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Cabinda

**Stability
brings
prosperity**



Peace accord heralds new era

Peace has been consolidated in the Angolan province, bringing with it new economic growth that is beginning to be felt by Cabindans. Foreign oil and mineral companies are also beginning onshore exploration for the first time in the province's history

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Cabinda has long been one of Angola's richest provinces, and for decades was by far its biggest export earner thanks to its oil wealth. Once the region's separatist movement agreed to peace with the central government, Cabinda began a new era of political stability and economic development.

The Cabinda Forum for Dialogue, which represented the separatists, and the government signed a pact on Aug. 1, 2006. The accord has already improved the lives of Cabindans by permitting them to return to their homes and farms and start the process of rebuilding the province.

"The government and the Cabinda Forum for Dialogue signed the accords with the intention of ending the hostilities from which the province had been suffering," says José Anibal Lopes Rocha, the governor of the province. "That event is what opened the door to the development that Cabinda is experiencing today."

Under the terms of the pact, the government and the guerillas have ended hostilities, the guerillas have been integrated into the Angolan Armed Forces, and positions in the national government have been reserved for Cabindans.

The province's people turned out in large numbers to participate in the Sept. 5 legislative elections, which were judged by foreign observers to be "peaceful and orderly," as well as transparent. The governing party, the MPLA, won about 80% of the vote at the national level, and in Cabinda, voter turnout was slightly higher (87.87%) than an already high national average (87.36%).

Along with political stability, Cabinda has gained increased government spending and faster economic expansion. As part of the 2006 agreement, Cabinda keeps a percentage of the revenue from the sale

of oil, and the regional government is devoting that extra cash towards improving the lives of Cabindans through increased spending on health, education and infrastructure.

"We all know that the Angolan people, in general after the long period of war, find themselves in terrible situations, in need of urgent help, and for this reason the Forum and the government together are working to change this situation," says Bento Bembe, leader of the Cabinda Forum for Dialogue.

Another part of the spending has gone to increasing the number of police in the province, leading to lower crime rates. Cabinda has gone from having one police station to nine, plus another seven police posts spread throughout the area.

A project that will be funded with oil money is a 20-kilometre, £1.7 billion bridge and roadway that will link the exclave of Cabinda to the rest of Angola, crossing over the Zaire river and parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo once it is finished in 2012.

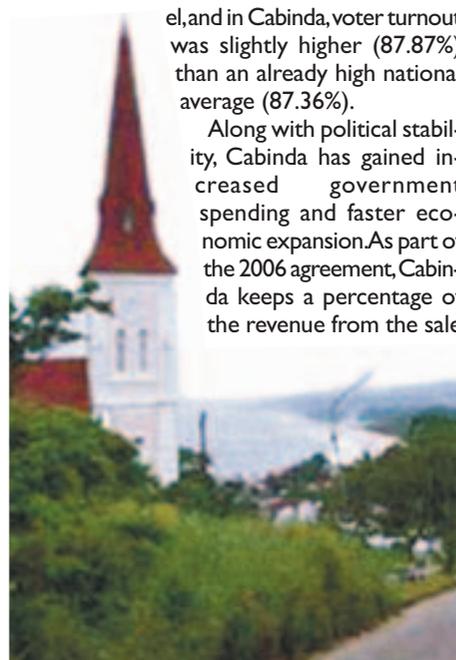
With the improvement of the situation in Cabinda, refugees from the earlier violence are returning to their homes, and are now in need of employment, as are the guerillas that are not being integrated into the armed forces. The regional government is helping in this area by funding efforts to diversify the economy, encouraging more agricultural activity, building an industrial park and promoting an increase in fishing and other productive activities.

Angola's oil industry is already seeing a big increase in foreign investment. In July, BP announced £6.7 billion in spending in the country, and Chevron is increasing its financing of projects in Cabinda.



