staff. The distribution has also been slow due a lack of funds and internal communication problems. Thus, the *Humbi-Humbi* lost its role of forum of opinions on development questions that it used to have.

The *Angola-Cronologia* is published regularly in Luanda, with a circulation of 300 copies. The distribution is made either through electronic mail (mainly to the foreign readers) or mail through the postal services. Although there is a strong demand for the publication fro Antennas and the rural areas, it has not been possible to increase the circulation due lack of funds. The ADRA homepage is deactivated at the moment. The reason is the lack of financial resources and personnel with appropriate skills to deal with its technical and content issues.

In all provinces where ADRA is active, including Luanda, there are small documentation centres, although they tend to function deficiently. They serve the needs of the technical staff, and also attend to the broader public, mainly students at the medium level and above. The Luanda documentation centre has important information not easily obtained in other places. It is also equipped to produce and to reproduce documents. However, the level of use and degree of integration is inferior to what it could have been with a small strategic investment. It does not have sufficient professional knowledge in the domain of the communication and documentation, and lacks resources to keep the centres updated.

Some of the other problems ADRA has seen on the information, communication and documentation component has been a limited capacity in collecting, managing and dissemination of information. However, the presentation of monthly digest chronologies in the Angolan news have been revitalised, the *Malanje Bulletin* has been re-launched, and local area radio conferences are

being improved as a means to access information and influence on decisions. Journalist training and web page revisions are also under way. Despite some interest by donors to finance the information management component, this is still inadequately funded.

In terms of institutional cooperation, ADRA has seen problems like a low level of knowledge about donors and funders, insufficient formalisation of partnerships, absence of medium and long-term cooperation agreements, and a lack of focus on thematic networking. However, new partnerships have been established with DW, CLUSA and IEPALA, protocols are signed with MED in some provinces, and relations with UTCAH are strengthened. ADRA will also collect information on and work out a strategy for partnerships with other NGOs and donors. There is nevertheless still a certain lack of attention by the management on this component.

Like most other civil society organisations working in service delivery (broadly defined), ADRA is seeking a balanced working relation with the Government. The Government of Angola seems to have accepted and appreciated the work of NGOs like ADRA in service delivery, emergency relief and pro-poor development. ADRA officials point out they are not against the government and that their strategy is not politicised confrontations with the Government, but rather a peaceful, correct relationship based on mutual respect.²⁸ ADRA is seeking a good working relationship with specialised ministries (like agriculture, education and territorial administration) and local government, with a special emphasis on local governments.

Thus, the approach to high-level politics and central government is largely left to other organisations and umbrella organisations. The budget process issue for instance, and the “missing millions”, is interesting for ADRA but not an organisational priority. The question of local authority, local popular empowerment and local budget transparency is closer to the core of ADRA's interest.

3.2.1.2 Mãos Livres

Mãos Livres - Associação de Juristas e Jornalistas na Defesa e Difusão dos Direitos Humanos e da Cidadania (ML, “Free Hands”) is a human rights defence NGO established by a lawyer and a journalist in April 2000, initially backed by the UN Human Rights Division. It is to a large extent an organisation that offers free legal assistance, and aims to defend and spread information about human rights and access to justice in Angola. It has now around 300 members and activities in 7 provinces, and approximately 90 employees. Members are mainly lawyers and law students, including what is called “para-legals”, working on a voluntary and part-time basis but with expenses and fees paid.

These 90 employees deal with tens of thousands of cases every year, and refer approximately 300 to the court system and reaching out-of-court settlements in a large number of cases. Mãos Livres have also been successful in securing the release of some illegally held detainees. Among the current larger cases they are working on, we find politically sensitive issues like indemnities for the forced evictions from and land expropriations of *Boa Vista*, *Kilamba Kiayi* and the new airport site.²⁹

Although the organisation originally got its backing from UN Human Rights Division only, it has now a broad donor base.

The organisation's main goals and objectives are submitted for discussion at the General Assembly. The last records of the GA we have access to was held in June 2002, attended by 26 members and approved the three-years programme of activities 2002-2005, after discussion of the

²⁸ ADRA emerged shortly before 1991 and had close ties with the MPLA. These close ties have later been loosened, but the mutual respect seems to linger on.

²⁹ In March 2006 the UN's Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Miloon Kothari, highlighted the forced evictions and home demolitions in the suburb of Kilamba Kiayi, which affected over 600 families. He expressed particular concern at the excessive use of force by police and private security companies (http://193.194.138.190/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/1D3D4A_A404AD9AC_2C1257142004E50CE?opendocument)

activities developed during the period 1999-April 2002. This Assembly also elected the bodies for the period.

At the General Assembly, three members were elected for president, deputy-president and secretary. For the Executive Direction were elected six members; a president; a general secretary; and four secretaries for legal assistance, planning and statistics, press and civic education, and organisation.

The Assembly has elected 6 provincial secretaries in Kwanza-Norte, Kwanza-Sul, Huambo, Huíla, Malanje and Benguela. The minutes of the Assembly reflects a decision to create offices in all provinces where the Association is represented plus one Legal Advisory Centre, and six offices in Luanda. We have not been able to confirm the latter.

In terms of policy engagement, it is clear that from its mandate of defending human rights, *Mãos Livres* has to deal with government agencies on a regular basis and on all levels. Therefore, legal reform, prison reform and other basic government reforms is part of their agenda, as well as broader democratisation issues. In their strategy, they try to influence the government on all levels, central, provincial and local, through the training of staff as well as the public,³⁰ through broadcasts on independent radio and newspaper articles. *Maos Livres* even used to have a weekly column in the state-owned *Journal de Angola*. They also conducted seminars also for government officials on human rights and legal issues.

Mãos Livres seems to have a particularly good working relationship with a number of government offices and agencies, for instance the Ombudsman's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General; the Police and the Directorate of Criminal Investigation, the courts (at all levels) and the Parliament, and especially the Economy and Finance commission. To some extent, government agencies have been asking for *Mãos Livres*' assistance in writing reports (like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Human Rights Report) and they have been asked to arrange seminars on human rights.

Although *Mãos Livres* has a good working relationship with some government institutions, other government agencies regard it as "too radical". We have heard harsh characteristics of the organisation by some officials. The situation seems to be improving, however, and *Mãos Livres* is gaining legitimacy. The organisation also seems to be functioning well in terms of internal democracy, transparency and representation.

With its human rights focus and legal perspective, *Mãos Livres* is critically important for some of the broader democratisation issues, like human rights in terms of due process, freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest, and detention.

This focus of the organisation does not naturally lead to political rights concerns, however, or an interest in sound public finance management and financial transparency. Considering that social and economic rights are part and parcel of human rights and a rights-based development, one may argue that *Mãos Livres* could play an even stronger role in spreading information on the implications of the international conventions on human rights.

3.2.1.3 Associação Justiça Paz e Democracia

The *Associação Justiça Paz e Democracia*, (Organisation for Justice, Peace and Democracy, AJPD) is an independent, non-political NGO established in 2000, initially supported by Open Society.³¹

³⁰ In 2004, for instance, *Mãos Livres* conducted twelve particularly successful debates in three cities in Benguela province in which more than 700 citizens participated, including inmates in the provincial prison, who received information on citizen rights and responsibilities.

³¹ The *Open Society Institute* (OSI) is a private operating and grant making foundation, that aims to shape public policy to promote democratic governance, human rights, and economic, legal, and social reform. OSI was created in 1993 by investor and philanthropist George Soros to support his foundations in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. OSI has expanded the activities of the Soros Foundations to other areas of the world where the transition to democracy is of particular concern. The Soros foundations network encompasses more than 60 countries, including the United States. See: <http://www.soros.org/>.

AJPD is one of the larger NGOs working in the human rights sector, with a focus on the rule of law, constitutional and penal reform, and the rights of people with HIV/AIDS. It has less than 10 people engaged on a full or part-time basis, and appears to be well organised and efficient.

The AJPD has three main working areas or reform programmes. The first is the monitoring of illegal prisoners, visits to prisons and prisoners, inquiries into their cases, and legal advice. This was how the organisation was initiated in the first place, when one of a group of friends was illegally imprisoned (the law says a detainee must be charged within 48 hours). The second area focuses on the conditions of police stations and wards, the so-called “secure police stations” project. This is about legal security and human rights for detainees at police stations, including proper procedure. AJPD has organized several training sessions for National Police commanders, and the fifth round will take place in late June 2006 at the Luanda Provincial Command meeting hall. A three-day session will provide technical and juridical upgraded information to about 40 police commanders and criminal investigation officers. One important aim is to reduce the number of illegal detentions.

The AJPD is working in close interaction with prison authorities and with the police force, as well as the various courts and the Ministry of Home Affairs. It has also been invited to give their input to a Presidential justice reform commission. Their aim is to extend the legal advice service to people subjected to forced evictions and other maltreatment, and to upgrade their training and sensitisation programme to include universities and colleges.

AJPD has had difficulties obtaining its formal certificate of registration from the Ministry of Justice. AJPD gained registration only due to a clause in the registration law that gives legal status if the authorities do not reject the application within 90 days. The visibility of the AJPD in the media is relatively good, however, as the organisation know well who are their journalist friends who can be called upon when needed.

The people behind the organisation are mainly young academics, with background in international human rights studies and other issues. As such, the organisation is an excellent training ground for young academics.

The AJPD receives financial support from various donors like the Open Society, Christian Aid UK, and the Netherlands Embassy. AJPD published a *Human Rights Annual Report* in November 2005 (AJPD 2005).

Like *Mãos Livres*, the AJPD is important for some of the broader democratisation and human rights issues like due process, freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest, and detention. But, as with *Mãos Livres* and other human rights organisations, this mandate does not easily lead to political rights concerns, or an interest in sound public finance management and financial transparency. The organisation is, however, active within several networks, which demonstrates their willingness to engage in broader democratisation issues, beyond the conditions of detainees and judicial reform.

3.2.1.4 Acção para o Desenvolvimento, Pesquisa e Cooperação Internacional

The *Acção para o Desenvolvimento, Pesquisa e Cooperação Internacional* (Angolan Action for the Development, Research and International Cooperation, ADPCI) is an Angolan NGO working in the field of sustainable development, citizen participation and human rights. ADPCI is an ‘old’ organisation in Angola, dating from 1998, but still small with only 67 members (individuals; of which only 18 are paying their membership fees...) and a small group of activists.

ADPCI has worked on youth mobilization in rural and urban areas, about HIV/aids and human rights. At the moment it is largely funded by (and directed in the interests of) the AU NEPAD initiative, and can be regarded as the NEPAD defence and promotion agency in Angola. ADPCI is developing several programmes related to NEPAD, and some of the activities they have already carried out are a survey on communities’ perceptions on NEPAD, production of radio programs on NEPAD, and a national conference on NEPAD. Furthermore, there is reportedly a NEPAD peer review in the pipeline, which could possibly be an inroad to good governance issues.