Facts & figures

- ▶ **LOCATION:**
A province of Angola, which is separated from the rest of the country by Democratic Republic of Congo
- ▶ **POPULATION:**
Approximately 300,000
- ▶ **CAPITAL:** Cabinda City
- ▶ **AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS:**
Cassava, bananas, coffee
- ▶ **INDUSTRY:**
Oil extraction, oil refinery, construction materials, food produce, wines, tobacco, timber and furniture



‘Cabinda now has the autonomy to manage its own resources’

Special statute opens the door to a brighter future for the province, says the man who was key to its implementation

Cabinda is the second-biggest contributor to the national budget plan after Luanda. Would this rapid evolution and reconstruction around the country be possible without the contribution from Cabinda?

In addition to oil, Cabinda has other minerals, such as gold, phosphate and diamonds, that are still to be exploited. We have a lot of wood and marine resources.

The resources that Cabinda generates are withheld at the source to be used in reconstruction and public investment programs. Before we had an annual budget of £48 million, and today we have a budget of £167 million.

I'd also like to point out that civil service salaries in Cabinda are paid from local revenue.

Today high-profile public infrastructure projects are being carried out at the airport, the port, in water, energy, education and health, etc. We've even had the privilege of having the president of the Republic inaugurate some of these projects.

We're still investing a lot in housing projects. We have just finished a neighbourhood of 100 houses that will be used by public workers, and we're now building another neighbourhood of 250 houses, half of which are already finished. We recently laid the first brick for the construction of another neighborhood of 150 houses in the town of Cacolo, 50 houses in Bucuzau and another 50 in the town of Belize.

With all this we should see great progress in Cabinda, thanks to the support and organisation of the central government. Obviously, Cabinda plays an important role in the development of other provinces. The revenue that

Cabinda has generated has been important to the overall development of the country.

With peace and with new exploration techniques, the potential to find onshore reserves has increased. Given that, will Cabinda continue being Angola's main oil producing region?

Yes. As you know, at this moment almost 4% of the oil that the U.S. imports from the rest of the world comes from Cabinda. Until now the exploration in the province was done offshore, but now that exploration has been carried out onshore, there is great potential there.

Well-known companies have already come to Cabinda and this will certainly have an impact on people's lives because it will create more employment. That is why we're going to create the housing conditions for locals and expatriates that come to work in that activity. This has also required us to invest in a hospital facility with the most modern technology, which will have a particular emphasis on the treatment of cardiovascular and renal complaints and other illnesses.

What are you doing to spur agricultural production?

In addition to working with the state, we are also cooperating with some non-governmental organisations in the organisation of the agricultural sector. For example, we made an experiment in the production of potatoes



JOSÉ ANIBAL LOPES ROCHA
Governor of Cabinda

using new technology and as a result we're now producing better quality potatoes. We recently started using greenhouse technology that will let us continue to produce food during the rainy season, and now a large part of the fruits and vegetables consumed in Cabinda are produced locally.

What are you doing to improve the welfare of the people in the region and help attract investment?

Cabinda has a functioning health care system that ensures people's safety. Right now we're extending the health system to the areas where it has been weakest until now. We have a good health system, and Cabinda stands out regarding the low level of infant mortality – it's the lowest in the country.

We have a specific program against malaria that goes beyond fighting local outbreaks to fumigating households and streets, which helps protect people from the illness.

We have a permanent lighting system, though sometimes there are failures, but we're working to reduce them. We're extending the medium- and low-tension power network.

I should add that the province has good quality schools, with no students excluded from the system, and education facilities in every town.

The health network is good, and as I said recently, we are going to inaugurate a hospital soon which will have highly qualified doctors.

Among other advances we have moved forward on telecommunications, airport improvements and other areas that ensure that people are safe and sound.

What advantages does the region have to attract investors?

Today we have a good communications system, a health care system, internal security etc. We have an airport with new technology, and in Cabinda we offer investment incentives including tax exemptions.

The province is a 35-minute flight from Luanda, and is less than 400 kilometres from Luanda, Brazzaville and Gabon. One sign that investments here are safe is the presence of the many oil companies.

We are going to build a deepwater port, a project that has been ready to go for some time, we were just waiting for the green light to start it. Another project that will tie Cabinda more closely to the rest of the country is the bridge, upon which construction will start at the end of the year.

What are you doing to increase timber production, while at the same time protecting the rich ecosystem in the Mayombe forest?