However, the organisation is still searching for a mandate and purpose, projects and partners, and seems willing to take up whatever donors and other financial sources will come up with (democracy and good governance, transparency and accountability, the EITI initiative, poverty and millennium goals...).

3.2.2 International NGOs

International NGOs (INGOs) in Angola are all initiated, funded, and managed by international organisations, or they are national branches of international NGOs. Most of these are advocacy and rural development organisations, or working in the fields of refugees, land mines or poverty alleviation. Most of them are subcontractors of humanitarian aid distribution. There are very few INGOs on human rights, and even fewer on good governance, corruption and transparency issues. For instance, there is no *Transparency International* (TI) chapter in Angola, although this would be a highly relevant organisation in the country.

3.2.2.1 NPA

Norsk Folkehjelp (Norwegian People's Aid, NPA) is the humanitarian organisation of the Norwegian trade union movement. In its work NPA is guided by the values of national and international solidarity, human dignity, freedom and equality. NPA has worked in Angola since 1989, and continued its operations in Angola through the civil war.

NPA concentrates mainly on rural development based on popular participation, mine clearing and primary health care. The aim is also to strengthen civil society and local organisations, right-based programmes and social, political and economic reforms. NPA now works in five provinces, employs more than 550 people in Angola, and the country programme has an annual budget of approximately 60 million NOK. About 85% is for the *Mine Action Programme*, the remaining 15% for its *Development Programme*.

In its development programme, NPA has two thematic areas; land and resource rights, and democratic rights and participation. NPA is explicitly supporting Angolan NGOs working for women's rights, land rights, and will also support organisations promoting women in the coming presidential and parliamentary elections.

The thematic area identified as "democratic rights and participation" is spread around four components; civic education initiatives, human rights education of police and communities in Bengo province; preparations for Angola's next elections, and (an assessment of whether to include) violence against women.

We note that the human rights component and the elections component is directed at long-term democratisation issues, and we also note the absence of budget issues and public finance management. Neither NPA, nor the partners with which they work, have much literacy on the issues of budget control and public finance. However, NPA states that they are planning for a stronger focus on policy making and monitoring its implementation (strategic phase from 2008), and that they are very interested in understanding budgetary issues and particularly the issue of gender budgeting.

Our impression is furthermore that NPA has a similar attitude to politics and the central government as does the national organisation ADRA and most other NGOs; in order to protect its primary goal and main projects, high-level political issues are largely avoided. NPA prefers to work indirectly via CSOs in Angola (in line with its "partnership and rights-based approach") to promote democratisation from below. In line with this is also NPA's approach of strengthening the relationship between communities and local governments. However, as a part of its efforts in helping poor people defending their rights, NPA is nevertheless willing to participate in and to support some networks, and take part in workshops and other initiatives on public finance issues, on invitation.

3.2.2.2 NCA

Kirkens Nødhjelp (Norwegian Church Aid, NCA) is a non-governmental and ecumenical organisation that works to ensure the individual's basic rights. Anchored in the Christian faith, NCA supports the poorest of the poor, regardless of gender, political conviction, religious affiliation and ethnicity. To achieve permanent results, the NCA is collaborating with ecumenical and other local organisations in three ways: emergency response, long-term development work and influencing attitudes and decisions.

In Angola, NCA works mainly through its core partners, which are the three councils of churches and various church dominations. In June 2006, NCA launched a new *Country Programme Plan* for its work in Angola for the period 2006-2009. *Civil Society for Accountable Governance* is one of two components of this new programme. Furthermore, capacity building of civil society is a cross-cutting issue, aimed at facilitating NCA's partners to work on this component.

The *Civil Society for Accountable Governance* programme seeks to strengthen the churches engagement for fair economic governance. A major injustice in Angola is that ordinary citizens are not benefiting from the country's considerable economic wealth. Because the churches' broad membership includes the power elite as well as ordinary citizens, there is scope for the churches to be more active in challenging the political leadership to put in practice better economic governance. To do this, NCA will assist initiatives to create space for the churches to debate and strategize on issues of economic governance, and support church-lead initiatives on corruption and ethical leadership.

NCA will assist churches to build capacity for analysis and advocacy on key aspects of economic governance, and help facilitate linkages to relevant international networks. As a Norwegian NGO coming from an oil producing nation with good transparency and regulation, NCA aims to facilitate positive learning and exchange around issues of responsible oil policy and corporate accountability. This is, however, one of the most sensitive governance issues in Angola, and the churches in Angola will themselves need to set the pace and agenda for this work. The ambition for NCA and partners is to cooperate on policy analysis and carry out advocacy work around issues of petroleum policy and a more active use of the revenues for poverty reduction. The longer term goal is that NCA's partners are enabled to be central actors with regard to advocacy, policy analysis and civil society networking on monitoring public budget and spending and corporate accountability in the petroleum sector.

The specific objective for NCA is to get the Churches in Angola to use their moral authority to speak out on issues of corruption and unjust use of economic resources. NCA expected results are, among others, increased understanding, within the churches, of issues and strategies to promote transparency and use of petroleum resources for the benefit of all Angola's citizens. That NCA's core partners have increased understanding of the importance of analysis and monitoring of the national budget.

NCA assumes that churches are committed to and have the capacity to work on issues of citizenship and governance. There is also assumed that local, regional and international organizations will be capable of providing relevant professional support to Angolan churches. One risk factor is that church structures are too close to power structures in Angola, and can therefore be unwilling or unable to engage government effectively on increased space for citizen participation and on anti-corruption measures. Another risk is that the churches do not have adequate organizational structures to effectively address these issues.

NCA, together with its partners, has started working on the challenge to engage churches for fair economic governance. In September, NCA arranged a seminar for its main partner organisations, which gave input on advocacy work by NCA and partners in Angola, and also tools and strategies for advocacy work. The seminar elaborated the idea of establishing an ecumenical network on religion and governance; a network for improved economic governance, increased transparency of public revenues, and better economic distribution. The main conclusion of the seminar was to write a letter presenting this idea to the three church-councils in Angola, *Aliança*

Evangélica de Angola (AEA), *Conferência Eclesial de Angola e São Tomé* (CEAST) and *Conselho das Igrejas Cristãs em Angola* (CICA). The three church councils already have experiences with working together for joint achievements. To draw upon the experiences gained as regard to strengths and weaknesses for such joint achievements, will be a key for the foundation of a joint network.

NCA will take the role as facilitator and provide capacity-building, when needed. NCA will also promote information to partners about the PWYP campaign, support the EITI initiative of the *Catholic Church of Angola* (which has already called for Angola to enter EITI, see chapter 3.4 below), and NCA will motivate its other partners to do the same. However, NCA believes this will be sustainable and efficient only if the three councils of churches join forces. NCA has a careful approach to this, believing it is crucial that the various Angolan church councils and churches are taking the lead.

3.2.2.3 Development Workshop

Development Workshop (DW) is a Canadian non-profit international NGO, focussed on capacity building, civic education, conflict resolution and promotion of dialogue in Angola, and in particular in rural areas. It is working to improve settlements and livelihoods of the poor in less-developed communities. Its programme focus areas include shelter, peri-urban upgrading, water supply and sanitation, primary health care, small enterprise development and disaster mitigation. DW's strategy is to strengthen the capacity of communities and organisations to act on development problems and opportunities

DW was established in Angola in 1981, at the national government's request to assist in developing policies and programs for self-help housing. It was for many years the only NGO in the country, and has a large percentage of national staff. It is almost to be regarded (and understood by many Angolans) as an Angolan NGO.

Development Workshop is strong in networking, and aiming at consolidation of civil society in Angola. On DW's homepage we can read that "*Civil society has a crucial new role in the post-war "transition" to advocate for good governance, equitable access to basic services and human rights. Development Workshop has over many years has been instrumental to the strengthening of these civil society networks and has been a founding partner in the creation of many of these forum, from CONGA (in 1988), including the Women's, the Peace and the Land Networks, RASME (for enterprise development), AngoNet and more recently the PRSP NGO consultation. Through its networks, Angolan civil society advocates for reform and for resources previously diverted to the war to be mobilised in ways that builds on communities' capacities and lifts barriers that previously excluded them from participating fully in the development process*".³²

For instance, the DW-led networking project *AngoNet* is an attempt to bring together all humanitarian organisations.³³ Over four hundred local NGOs and CBOs in five provinces are assisted with information and support through *AngoNet*, which provides e-mail and Internet based services to the Angolan non-profit community.

When it comes to working with the government, DW is "*able to contribute to national policy debates and advocating for policy reforms on a number of key issues. DW participates with Government and civil society in several national fora, including the Ad-Hoc Habitat Group (contributing to the land rights policy), Poverty Reduction Strategy PRSP debate, National Water Policy Working Group, Jubileu 2000 (on debt reduction), and is a founding member of a number of civil-society networks mentioned above.*" (DW Annual Report 2004:4). DW has special historical ties with MPLA and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Development Workshop's main donors are DFID, CIDA and the Norwegian Embassy. Other donors include a large number of organizations, among them Esso and BP.

³² <http://www.dw.angonet.org/aboutAngola.asp> (070806)

³³ <http://www.angonet.org>

3.2.2.4 Other INGOs

Other international NGO are also active in Angola, such as *Care International*, *Open Society*, *Oxfam*, *Trocaire*, *IBIS*, *Save the Children*, *Médecins sans Frontières*, and *ACORD*. Some are monitoring Angola from the distance, sometimes with excellent reports on social and political issues, like *Human Rights Watch* and *Save the Children UK*.

The concern among many development professionals is that while there is a consolidated donor push for them to move into good governance, democracy and other political issues, there is insufficient internal momentum or capacity as yet to make an impact on the Angolan government. It is also our impression, based on the criteria listed above, that INGOs' main strategy is to make only a careful and indirect approach to advocacy on governance and accountability. The strategy is usually indirect through networks and coalitions, and cautious not to expose themselves to government responses that can include restrictions on their primary work.³⁴

3.3 IGOs

When it comes to international government organisations (IGOs), the European Union, the World Bank, IMF and various UN organisations are operating in Angola. These multilateral government agencies are supporting activities that are of interest to Angolan CSOs, and Angolan CSOs can probably draw upon the support from these agencies.

(Support for CSOs can also be drawn from the private sector, for instance Chevron, which is active with investments in education, health, environment, agriculture, human capacity building, and infrastructure. Also other national and international companies can be supportive of CSOs through their *Corporate Social Responsibility* programmes).³⁵

For Angolan civil society organisations to exert pressure on the government for pro-poor budget programming and other public finance issues, a reinforcement of the links between Angolan CSOs and international government agencies is important. The IGOs have on their agenda better relations between Angolan CSOs and the government (especially the executive and legislative powers. The purpose should be to institutionalise dialogue and civil society participation in decision making, not only in the terms proposed by the EU PAANE programme but in even broader terms of inclusion, respect and recognition of social groups and organisations in political processes).³⁶

3.3.1.1 The European Union

The *European Union (Delegação da Comissão Europeia)* has a number of programmes and projects that can constitute possibilities for partnerships for Angolan CSOs, in particular the *Support Program to Non-State Actors (PAANE)*,³⁷ but also the *Reinforcement of the Planning and*

³⁴ This is not the case of all of the organisations, however, and in particular not the organisations working on Angola from a distance, like *Save the Children UK* (<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>) and *Human Rights Watch* (<http://www.hrw.org/>); both have produced good and highly critical reports on Angolan politics and economy.

³⁵ See <http://www.chevron.com/operations/africa/angola.asp>. Some time ago, Chevron demonstrated the interest to support a CSO initiative to run a kind of Citizenship Centre, to develop CSO activities like capacity building, advocacy and lobbying, inclusion in terms of relevant information and access to internet, and so on. By now, Chevron has declared that the company will fund the necessary legal support to local CSO's in the process of revising the legal framework for the activities of CSO's in Angola (see text box one).

³⁶ One idea launched is on the possibility of creating a kind of Citizenship Office at the Ministry of Planning. This can facilitate dialogue between state and non-state actors, making legal procedures and laws known to citizens, promote new legislation on participation and effective exercise of citizenship rights, identify opportunities for partnerships and implement common actions. For the government to accept such ideas, there is a need for concerted pressure from CSOs and from outside actors, including the IGOs mentioned above.

³⁷ "The aim of the PAANE programme is to encourage the participation of non-state actors in the transition and development process in Angola as part of the fight against poverty and of good governance. Its specific aims are to build up the capacities of non-state actors (NSAs) in their roles as implementers and representatives, improve NSAs' access to information networks and promote social and political dialogue between NSAs and local and national authorities. The

Budgeting Process (RPPO), and various micro-projects under the umbrella of the *European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights* (DDH). Also some of the regional and decentralised EU programmes can be of interest.

3.3.1.2 The World Bank

The *World Bank* (through its *International Development Association*, IDA), has an assistance strategy set out in the IDA *Interim Strategy Note* (ISN). The Angola ISN's support for the government's program for 2005 and 2006 is based on three pillars, of which the first is of interest here: "Enhancing transparent governance and intensifying capacity development, especially support for public sector reform and civil society empowerment". The ISN has a strong focus on economic and sector work, particularly with respect to analytic and advisory services, for example, public expenditure and financial management reforms and the climate for private sector investment. Of the World Bank's current portfolio of five projects, the *Economic Management Technical Assistance Project* is of particular interest for Angolan CSOs, although the main Angolan partners are the Ministry of Planning (MINPLAN), Ministry of Finance (MINFIN), and the Central Bank of Angola (BNA).³⁸

3.3.1.3 The UNDP

The *United Nation's Development Programme* (UNDP) is committed to play a pivotal role in achieving the eight *Millennium Development Goals* of the United Nations Millennium Summit. UNDP is helping to lead the efforts to integrate the MDGs into all aspects of the UN system's work at the country level. UNDP is focusing its own staff and circle of partners to support developing nations as they map out the policies and assemble the alliances needed to reach these goals. UNDP collaborates with the government, UN sister agencies, other donors, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in promoting people-centered development and building partnerships to fight poverty. Of the UNDP's five core practice areas, the democratic governance component is of most interest for Angolan CSOs, although the UNDP implements its programmes within the framework of the *Standard Basic Assistance Agreement* between the Government of Angola and the United Nations Development Programme, and have the *Ministry of Planning* as its formal government counterpart.³⁹

3.4 Religion and churches

There are at least 87 churches with state recognition, and over 800 other known churches in Angola.⁴⁰ Their influence, especially around the peace process, has varied considerably and has been driven mainly through a few visible umbrella structures: the *Council of Christian Churches of Angola* (CICA) and the *Angolan Evangelical Alliance* (AEA), which represent the major protestant churches (Methodist, Baptist, Congregational etc.), and the *Angolan Catholic Church*, which acts through the *Bishops' Conference of Angola and São Tomé* (CEAST).

technical assistance staff will provide technical and financial management support services. The PAANE programme will be managed by a Project Management Unit (PMU)." (<http://www.evd.nl/info/zoeken/ShowBouwsteen.asp?bstnum=163511&location=>)

³⁸ "The Economic Management Technical Assistance Project for Angola aims to strengthen the Government's capacity to formulate sound analysis and to implement sound policies in areas which are critical to the management of public resources, including: poverty analysis; setting-up a monitoring and evaluation system; formulation of a sound Public Investment Program (PIP); and the establishment of a more transparent and efficient public finance framework." See for more details: <http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=64283627&piPK=64290415&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P072205>

³⁹ See <http://mirror.undp.org/angola/>. Of particular interest is the project on *Decentralisation* co-financed by WB and Norway.

⁴⁰ According to Chatham House Report (2005), chapter 3 Civil Society, page 13.

The *Catholic Church of Angola* and its affiliate organisations are playing an essential political role as one of the main channels of information, organisation and opposition in Angola. With its moral standing, long history, wide outreach, strategic alliance making, natural pro-poor inclination and international backing, the Catholic Church is a force that the government has to relate to, and it has been willing to take several struggles with the government on organisational and religious freedom, human rights and also political issues.

For instance has the *Bishops Conference of Angola and São Tomé* – through the Angolan Catholic Church’s *Commission for Peace, Justice and Migrations* – made an appeal for the Angolan Government via Angolan Minister of Finance to join the EITI. This demonstrates that the Catholic Church sees this initiative as important to continue improving the levels of transparency in the country.⁴¹

Besides the traditional services, the Catholic Church runs an independent university (*Universidade Católica de Angola*, UCAN) with its library and a research centre (*Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica*, CEIC), and a radio station, *Rádio Ecclésia*, both with a strong current influence and an even stronger potential impact. The *Catholic Relief Services* is an international church NGO that cooperates closely with the Catholic Church of Angola.

3.4.1.1 CRS

The *Catholic Relief Services/Angola* (CRS)⁴² had a very modest start in 1989, but is now a relatively large INGO in Angola. CRS is now working in some of the same areas as other relief and development agencies (like the immediate and long-term needs of resettlement and resident communities’ health and food security), but mainly through the local catholic churches and dioceses. CRS is supporting local church partners’ peace and reconciliation initiatives and HIV/AIDS education and awareness projects, and tries to reach out to humanitarian needs in isolated areas.

CRS/Angola is also active in promoting human rights, capacity building of local organisations, and is a member of several organisational networks. CRS/Angola has currently 160 staff members in Angola, spread throughout five offices (Lobito, Luanda, Cubal, Balombo and Ganda).

3.4.1.2 CEIC

The Catholic University’s research centre *Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica* (CEIC)⁴³ is worth mentioning because of its outreach on terms of popularisation and dissemination of information (information that is relevant for democratisation as well as budgeting processes).

CEIC is an independent and autonomous research centre recently established at the Catholic University of Angola. In addition to the academic and research aims, the explicit objectives of the research centre are to foster informed public debate on public policy issues, including governance and international economic relations. This is done through the publication of research findings and the promotion of research seminars, and thus to contribute to the development of national capacity in the area of public policy formulation and evaluation.

In our view, the centre has been quite successful in this, reaching out to the “informed public” in Luanda mainly (invitees to open lectures including students and academics, but also journalists, government officials and the broader public). Through these open lectures, international conferences and round tables, with their promotion of a ‘culture of openness’ and their focus on

⁴¹ The Chatham House report notes, however, that “*the selection of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Pope in April suggests that there is uncertainty over the possibility of a radicalisation of the Church’s role in the context of a civil society seeking to challenge Angola’s rulers: he is regarded as a conservative figure who once described liberation theology (...) as ‘a fundamental threat to the faith of the Church’*” (2005; ch.3; p.6).

⁴² <http://www.crs.org/home.cfm>

⁴³ <http://www.ceic-ucan.com/ceic/Default.aspx>

human rights and good governance, based largely on their own research; CEIC is an important player in this field.

3.5 The media

Although the Angolan law provides for freedom of speech and of the press, at times the government restricted these rights in practice and media and journalists practices self-censorship. Both radio and print media have criticized the government openly and at times harshly, and there has been an increased media attention on the upcoming elections, corruption, economic mismanagement, and opposition politics. Even when the government continues to limit access by independent journalists to certain events and officials, in particular through the law that permits the government to classify information, there have in contrast to earlier years been no reports lately that journalists have been investigated, harassed or imprisoned.

The private media are self-censored (except for a few weekly opposition magazines that are publishing editorials and comments of a very political nature, including accusations of individual ministers and other elite persons). The private media are indeed un-professional and sales-oriented (publishing gossip and scandals with little substantiation and research). Foreign journalists must receive authorization from the Ministry of the Interior to meet government officials or to travel within the country.

Text box six: The Press Law

After the resumption of war in 1998, a military reporting ban called for by the media minister brought increased pressure on journalists of the private press that had emerged during the period of the Lusaka peace process after 1994. Following fierce clamp-downs on journalists from 1999 to 2000, including the imprisonment of activist Rafael Marques after he was charged for defamation against the President, the *international Committee to Protect Journalists* (CPJ) named President José Eduardo dos Santos one of the “*ten worst enemies of the press*” in May 2000. These tabloid accusations from an international organisation addressed to the president nevertheless had an impact.

The new Press Law was approved by Parliament in summer 2006, with the majority vote from the ruling party and the opposition abstaining. This law was passed in the midst of strong criticism from civil society groups, media and opposition parties. Still in the drafting process, the law had some input from civil society organisations, particularly the *Union of Angolan Journalists* and *Mãos Livres*.

Hence, when the government submitted a revised press law in July 2000, it praised itself for this act of openness, but international press freedom organisations joined protests by Angolan journalists against the revised law, seen as “*draconic*” and “*a disastrous development for the media*”. Civil society organisations contributed with lobbying efforts to exert pressure against the law. A CPJ delegation to Angola in October 2000, financed by the Open Society, met government and presidential officials and members of the private and state media, and finally the government has temporarily suspended the draft law. Despite the approval of Parliament, the Law was referred back to specialised commissions for the establishment of regulations to protect it from unlawful interpretations and implementation.