We require that the wood that leaves Cabinda's forests be semi-transformed in order to guarantee more local jobs, and thus more local revenue. In fact our revenue from this has gone up spectacularly. Our tax system is also intended to encourage a balance and make sure that trees aren't cut down too early.

In Bucuzau we have an area where, for every tree that's cut down, another one is planted. We have great potential for the timber industry to grow without endangering the ecosystem because we have lots of available space and the number of timber cutters is limited. We have a biodiversity program that we've started with the help of an Israeli specialist, which works to protect primates in the area.

We're working to introduce species, such as goats and other grazing animals, to encourage people to eat them, instead of other, rarer indigenous animals. We've had a lot of success with this program.

CABINDA: A BRIEF HISTORY

From the Kongo Kingdom to modern day

The area that now constitutes the province of Cabinda was a group of principalities associated with the Kongo kingdom in the 1500s, when the first European explorers, in this case Portuguese, arrived in the region.

An adventurer named Diogo Cao was sent by the Portuguese king to trade gifts with the Kongo king, an exchange that began the European country's long history with Cabinda, which became an important trading post over the centuries.

Slaves were the biggest part of that trade relationship. They were brought from the interior of the continent by the Kongoleses and sold to the Portuguese, who transported them to Brazil and other parts of their empire.

The relationship with Portugal became so close that in 1758 a Kongoleses King declared that the European country had an exclusive right to trade there. The declaration annoyed other European nations and the British refused to recognise it.

The Portuguese also had claims on other areas north of the Zaire river. After the Berlin Conference, called in 1884 by

the Germans to formalise the carving up of Africa into European colonies, Portugal was left with Cabinda as its only sphere of influence in the area north of the river.

The Cabindan princes were alarmed by the outcome of the conference, fearing encroachment by other powers, and signed a treaty the following year that made the province a protectorate of Portugal. Two years later, the first Portuguese governor of the colony arrived.

Cabinda and Angola were governed as separate colonies by the Portuguese until 1956, when they were brought under the same administration. The Portuguese then governed them together until 1975, when Angola gained its independence following the Carnation Revolution that overthrew Portugal's dictatorship.

Angola then suffered through 27 years of civil war, and in Cabinda the central government was also faced with a separatist movement. The war in Angola ended with an accord in 2002, and the Cabindan separatists agreed to lay down their arms in 2006, leaving the entire country at peace.

No stranger to foreign investment

Cabinda has long had an international presence on her shores, or rather, off her shores

Angola is among the three largest oil producers in Africa, along with Nigeria and Libya. Production has risen to about 2 million barrels per day this year, and Cabinda has long been the most important region for the country's petroleum industry.

Since the end of the civil war in 2002, the government has been able to devote more of the revenue from the oil industry toward helping its citizens. Cabinda's local government keeps 10% of the income from local production for its own projects, which include programmes to improve the health and education of the province's population.

Currently, the bulk of the region's oil production comes from offshore platforms, in the areas known as Block Zero and Block 14. Block Zero is one of the country's most productive areas, pumping about 370,000 barrels per day in 2007.

Production from Block 14 is scheduled to increase in the next few years. While daily production levels at the Kuito field is declining, output from the Benguela, Belize, Lobito, Tomboco project (BBLT) is expected to peak this year and the Tombua Landana project will come onstream next year, adding about 100,000 barrels per day by 2010.

Tombua Landana is an ambitious project which includes the construction of one of the tallest structures on the planet. At 474 metres (1,554 feet), most of that submerged, the deepwater drilling rig is taller than the Sears Tower in Chicago and dwarfs the Eiffel Tower.

The Angolan unit of Chevron Corp. of the U.S. operates the Tombua Landana project and has a 31% stake. Other partners in the project include Sonangol, the Angolan national oil company, and Eni S.p.A. of Italy, both with 20% stakes.

The total investment in the project will be more than £2 billion, which will include more than £167 million of local content spending. The project maximises the use of Angolan engineering, procurement, construction and installation capabilities.