The new law gives a strong monopoly to the state media for nationwide coverage (the Catholic *Rádio Ecclésia* has for instance not been granted the right to broadcast nationwide), and is devoid of critical regulatory mechanisms to make it applicable without any leeway for government’s own interpretation and implementation. According to critics, the law also contains negative elements such as criminal responsibility of journalists, and regulations for private media companies. On the other hand the law opens space for new radio stations to operate in FM only, for the establishment of community private news agencies and for television.

Opposition parties and some civil society organisations have also criticised the rush with which the law was put forward for approval in Parliament, which gave them insufficient time to comment and make counter-proposals. The government has later announced the appointment of a technical commission, including representatives from professional associations and unions, to revise the draft law, and a new draft was supposed to be submitted for public consultation several times. However, it remains unpublished to date.

Source: Chatham House, *chapter 3* (2005:12).

3.5.1.1 Rádio Ecclésia

There are five commercial radio stations, including the Catholic Church's *Rádio Ecclésia de Angola*, which has openly criticized government policies, highlighted poor socioeconomic conditions, and sensitized people on social and political issues.

Given high illiteracy rates and the high cost of newspapers, radio is considered an especially effective medium for democratic development all over Africa, and it is by far the most powerful way of spreading information to the rural majority also in Angola. *Rádio Ecclésia* started to broadcast back in 1954, but it was banned by the government in 1978, and did not re-open until March 1997.⁴⁴

A good sign of progress would be a wider expansion of the *Rádio Ecclésia* signal across the country. This has been an issue of wide discussions, as the government has continued to refuse to grant it the right to broadcast nationwide on the FM broadcast network.

⁴⁴ <http://www.recclesia.org/index.php>

3.6 Professional organisations and trade unions

There are two main trade unions in Angola, one government/ruling party controlled (UNTA) and one independent federation (CGSILA).⁴⁵ The CGSILA federation was established in 1996 and has around 50.000 members altogether.

3.6.1.1 Sinprof

The independent union of professors and high school teachers (*Sindicato dos Professores*, Sinprof) was among the first independent trade unions to be established according to the new law on organisations of 1992. It remains one of the more politically active and influential unions, with some 37.000 members and branches in 15 of the 18 provinces.

The main objective of the Sinprof is to promote workers rights, including salary issues, worker conditions, debt of teachers, labour justice and equal access to jobs, training and promotions. Sinprof is also promoting reforms of the education sector on a broader scale, to ensure access to education for all. At the same time, the union is preoccupied with the rule of law, human rights, good governance and democratisation issues.

As a politically active trade union, Sinprof takes part in a number of alliances and coalitions, with other trade unions, with student unions, international organisations and with Angolan CSOs. The “Free Education Now” coalition in Benguela is but one example, the international campaign for the Millennium Challenge goal of “Free education for all” within 2015, is another. Sinprof is also an active member of FONGA and other networks, and it has a cooperation with the Norwegian Union of Education.⁴⁶

The internal democracy is well taken care of through the union’s statutes and practices of elections. The leadership rotates regularly.

Sinprof is also working with the government on specific issues, in particular with the Ministry of Education. Within the Ministry there are people who share Sinprof’s concerns about free education for all, but in Sinprof’s opinion the Ministry lacks a culture of information and transparency, and a culture of cooperation and participation. This claimed lack of competence, qualifications and basic infrastructure is limiting. According to Sinprof, to have regular, updated figures of the number of teachers and salaries is almost impossible, and the capacity of the Ministry to implement policies and reform is very weak.

3.6.1.2 Ordem dos Avogados

The *Ordem dos Avogados* (the Angolan Bar Association) has a human rights component (office) which is training lawyers and law students, and working on issues related to access to justice and providing legal assistance. It also promotes legal reform in Angola. The Bar Association human rights office takes active part in promoting room for CSO activity in Angola, by for instance providing legal advice and training for CSOs, and they take part in a number of networks.

Regarding lawyers in Angola, it has been mentioned that free legal advice and sensitive political cases like land evictions are not easily taken up by private law firms or lawyers. Lawyers are traditionally close to the government, and it does not give them much professional or political status to take up these issues. This is holding the organisation back from taking a strong position, and the activity on human rights is largely left to a few activists of the human rights office of the organisation.

⁴⁵ *Central Geral dos Sindicatos Independentes e Livres de Angola*.

⁴⁶ The *Union of Education* (Utdanningsforbundet) is Norway’s largest trade union for teaching personnel, and with its 136,000 members, the Union is the country’s second largest trade union. An idea for cooperation (in line with this report’s concern for public finance management) could be on PETS in the education sector (see text box 5).

3.6.1.3 Sindicato dos Jornalistas

The independent journalists' union (*Sindicato dos Jornalistas Angolanos*, SJA) was established in 1992 (like many other independent trade unions and NGOs).⁴⁷ It is an important organisation. SJA has some 1600 members and is active in 16 of 18 provinces, and is based on membership fees (although it receives some funding from the Open Society Organisation and the US and UK embassies). Its scope of work includes labour conditions, contracts and salaries, legal advice and training for members, as well as broader issues like press and trade union freedom and access to information.

The main challenge for the SJA is that most media are government media or MPLA controlled, and consequently pushing the official lines, agendas and standpoints. This leaves little room for criticism, analysis and opposition.⁴⁸ The SJA has been subjected to some harassment by its rival OJA and the government. There have for instance been strategic power cuts and some journalists have been laid off.

The SJA is member of the MISA (Media Institute of Southern Africa) and the FIJ (International Federation of Journalists).

3.6.1.4 Sindicato Independente do Sector Marítimo

The small but very militant and independent *Sindicato Independente do Sector Marítimo* (Union of Maritime and Related Workers, SIMA) is worth mentioning because it tries to organise seamen as well as offshore oil workers. It has been very visible in the continuous (and continuing) protest in front of the company *Angonave* (Angolan Maritime Lines). The protest started in October 2000 and will last till judgement is passed in the case by the International Court in the Hague. Angonave has been paralyzed since 1993, and was formally dissolved by the Angolan government by the end of 2000.

3.6.1.5 Associação Fiscal

The small professional organisation *Associação Fiscal* organises around 60 individual members and seven companies working in the field of taxation, accounting and auditing. It organises training workshops and seminars for members, and is a highly technical organisation mainly for economists and auditors. The leadership of the organisation is rotating, and they have monthly meetings.

The Associação Fiscal is worth mentioning because it has also a broader than professional outlook; it is preoccupied with public financial management and good governance issues. The situation of small enterprises and the prohibiting tax regime, the informal sector and police harassment, customs and company taxes, and the possible support to infant industries are part of their interests, as well as the budget process and sound public financial management.

Although it has been a member of the President's tax reform committee, as a small professional organisation it does not have much influence on its own. The action it has taken has mainly been through petitions and letters to ministries, and lobbying with parliamentarians, but the organisation aims to cooperate better in SCO networks and professional networks. It also aims at creating a reference library accessible to the broader population.

⁴⁷ Not to be confused with the MPLA-dominated *União dos Jornalistas Angolanos* (OJA) which is granted government financial support (which the SJA is not) and whose General Secretary is the Vice-Minister of Communication. In fact, the SJA hires one office at the office of the OJA, but noteworthy enough the larger OJA office space is usually empty and inactive whereas the SJA office within it is far more energetic!

⁴⁸ There is no explicit censorship in Angola, but editors are careful about their coverage of political issues. For instance, inexperienced journalists will be sent to cover important opposition party activities, whereas skilled journalists and photographers will cover broadly from MPLA activities, including district cell activities.

3.6.1.6 Student organisations

The organisation of Angolan students abroad, the Club-K (*Clube de Estudantes Angolanos no Exterior*) is a socio-cultural organisation that aims to support Angolan communities living abroad. It was created in November 2000 and the executive board is composed by 60 members. The majority of students are studying in 14 countries (Portugal, South Africa, Botswana, Canada, USA, Poland, Spain, Germany, Check Republic, England, Netherlands, France, Zimbabwe and Egypt), with France, South Africa and Canada having the most important roles in coordination of the activities of the organisation. The organisation is quite active in its work with the diaspora, using the internet facilities to disseminate information and the participation of the Angolan students abroad. It organizes activities as conferences, debates and meetings.

Internally there are some students' organisations, like UNE (*União Nacional de Estudantes*); another organisation is the MEA (*Angolan Student Movement*) created in 2001 with the aim to defend the interests of the students in general but its membership is basically coming from the medium and university level. They are basically oriented towards student working conditions and practical issues, and one of the main battles they are fighting (and not only in Luanda, but also in Benguela and in Lubango) is the one to gain free access to public transport.

Several initiatives are on the way to create associations in each of the universities in Luanda, as for instance at the *Lusíada* and *Catholic* universities.⁴⁹

3.7 Organisational networks

There are a number of organisational networks or umbrella organisations in Angola, of which some are politically and potentially quite important.

However, Angolan NGOs have some significant difficulties in creating partnerships and platforms that can really coordinate their interventions. NGOs are fragmented in small organisations with their established relations, with their particular "beneficiaries" and donors. The need to avoid this fragmentation and to act in a more coordinated way through thematic or geographic coalitions, networks, and so on, seems not to be a very strong priority.

At the same time, some organisations and CSO actors are moving from this fragmentation and trying to form strategic alliances, to get proposals on the table for a broad debate on positions, and to institutionalise a better relationship with state and non-state actors. This includes proposals on how to present their views, objectives and concrete proposals to state institutions, executive and legislative power, and how to involve Angolan society in this discussion through the media in order to influence public opinion.

3.7.1.1 Rede Eleitoral

Like the human rights organisations, the *Rede Eleitoral* (Electoral Network) is working on an absolutely essential issue for the democratisation of Angola.

The Rede Eleitoral is a network of 42 member and associated organisations, represented in 12 provinces, with a small secretariat in Luanda consisting of 5 people. The network is working in the areas of civic and electoral education (including the electoral registering and voting process), advocacy on legal matters and legal reform (including the new law on elections and the still operative limits on freedom of expression), election observation (having participated as observers in several countries internationally) and resolution of conflicts related to elections. The Rede Eleitoral was initiated by and is financially supported by the *National Democratic Institute* (NDI, USA), and has its office situated within the NDI office in downtown Luanda.

⁴⁹ The registered universities in Angola are: *Universidade Agostinho Neto* (UAN), *Universidade Jean Piaget de Angola*, *Universidade Católica de Angola* (UCAN), *Universidade Independente de Angola*, *Instituto Superior Privado de Angola* (ISPRA) and *Instituto de Relações Internacionais* (IRI).

The issue of conflict resolution is essential. According to the representative of the network, they are very aware of the dangers of elections, and in particular electoral campaigns, when it comes to inciting conflict, violence and ethnic hatred. Another core issue of the network is to promote the idea of local elections first.⁵⁰

The network seems to be cooperating relatively well with the *Ministry of Territorial Affairs*, which is preparing the elections, and the *National Election Commission (CNE)*, which is organising the election, not least because of the competence and professionalism of some of the managers, but all the network's ideas on sensitive issues have not been accepted.

Even when the Rede Eleitoral is doing good work on the important issue of the upcoming elections, with some 90 permanent observers in all 18 provinces, the readiness of another 500 observers for the time of the elections, and preparedness to mediate in upcoming tensions, there is a lack of trained personnel for conflict resolution, the number of observers are inadequate, and the funding of the operations are not secured. Domestic funding is non-existent, and foreign funding has been too little, too late, and too short-term. Ideally, the network should be supported by even more national NGOs (for legitimacy and funding), foreign funding should secure its sustainability also in-between elections, and donors could contribute with more technical assistance in the form of election law preparation, voter registration, and civil society monitoring and control.⁵¹

Furthermore, member NGOs in Angola should be involved to a larger degree in the network's core working areas, like election monitoring, electoral education and conflict resolution. Besides, the network and its member NGOs could take up issues like monitoring of media coverage (to secure a balanced media exposure), accountability benchmarks for political parties and transparency in political finance.

⁵⁰ This is in line with most lessons on decentralization and democratisation. Local elections are an important school in democratisation and democratic processes, not only for voters in terms of increasing information and inspired participation, but also for political parties and candidates. Local elections prior to legislative and presidential elections tend to defuse conflicts and to ensure a better representation. This is also in line with the majority of the opinions expressed on this issue in an AIP study from 2003 (IRI Luanda, International Republican Institute: National Survey of Angola 2003 (<http://www.iri.org/pdfs/AngolaPollReport.pdf> [150806])). Unfortunately, the Government of Angola does not seem to be of the same opinion.

⁵¹ Internationally, a large number of government and non-government organisations could assist in election facilitation and supervision, like *IFES* (International Foundation for Election Systems (<http://www.ifes.org/>)) and *IDEA* (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (<http://www.idea.int/>)), and *Nordem* is a relevant Norwegian organisation that can provide election observers, technical election support, election experts, political analysis and more (http://www.humanrights.uio.no/english/nordem/index_ny.html).

Text box seven: National Elections in Angola

The last parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Angola in 1992, in which the Parliament was elected for a four year term and the President for a five year term. The Parliament has extended its term twice, but the President's mandate is still from the one-party era (nominated by the 'People's Assembly'), because the second round of the presidential election in 1992 was not held, the civil war resumed, and the presidentials were nullified.

New national elections have been on the planning stage at least since 2001, when the President announced that new elections would be held in less than two years (and that he would not himself seek re-election). In 2004, this promise was repeated. However, the lack of security, the returning of displaced persons, the existence of land mines, the lack of communications etc. have been forwarded as reasons why the elections have been postponed and still not held, and arguments that elections would require a new constitution and a complex voter registration exercise have also been raised. The practical impediments for postponing the elections are nevertheless losing weight as time passes and the government's needs for democratic credentials increases.

There is now a new impetus to the election preparations. The President has publicly set a deadline of 31 December 2007 for the nation's next parliamentary and presidential elections (according to IFES). A new electoral law was passed in 2005, there is an 11-member National Election Commission established (although not as independent as other Election Commissions; it is nominated by and directly answerable to the Government, not the Parliament), and the voter registration process will start in November 2006 and last until August 2007.

The role of CSOs in the coming elections is extremely important. Issues like voter registration and education, training of election workers, codes of conduct for political parties, dispute resolution, election monitoring, vote counting and verification, are important for CSO engagement. Besides, a number of technical and project management issues require additional external expertise and support.

However, it is at the current planning stage of the elections that the conditions are made. Therefore, CSO dialogue with government becomes essential for the democratic content and legitimacy of the coming elections. Dialogue and agreement is necessary on issues like the mandate of the Election Commission, vote counting systems and ballot types, size of electoral districts, the terms and conditions for registration of parties, candidates and voters, and other factors that can influence on the results.

See International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) for the President's promise (<http://www.ifes.org/events.html> [101006]). See also EINNEWS.COM for updates on the Angolan elections (<http://www.einnews.com/angola/newsfeed-angola-elections>).

Text box eight: Promoting Transparency in Political Finance

Political finance is a key source of corruption risk, with systemic effects on the quality of governance, the efficacy of public institutions and the functioning of the political system. The influence of money on politics has increased significantly in recent years, as the costs of electoral campaigns have skyrocketed, increasing pressures on incumbents to recoup expenditures by illegal means. Financing politics includes not only funding electoral campaigns but also supporting political party activity between elections. Reforming political finance embraces a wide series of issues such as laws and regulations, enforcement mechanisms (in particular electoral commissions), and rules on disclosure, ceilings on expenditure, and assessing direct and indirect funding options.

Tackling the drivers of corruption in political systems requires a multi-pronged approach, which acknowledges the dynamics of power and politics. For example, there may be a tension between controlling corruption and promoting political competition and contention. The manner in which this delicate balance is resolved is necessarily context and country specific, depending on the stage of democratisation the country is in. For example, in post-conflict countries, fragile states and transitional regimes, reduced political contention may need to take precedence.

See the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) for more information on transparency in political finance, and their Money & Politics programme (<http://www.moneyandpolitics.net/projects/map.html>).

3.7.1.2 Jubileu 2000

Jubilee 2000 AFRICAMPAIGN Angola Coalition (Jubileu 2000) is a network or platform originally organised to work for debt relief (Cancellation of Third World Debt), as a number of organisations came together to launch a debt-relief campaign in Angola in July 1999. However, as little external debt is left in Angola (due to the oil and diamond incomes and the bailing out by the Chinese) the network is now mostly focussed on socio-economic rights. This includes a focus on durable poverty relief, transparency of public financial management and regional/local commercial development.

The members of the network are various NGOs (about 45) and individual members (about 15, mostly academics, professionals and students). Jubileu 2000 has a relatively good international network, basically through the international and global *Jubilee 2000 Coalition* (of which the Norwegian “*Aksjon Slett U-landsgjelda*” is also a member, and the *International South Group Network of Southern Africa*).⁵²

As such, Jubileu 2000 is one of the few organisations working specifically on the primary issues at the centre of this report, namely to find Angolan CSOs that will and can participate in policy analysis, public finance management and the budget process. For instance, the coalition is working with parliamentary groups (parties and the Economy and Finance committee) on budget technicalities; they are lobbying for transparency in the form of public access to the national budget and its background material (on internet and in the official journal); and they are working for a better pro-poor redistribution of the resources (as exemplified by their study on the use of public money on children in Angola). Jubileu 2000 is also planning to make a national campaign on the extractive industries (EITI) initiative.

The organisation claims to have a good working relationship with and access to relevant government institutions, primarily because it is able to provide professional knowledge and competence. Besides, they are explicitly “not anti-government”, although a number of government officials and bureaucrats have difficulties relating to the organisation because any contact with the ‘opposition’ can jeopardize their career. Jubileu 2000 representatives still believe they can work with government institutions, that it is possible to build alliances and partnerships with government offices, and that access to information is easier than some activists seems to believe.

Careful political balancing and manoeuvring notwithstanding, the Jubileu 2000’s economic understanding, budget literacy and professionalism, including national and international networks as well as their ambitions of information sharing and public awareness raising (through the internet and bulletins) are valuable assets.⁵³ Although there is not much of a top-level culture of open discussions and public-private consultations in Angola, Jubileu 2000’s non-confrontational approach seems to be appropriate given the circumstances.

In order for Jubileu 2000 to have an even stronger impact, however, what is needed is not only what is stated in their work programme in terms of a broad cooperation with CSOs in Angola and public awareness raising, but a stronger actual cooperation with and perhaps guidance by the network member organisations. They need to be properly behind the networks agenda for it to be influential. Jubileu 2000, as a platform or network, is in the danger of becoming an organisation of its own with less internal democracy led by a few insightful individuals with their private agenda and a personal leadership.

⁵² <http://www.jubileereasearch.org/Jubilee2000/main.html>

⁵³ In their own words, “We will maintain Jubileu 2000’s tradition of distilling, analysing and de-mystifying economic concepts and information; and communicating in ways easily understood by campaigners. We are not just an economic think-tank. We are a think-and-do tank. We encourage people to undertake advocacy and campaign action”. (<http://www.globalrising.org/africa/finance.htm>).

3.7.1.3 Other networks

There are several different organisational networks in Angola, on different issues. On budget and public finance issues, two initiatives have been taken recently, initiatives that may develop into organisational networks or other forms of organisation.⁵⁴ (

In terms of networks on other issues, there are initiatives to create networks at national, provincial and local levels to support Angolan population facing the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The bigger and more visible network is ANASO (*Angolan network of the organisations against HIV/SIDA*), constituted by 107 organisations with focal points in all the 18 provinces. The church has also created a network to deal with HIV/SIDA, called *Rede Esperança*, and public and private enterprises (nationals and foreign) have created the *Business Committee for Fighting HIV/SIDA* (with companies like Odebrecht, SONANGOL, Endiama, Chevron, Total, Nova Cimangola, TAAG, Luanda Railway and ENSA).

There are also several networks created to protect children. One of the more visible is the *Pastoral da Criança*, created by the Catholic Church, acting through the 18 dioceses. In all the provinces there is a provincial network to protect children, mobilizing public institutions, churches, and NGO's, acting as a forum under the coordination of the provincial direction of the MINARSS.

The *Rede Terra* (Land Network) is a network or consortium of 20 organisations, nationals and internationals, which aims to influence public policies related with land tenure, access and use of land. It played a very significant role in the process of approval of a new land law, taking the initiative to organize a broad consultancy among stakeholders through a popular consultancy covering several communities in 10 out of the 18 Angolan provinces, and presenting concrete proposals to the Parliament. It is an example of how civil society organisations can successfully unite and influence national legislation, even legislation of vital importance to the ruling elite.

3.7.1.4 CONGA

The committee of international NGO's in Angola (CONGA) was created in 1988, as a committee for NGOs working in Angola to meet and discuss issues of common interest. CONGA included both national and international NGOs until 1991 when national NGOs created FONGA.

CONGA maintained from the beginning close contacts with UTCAH (*Unidade técnica de coordenação da ajuda humanitária*, the Government's humanitarian coordination structure) and the UN Coordinating Office in Luanda. Given the complex crisis in the country and the necessity for strong coordination from 1993 to 1997, UTCAH assumed an important humanitarian coordination role, and international NGOs has worked closely with UTCAH (mainly through CONGA) since its inception.

In 1997, members of CONGA decided to strengthen CONGA's structure by setting up several thematic working groups to coordinate on key issues with FONGA, the Government and the UN. In 2000, the CONGA Liaison Group was formed. This group meets weekly with UTCAH to discuss issues related to humanitarian assistance and coordination and to provide valuable input to strategic decision-making and policy activities. The CONGA Liaison Group has also taken a strong NGO leadership role in coordination and humanitarian activities.

CONGA has an *Information Officer* who assists with inter-NGO communication and facilitates the NGO community in disseminating its concerns and point of view.

3.7.1.5 FONGA

The *Forum of the Angolan NGOs* (FONGA) was created as an umbrella organisation for NGOs in 1991, as a reaction to the international dominance of CONGA and its too close links to the

⁵⁴ On EITI supported by CRS and Open Society, and on budget monitoring, assisted by World Learning and IDASA, see chapter 4.4.2 below.

government and the directorship of the UTCHA. FONGA has more than 450 members in Angola, a head office in Luanda and 4 nucleus offices in Cabinda, Benguela, Huíla and Kwanza-Sul.

What was seen as the failure of FONGA and a confrontational line by its former secretary-general led to the replacement of its leadership in April 2003. However, FONGA is still facing structural, organisational and political problems that have weakened the organisation as a national platform.

This is reflecting a common pattern in the rise and fall of civil society umbrella organisations, networks and platforms in Angola. Like others, FONGA's central structures – designed to facilitate and co-ordinate activities of its member organisations – instead became an instrument for top-down decision-making coloured by personal leadership styles and overseas agendas. This isolated the leadership from reality on the ground and from member organisations.

This should serve as a reminder that civil society networks and coalitions are not always viewed as positive forces, and are often perceived as being donor-driven and removed from the practical issues that face ordinary Angolans. Some observers also report that there is an ongoing government infiltration of CSOs, with the twin aims of controlling and weakening them, and this has also had negative effects on the CSOs ability to articulate the concerns of ordinary people.

3.8 Gender relations

In recent years budgets have in some countries been assessed in terms of their effects on children or women. In most cases budgets do not include any particular reference to their effects on women and children, nor do they show separate allocations for women and children's programs. This is also the case in Angola.

The effects of budget decisions on women and children must be therefore derived from various sources of information within the budget, and from sources outside the budget. In Angola, women constitute the majority of the population, and with the history of the war Angolan women have suffered disproportionately. A gender approach will be do defend affirmative action, and promote the participation of women in particular. At least, women should have preference in similar conditions as men, in programmes, projects, CSO boards, commissions and other forums.

Several NGOs in different parts of the world have worked on gender budget issues. One of the most well known is the *Women's Budget Initiative* in South Africa (see text box eight below). Another example is the *Tanzanian Gender Networking Program (TGNP)*. Since 1993, the TGNP *Gender Budget Initiative* has been working to facilitate the process of gender equality, equity, and women's empowerment at different levels of society. The budget is one of the many projects through which the program emphasizes gender issues in the public debate. Other efforts in this area have been the work of two groups in Mexico, *Fundar* and *Equidad de Género*.⁵⁵

It is our impression that Angolan women organisations neither have the budget literacy skills nor any concrete plans at present to engage in "women budgeting" issues. However, we believe they have a role to play and would be possible to engage if invited to workshops and training sessions initially, and to women budget activities thereafter.

⁵⁵ For a review of NGO gender budget activities and strategies around the world, see the paper "Review of Gender Budget Initiatives," by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry, South Africa, 2000 (<http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/library/GenderBudget.pdf> [140906]). For more on the Tanzanian TGNP, see <http://www.tgnp.co.tz/>.

Text box nine: Women's Budget Initiative

The South African *Women's Budget Initiative* (WBI) is a research and training project based at IDASA, the Institute for Democracy in South Africa. The initiative aims to facilitate effective lobbying and advocacy around gender equity. The Women's Budget Initiative was developed in 1995 to track and advance the interests of women during the South African political and economic transition. The initiative is a research, training, and advocacy project that produces the annual *South African Women's Budget* and related products. The *Women's Budget* researches the link between budgets, gender and poverty.

Research, training and advocacy are core approaches to Women's Budget work and closely interconnected. The research looks at the extent to which budgets and the associated policies are gender-sensitive. Training builds the capacity of organisations, legislatures and government officials to conduct gender-sensitive budget analysis. Training is also a platform through which research information can be shared and others empowered to undertake research themselves. Advocacy efforts of organisations are strengthened through research and training on gender-sensitive budgeting. Research information is used to develop advocacy strategies and the development of these strategies is incorporated into training sessions.

See: Institute for Democracy in South Africa (*Idasa*) homepage for more information (<http://www.idasa.org.za>)

3.8.1.1 Movimento Angolano Mulheres, Paz e Desenvolvimento

The *Movimento Angolano Mulheres, Paz e Desenvolvimento* (Angolan Movement for Women, Peace and Development) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing a wide range of women from different sectors of Angolan society. Their main focus is to promote greater representativity of women within political and governmental structures as well as to fight for the emancipation of women. The movement organized the first Conference on Women and Peace in 2001.

It has now developed several projects under the broad heading of Woman and Democracy. The main activities are related with the training of human rights and peace activists, and support to the economic, social and political rights of women (and in particular those who are the direct victims of civil war).

Foundation data is reported to be 1999; it was legally instituted in the beginning of the year 2000. The members of the direction works on a volunteer or philanthropic basis, there are 4 full-time staff members and reported more than 2000 members distributed around the country.

3.8.1.2 Rede Mulher

The *Rede Mulher* (Women Network) was created in 1998 to address the promotion of equality between women and men in Angola, through communication and information, capacity building, lobbying and advocacy in gender issues. It's head office is located in Luanda, has 5 staff members, and the network is represented in 12 provinces. It has a membership base of more than 80 organisations.

Rede Mulher is a "classic" women's organisation, and in terms of political activism the organisation has a working group called *Comité das Mulheres Politicas* (Committee of Women in Politics) in partnership with *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. They are leading a series of public debates on issues like political parties, national reconciliation, the National Assembly, etc. The Rede Mulher is indeed interested in political issues, and it is a likely candidate also for public finance management issues.

4. Analysis and conclusions

4.1 Mandate and influence

One basic lesson from the outline of Angolan civil society organisations made above, is that the more directly the organisations are working on issues of central government accountability and transparency, public finance management and budgeting, the smaller, weaker and less legitimate (in terms of membership base and in the eyes of the government as “foreign”) the organisations tend to be.

4.1.1 Broad democratisation issues

If we take a look at the question of how CSOs can influence governance and democratisation in broad terms, we have seen that a number of CSOs are working for

- The establishment and respect of certain minimum standards, like government acceptance of the role of civil society (room for manoeuvre, space and legitimacy)
- General transparency in government affairs, like the right to insight and oversight in governance matters
- Respect for basic human rights, like due process but also political rights like access to information, free speech, and the right to organise.

This lays within the core mandate of some organisations, in particular human rights organisations. But other organisations are also taking up these issues in their work, as we have seen that a number of them are willing to engage in networks and alliances that can advance their operational space as organisations. Softer policy issues like access to information, legal space for the operation of NGOs, and their recognition as legitimate interlocutors and partners by government, is also a concern for most organisations.

Human rights organisations have a stronger will to engage in democratisation issues and good governance, because of their mandate. There are 3-5 human rights organisations in Angola, with a good oversight, strong competence, and a high level of engagement. *AJPD* and *Mãos Livres* is falling in this category, together with other organisations working directly on democratization issues like the *Rede Eleitoral*.

These do have some influence, as seen from their accomplishments. Human rights and elections is a necessary basis for democratisation along with political parties with different programmes, a genuine opposition, a functioning parliament, judiciary and institutions of control. Human rights and election organisations are potentially relevant and largely positively inclined to engage themselves in democratisation, transparency and accountability issues, but they often have a legal and legal rights perspective, and thus a competence base and activity focus that are primarily directing them differently.

Only to a small extent and mainly in an indirect manner are the other organisations touching on democratisation and good governance issues, when working on their core areas. Land mines clearing, conflict resolution, water and sanitation, basic health and education, children rights and a host of other issues that NGOs are working on has few and very indirect links to democratisation issues. But, when their centre of focus is the empowerment of the poor, information and awareness building, human and land rights, local government service provision and working conditions, they come closer to democratisation and good governance issues. Their work on these and related issues

can of course have a long-term democratisation effect, as “democratisation from below”, and as such this aspect must not be underestimated.

However, the direct and immediate impact of this NGO-supported ‘democratisation from below’ process on central government policies, transparency and good governance, is limited. Deep and true democratisation, or even strengthened government accountability and transparency, will take very long to establish in Angola through local empowerment programmes and “democratisation from below”, if ever.

4.1.2 Narrow public finance issues

If we take a look at the question of how CSOs can influence on the more specific processes of public finance management, including public revenues and taxation systems, the budget process, and expenditure patterns, there are some specific tasks that are essential for civil society organisations to accomplish. These include to

- Demonstrate literacy and detailed knowledge and technical insight in public finance management, revenue collection, fiscal regimes, tax administration, budget processes, and budget execution principles
- Develop relevant organisational structures to address public finance issues, including administrative and managerial efficiency and skilled personnel
- Develop the necessary independence and integrity, including a secure financial basis, sound management, internal democracy and transparency of the organisations. This should ideally include an informed and engaged membership base
- Collect, compare, interpret, analyse, evaluate, and present (in a simplified manner) data and information on incomes, budgets and expenditures
- Exert qualified pressure on government agencies, ministries, the parliament, political parties and audit and control institutions throughout the budget cycle
- Cooperate and make strategic alliances, with other Angolan NGOs and civil society organisations, with international organisations and the media.

In general, most of the Angolan civil society organisations have a mandate pointing towards specific target groups (e.g. socially and economically excluded or vulnerable groups) or member constituencies (professions). The mandate for most organisations is thus quite different from public finance issues. For instance do *ADRA*, *DW*, *APN* and several other NGOs listed above, and professional organisations and workers’ unions like *Sinprof* and the student organisations, have mandates that direct them primarily to other activities than sound public finance management.

Besides, organisations are protecting their core working area, and tend to avoid activities that can hamper their operation. In Angola, social service providing organisations, as well as relief and emergency organisations, are to a large degree keeping their distance to politics to protect their sectoral interests. They are rather unwilling to engage in ‘hard’ political issues like transparency, revenues and budgeting, because of the hostile climate for CSO work and the persistent possibilities of a backlash. Some organisations have expressed their preference for “*not rocking the boat*”, preferring to focus on their day-to-day work and thus to avoid an exposure to ‘hard politics’ that can jeopardize their core operations.⁵⁶

Organisations that have a core mandate of promoting fiscal transparency and a sound budget process are very few and very weak. We are talking about less than a handful of organisations, with less than a hundred individual members, no more. With the reservation that we have overlooked some new and small organisations or initiatives; we have found only *Jubileu 2000*

⁵⁶ But these international organisations and organisations with a different mandate should and could, of course, be supportive to the national organisations working in this field.

and to a lesser extent the *Associação Fiscal*, the recent initiatives to get the EITI established in Angola, and an ad-hoc group on PWYP⁵⁷.

The *Jubileu 2000* is a network composed of other organisations. It has an original mandate slightly different from budgeting processes (namely debt relief), although it has been re-orienting itself lately towards good public finance management. But, it is very small and dependent on a few individuals, it is inadequately resourced, little known and little visible in Angola. It is also dependent on foreign funding, sometimes lacking in legitimacy and sometimes too close to government.

The *Associação Fiscal* is basically an interest organisation for private companies working in the audit sector. It is an organisation that is listened to by government ministries and agencies because of their competence and technical skills. The organisation's outlook and approach is also good, but it is extremely small and dependent on a few individuals, little known and very little visible in Angola, and its mandate will restrict it from playing a stronger political role.

Therefore, we are concluding that the Angolan civil society's actual and perceived interest in improved governance of public affairs is relatively well developed, but the more specifically we are talking about public finance management, budget process and fiscal transparency, the fewer and weaker are the relevant organisations.

4.2 Lack of an economic interest base

Another basic lesson from the outline is that there are relatively few genuine interest organisations in Angola, i.e organisations run by and for a membership base with particular and distinct (economic or social) interests. This link between organic (material) interests, interest organisations and political organisations – on which most of the democratisation process in the liberal democratic world was based – is seriously underdeveloped in Angola.⁵⁸

For instance, although a number of development assistance organisations are promoting local empowerment and institution building, there is still a long way forward until the rural smallholder population has well-functioning organisations to represent their interests. People in Angola are still not engaging themselves in organisations and paying membership fees to promote their (sectoral or group) interests.

The exemptions are the trade unions and professional organisations that are on the rise and gaining strengths, despite deliberate attempts by the government to control and restrict them. These organisations are also demanding not only better conditions for their members and a political space for their organisations, but are also engaged in broader democratisation and governance issues. Somewhat restricted by their trade or profession mandate, these organisations can in the longer term have an important impact. The further link to opposition party politics is largely non-existent, however. The backing of certain political parties by trade or professional organisations, interest groups and social classes, which is the order of the day in liberal democracies, is not even at the initiation point in Angola today.

4.3 Government restrictions

One of the democratic deficiencies of Angola is the government's deliberate but inconsistent policies of restricting the room for manoeuvre, controlling the operations and limiting the political impact of civil society organisations. As the likelihood is small for many years to come that the MPLA government and the current ruling elite will be voted out in free and fair elections, these restrictions will probably exist for the same number of years.

⁵⁷ For the two latter initiatives, see chapter 4.4.2 below.

⁵⁸ We are making this conclusion with the reservation that private sector (business) organisations may exist that brighten the picture. However, based on impressions from our field research, business organisations are not representing broad socio-economic groups and interests, that can serve as an alternative to and a check on government.

The MPLA government is running and controlling their own “mass organisations”, and is trying to capture as much civil society space and legitimacy as possible through these. Furthermore, the operations of civil society face legal provisions with illiberal traits, aimed at restricting and controlling NGOs. Many NGO representatives expressed fear of reprisals, harassment and retribution if some vague limits were crossed.

The government can accept organisations and activities that are within their own priorities and in areas where they need assistance and competence (mainly service delivery and emergency relief, to some extent technical assistance and local self-help), and it has done so for many years. But the government seems to be very reluctant to accept any political role of civil society, and has expressed its dislike for advocacy, human rights and openly political associations. Some observers are of the opinion that the ruling elite is protecting its vital interests of accumulation and power preservation, and probably will react violently if there is a perception these are seriously threatened.⁵⁹

This has created a lot of tension between government and the civil society organisations. It must be recognized that civil society interventions in the advocacy of political rights, in demanding more transparency and accountability, in the national budget process, and in a better redistribution and pro-poor use of the national revenues, has been met and will be met with resistance. The relatively low level of civil society capacity, competence and knowledge, especially when it comes to public finance matters, is also an important restricting factor.⁶⁰

4.4 Inroads

The tendency of by some ministries and government agencies to control the NGOs is not general. Some ministers and MPLA party members are directly hostile to civil society and their activities, but others are rather open to civil society organisations and their engagement. There is a growing space for civil society and certain openings exist, both thematically (especially on technical issues), geographically (especially on local issues) and to some extent politically (especially on NGO-Parliament relations and sometimes with certain government ministries and departments). This space can and should be used, strategically and deliberately, to increase the push sound budget policies, for good governance and transparency, thereby promoting democratisation in Angola.

Among the necessary strategies to improve on CSOs capacity and efficiency in influencing government on economic policy analysis, public finance management, financial transparency, and pro-poor budget programming, we will suggest that

- more interest in and more competence on these issues is created through more training workshops on applied budget work for CSOs,
- competence and professionalism is enhanced also through more strategic partnerships with international organisations,
- strategies are developed through stronger national alliances and networks, for instance with relevant university institutes, resource persons and policy analysis entities within ministries,
- that the necessary broadening of public interest, insight and participation is enhanced through better public information campaigns.

⁵⁹ In the words of the Chatham House report, (civil society) “*strategies that allay fears of a total loss of government control can be beneficial*” (Chatham House 2005: Drivers of Change. Page 18, para 62).

⁶⁰ “*This lack of capacity, in turn, is exacerbated by fickle and limited donor interventions which do not make civil society an especially attractive or stable career choice for skilled Angolans*”, according to the Chatham House Drivers of Change report (2005, chapter 3, page 10).

4.4.1 Advancing budget literacy

The required insight and skills of organisations with a basic interest in public finance issues can quite easily be enhanced through training courses and other forms of competence and interest enhancement.

What *CEIC* and the *Associação Fiscal* is doing in this field is excellent, but very small in scope. The open seminars at CEIC are important, but they are of course not always on democratisation and public finance management issues and reaching a limited audience (around 100 people, mostly students). The *Associação Fiscal* library and seminars are reaching an even smaller audience.

Thus, there is a need for international expertise to be brought in for training purposes. This should initially be directed at staff and members of organisations with an interest in public finance management, to enlarge and broaden the pool of people with competence and insight. At the same time, existing national organisations and networks should facilitate any training courses.

There are international organisations like the *International Budget Project* and the *Africa Budget Project* that one can draw upon, and a lot of literature, manuals, handbooks, and even course material, training workshops and instructors available internationally.

Text box ten: Africa Budget Project

The *Africa Budget Project* (ABP) works to build capacity in civil society organisations and legislatures in African countries so that they can participate effectively in budget processes. The ABP is a unit within the *Budget Information Service* of the *Institute for Democracy* (Idasa) which is based in Cape Town, South Africa. It is also a partner of the *International Budget Project*, based in Washington DC. Idasa is committed to furthering the demand for applied budget work and nurturing strong budget organisations on the African continent. The ABP:

- Undertakes training and joint research projects to help organisations acquire the technical knowledge and skills needed to access budget processes;
- Provides research instruments and analysis frameworks that groups can apply;
- Provides technical assistance and one-on-one support; and
- Works with international organisations to improve the transparency of budgets and build the credibility of civil society organisations in budget debates.

For more information, see the *Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) homepage* (<http://www.idasa.org.za>) and the *International Budget Project (IBP) homepage* (<http://www.internationalbudget.org>). Of particular interest is the *IBP Civil Society Budget Initiative (CSBI)* (<http://www.internationalbudget.org/CSBI.htm>). For an excellent introduction to applied budget work, see the *IBP "Guide to Budget Work for NGOs"*, which offers a systematic overview of the different aspects of applied budget work, with an emphasis on the activities and approaches a non-governmental organization might want to undertake in its initial years of such work (<http://www.internationalbudget.org/resources/guide/index.htm>). See also the *Revenue Watch Institute's report "Follow the Money"*, which provides practical information on how citizens of resource-rich countries can become effective monitors of government earnings and expenditures (<http://www.revenuewatch.org/reports/120204.shtml>).

4.4.2 Strategic international partnerships

For the purpose of increasing the competence and professionalism of Angolan CSOs in applied budget work, there is also a need to make more and better strategic partnerships with international organisations. Existing national organisations and networks should facilitate these partnerships

There is no *Transparency International* national chapter in Angola. Links with the *TI* international secretariat in Berlin, the Norwegian chapter (which has expressed its interest to engage in Angola) and relevant (lusophone) chapters like *TI Brazil* should therefore be established. This can either be done through a closer link between *TI* chapters and one of the networks or

organisations oriented towards public finance (like for instance *Jubileu 2000*, *Associação Fiscal*, and others), or by informal Angolan networks aiming at establishing a proper TI Angola chapter.

Text box eleven: Transparency International

Transparency International (TI) is the biggest and most influential global civil society organisation, leading the fight against corruption. It brings people together in a powerful worldwide coalition to end the devastating impact of corruption on men, women and children around the world.

TI's mission is to create change towards a world free of corruption. Transparency International challenges the inevitability of corruption, and offers hope to its victims. TI plays a lead role in improving the lives of millions around the world, by building momentum for the anti-corruption movement, raising awareness and diminishing apathy and tolerance of corruption, as well as devising and implementing practical actions to address it.

Transparency International is a global network including more than 90 locally established national chapters and chapters-in-formation. These bodies fight corruption in the national arena in a number of ways. They bring together relevant players from government, civil society, business and the media to promote transparency in elections, in public administration, in procurement and in business. TI's global network of chapters and contacts also use advocacy campaigns to lobby governments to implement anti-corruption reforms.

Politically non-partisan, TI does not undertake investigations of alleged corruption or expose individual cases, but at times will work in coalition with organisations that do. TI has the skills, tools, experience, expertise and broad participation to fight corruption on the ground, as well as through global and regional initiatives. Now in its second decade, Transparency International is maturing, intensifying and diversifying its fight against corruption.

See the Transparency International homepage (<http://www.transparency.org/>) for more information. See also the Norwegian TI chapter homepage (<http://www.transparency.no/>) and Transparência Brazil (<http://www.transparencia.org.br/index.html>).

Other strategic partnerships are the *Publish What You Pay* campaign and the *Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative* (as outlined in the text boxes below).

Some initiatives have already been taken to get the EITI scheme established in Angola. There is now an ad-hoc group on PWYP/EITI,⁶¹ which is preparing some input to the government after the *Petroleum Revenue Management Workshop* held at the Ministry of Finance in May 2006. This group is preparing the terms of reference of an Angolan platform, a visit by *Matteo Pellegrini* (PWYP Africa Regional Coordinator) in September, Angolan participation at the *EITI conference* in Oslo in October 2006 (including a lusophone training workshop for journalists, funded by the World Bank), a radio program on *Rádio Ecclésia*, and various other activities.

The EITI initiative has a number of Angolan NGO signatories,⁶² and it has quite some potential in Angola, not least because of international interest and focus. However, it should be signed up to by even more organisations to increase the pressure on the government and the industry.

⁶¹ The group was created after a seminar supported by CRS, Open Society and NIZA, and it is composed of representatives of *Mpalabanda*, *ADPCI*, *Justiça Económica*, *Comissão Episcopal de Justiça, Paz e Migrações*, *SODI*, *CRTC*, *Jubileu 2000* and *A-Ip*.

⁶² A number of Angolan NGOs has signed up to the initiative: *Ação para o Desenvolvimento*, *Pesquisa e Cooperação Internacional*, *Agência Eclética para o Desenvolvimento Social em Angola*, *CARE Angola*, *Grémio ABC*, *Justiça Paz e Democracia*, *Jubileu 2000 Angola*, *OIKOS*, and the *Reconciliation, Transparency and Citizenship Coalition*.

Text box twelve: Publish What You Pay

The *Publish What You Pay* campaign aims to help citizens of resource-rich developing countries holding their governments accountable for the management of revenues from the oil, gas and mining industries. Natural resource revenues are an important source of income for governments of over 50 developing countries. When properly managed these revenues should serve as a basis for poverty reduction, economic growth and development rather than exacerbating corruption, conflict and social divisiveness.

The *Publish What You Pay* coalition of over 280 NGOs worldwide calls for the mandatory disclosure of the payments made by oil, gas and mining companies' to all governments for the extraction of natural resources. This is a necessary first step towards a more accountable system for the management of revenues in resource-rich developing countries.

The campaign was founded by Global Witness, CAFOD, Oxfam, Save the Children UK, Transparency International UK and the Soros Foundation/Open Society Institute. There are now several Publish What You Pay national NGO coalitions around the world working towards greater resource revenue transparency.

Foreign investment in the oil, gas and mining industries is a significant source of revenue for governments of over 50 developing countries, but most of the countries in question are politically corrupt. Approximately 3.5 billion people live in these countries, of which 1.5 billion survive on less than US\$2 a day. Furthermore, twelve of the world's 25 most mineral-dependent states and six of the world's most oil-dependent states are classified by the World Bank as "highly indebted poor countries" with some of the world's worst Human Development Indicators, including Angola, Congo-Brazzaville, Kazakhstan and Venezuela.

Revenue transparency itself is a fundamental criterion for good governance: you cannot manage what you cannot measure. Natural resources are held in trust by the state for the citizens of a country. Those citizens have a clear right to information about the management of revenues associated with their resources. The campaign calls for multinational oil, mining and gas companies to reveal the same basic information about net payments to a state in the developing world that they already routinely disclose in the developed world. State-owned enterprises must also be financially accountable for payments made to their governments and revenues received. Together this information will help citizens of resource rich but poor countries to call their governments to account over the management of revenues and thereby seek a democratic debate over their use and distribution. Companies can often be perceived to be complicit to corruption and the deterioration of social conditions in the countries where they operate, even though they are providing a valuable source of investment that, when managed transparently and responsibly, should be a source for growth and development that will benefit all citizens of these poor countries.

See the international Publish What You Pay (<http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/english>) or the Norwegian PWYP homepage (http://www.publishwhatyoupay.no/component/option,com_frontpage/_Itemid,1) for background, objectives, toolkits, benchmarks, reports and news on the campaign. See also Revenue Watch (<http://www.revenuewatch.org/>) for country reports and literature (Angola not yet included).

Text box thirteen: Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

The *Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative* (EITI) is supported by DFID and other donors, and aims also to ensure that the revenues from extractive industries contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction. The EITI works to ensure due process and transparency in payments by the extractive industries and companies to governments and public bodies, and that the revenues collected are properly reported by those governments. At the core of the initiative is a set of Principles and Criteria that establish how EITI should be implemented. A number of companies and two countries (Nigeria and Azerbaijan) have now signed the initiative.

See the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) homepage (<http://eitidev.forumone.com>) for more information.

4.4.3 National networking

An essential strategy for CSOs engaged in budget work is to form national strategies through national alliances and networks. There are already a number of organisational networks and umbrella organisations in Angola, of which some are potentially important in terms of budget work.

We know, however, that there are tendencies of competition rather than cooperation amongst some organisations, especially as the traditional funding opportunities are shrinking. We have also seen how several organisations are protecting their core working area and funding sources. We have seen how some civil society organisations do engage in political issues, but only indirectly and carefully, basically through various organisational networks and coalitions. Given the relatively hostile political climate, this is a sensible and worthwhile strategy for most Angolan CSOs when engaging in applied budget work.

In order for networks and coalitions on budget issues to be effective and to have an even stronger impact, what is needed is a broad cooperation with various CSOs in Angola (for public backing and legitimacy purposes), a strong network secretariat (with skilled managers and activists), and preferably a strong guidance (ownership and directorship) executed by the network's member organisations.

In this line, there have been attempts by national NGOs to create a "social forum", and there is a tendency among INGOs (like *SNV*, *DW*, *Ibis*, *Intermom-Oxfam*, *Trocaire*, *APN* and others) to support the local NGOs in capacity building, skills and operation, through the creation of different "platforms" and networks. For instance is there a group of international NGOs that is working (with support from Chevron), on a project to create a "citizen centre". This can be used by all CSOs, for training, advocacy and lobbying activities, as well as debates on strategic issues.

Another element of the national networking is the need to discuss and agree on CSO strategic approaches. For instance is it important to understand the constraints and openings, and to search for inroads, through regular and sound contextual, political and institutional analyses. For instance, it is this government that shows so little interest in promoting participation of other social actors, which will formulate the legal framework for CSOs. Thus, there is an urgent need to develop CSO capacity and skills to work with it.

4.4.4 Media and public information campaigns

Applied budget work for NGOs also implies the necessary broadening of public interest, insight and participation. This can be done through programmes of public information campaigns.

Preparing a report should be considered only the first step of applied budget work. The goal is not only to publish an analysis but to get it into the hands of those who should read it and then to get them to read it. This means that very close attention needs to be paid to how and when products are distributed. It is therefore essential to develop a release strategy well before analyses and reports are finalised. The audiences and specific people within the preferred target groups have to be sought out. NGOs should promote public participation on a routine basis, not as an occasional happening.

A media strategy is especially important. The media is usually hungry for timely information, and can raise the profile of budget work by providing free publicity for a group's analyses and conclusions. Among other things, a media strategy should identify which parts of the media to prioritise. In some countries, the print media (especially daily and weekly newspapers) is the best target, but in Angola where the literacy rate is low, the focus may need to be on radio and/or television. Often a strategy calls for using combination of different types of media. NGOs will find that learning to use press releases and briefings effectively, offering opinion pieces to editors, and developing radio and television presentation skills are all important for implementing a successful media strategy.

Establishing a positive working relationship with the media requires repeated effort. It will take time for reporters to trust an organisation as a source of information. The more reporters regularly review an organisation's reports, the more comfortable they will become with its work.

The communication should be both pro-active and reactive. NGOs should be accessible and be prepared to provide background information and answer questions from the media on short notice.

In some countries, CSOs have come to realize that one of their tasks will be to educate the media about budget issues. These issues can be intimidating to reporters who lack quantitative or economics training. There are many ways to educate the media, such as setting up one-on-one briefing sessions to go over particular issues. One approach that some NGOs have used successfully is to run budget training courses specifically for the media. Not only can this approach be a valuable way to discuss current policy issues, but it also can create confidence and help establish working relationships.

Annex 1: Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADRA	Angolan Association for Rural Development
AEA	Aliança Evangélica de Angola
AJAPRAZ	Associação dos Jovens Provenientes da Zâmbia
APN	Norwegian People's Aid
CBOs	Community Based Associations
CEAST	Conferência Eclesial de Angola e São Tomé
CEIC	Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica
CICA	Conselho das Igrejas Cristãs em Angola
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CONGA	Comité das Organizações Não-Governamentais em Angola
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DFID	Department for International Development
DW	Development Workshop
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
FESA	Fundação Eduardo dos Santos
FONGA	Fórum das Organizações Não-Governamentais em Angola
IFI	International Finance Institutions (World Bank and IMF)
IGOs	International Governmental Organisations
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisations
JMPLA	Juventude do MPLA
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
MINARSS	Ministério da Assistência e Reinserção Social
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NORAD	Norwegian Development Association
OADEC	Organização de Ajuda ao Desenvolvimento Comunitário
OMA	Organização da Mulher Angolana
PAANE	Programa de Apoio aos Actores Não Estatais
OPA	Organização dos Pioneiros Agostinho Neto
PWYP	Publish What You Pay
SINFO	State Security Services
SJA	Sindicato dos Jornalistas Angolanos
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers
UCAN	Universidade Católica de Angola
UJ	União dos Jornalistas
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNTA	União Nacional dos Trabalhadores Angolanos
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UTCAH	Unidade técnica de coordenação da ajuda humanitária (Government Humanitarian Aid Coordination Technical Unit)

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SUMMARY

Civil society is inherently weak in Angola, and the political and societal space for civil society is limited. Angolan authorities have not fully accepted civil society's voice, watchdog and control functions, and the legal framework is restrictive. Most organisations are careful in their approach to and in their contact with government. There is a tangible fear of backlash, based on previous negative experiences.

NGOs explicitly and directly working on issues of governance, transparency and democracy, including public finance management, are all very small, having a limited membership base, and they are dependent on foreign funding. Except for a few human rights organisations, NGOs working on good governance and public finance are still embryonic in Angola.

Larger NGOs with a solid membership base, international backing and broad legitimacy in Angolan society and government, all have main priority working areas different from public finance management and state budgets. This makes them reluctant to engage in political matters, except for on carefully delineated issues that directly affect their core constituencies (like budget allocations to local areas), and with carefully chosen counterparts in (local) government agencies.

The tendency towards organisational networking is comparatively strong in Angola. Almost all NGOs are members of several organisational networks, through which they work not only for the benefit of their members, organisations and organisational space in general, but also on issues that relates to good governance and government transparency. Although some of these networks have been evolving towards being organisations on their own, the networking trend is very positive, sometimes politically significant, and should be supported.

The Angolan government seems to take CSO and NGO pressure seriously only when it is concerted, based on a larger number of organisations, and involving international NGOs and media. At the same time, the regime is not monolithic, and inroads to more accommodating ministries and government representatives do exist. Multiple and various channels must be employed for NGOs to be heard.

In order to have an impact on public finance management, transparent budgeting and pro-poor budgets, Angolan CSOs will need more elaborated knowledge and "budget literacy". This can be enhanced for instance through international partnerships for inspiration, information and training.

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