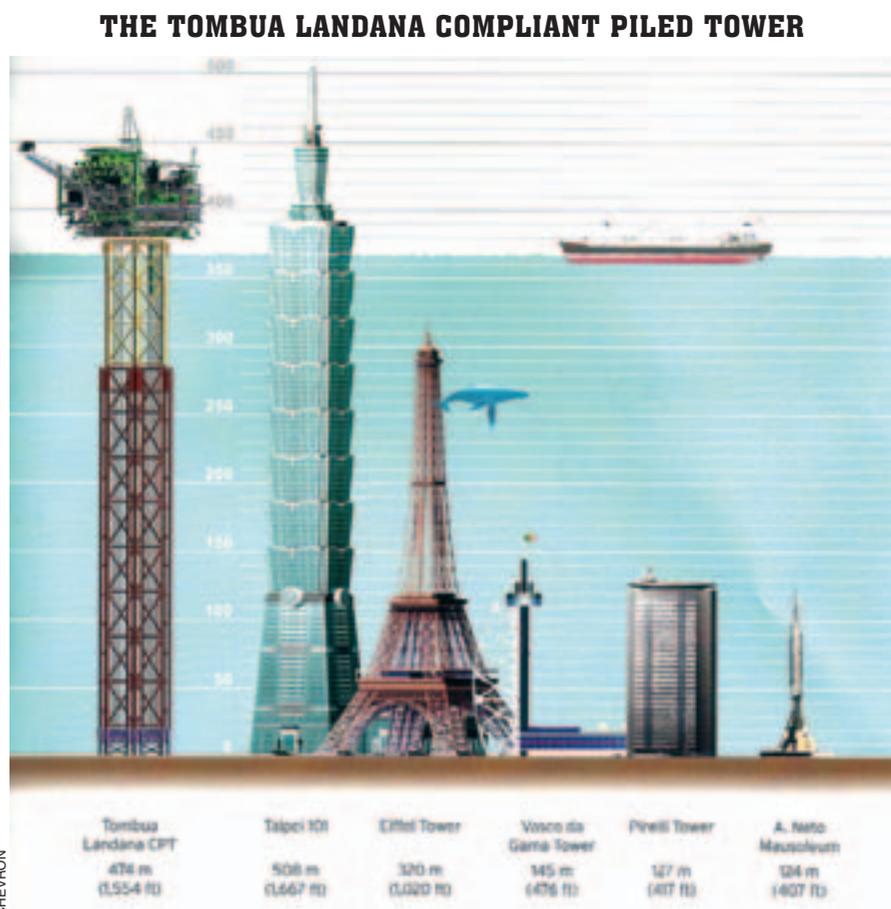
Non-Angolan companies that have won contracts as part of the project include Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Co., and Vetco Gray of the U.K., a supplier of equipment and services for onshore and offshore drilling.

Chevron's local unit, Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, or CABGOC, is one of the biggest players in the Cabindan oil industry. It has a 31% share in Block 14 production and a 39% stake in Block Zero.

As part of its investment in Cabinda, Chevron is spending £1.3 million to help fund the construction of a maritime water testing facility. The local government and the Fishing Ministry are also contributing to the project, which will carry out biological, chemical and heavy metal testing of the sea water in the region.

For decades, most of the oil produced in Cabinda came from offshore wells because of security concerns arising from the civil strife and turmoil that had prevented investors from exploring onshore areas.

Now that peace has come to Angola, more is being spent to identify promising areas and to develop any interesting discoveries. One field, called Massambala-1, was estimated last year to contain 170 mil-



CHEVRON

lion barrels of oil, more than five times the amount originally thought. Roc Oil of Australia, with a 60% stake in the Cabinda South block where Massambala-1 is located, has already begun exploration in other areas of the province.

Cabinda's people stand to gain from the

increase in onshore exploration, as well as from the production offshore, as programmes to hire more workers from the region benefit the province's economy, and as the decline of civil strife permits expatriate workers to come to Cabinda and further add to progress.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Boosting the economy through improved infrastructure

Over the next few years the people of Cabinda will enjoy noticeable improvement in many aspects of the province's infrastructure as the government invests more and more on roads, water and sanitation, buses and a new ferry.

The objective is to give residents of the region a higher quality of life by giving them easier access to clean water, improving their health through the construction and renovation of sewage systems and helping people and businesses go about their daily lives by enhancing telecommunications and decreasing the time and cost of local and regional transport.

The province is already about half way through a £85 million project to improve 272 kilometres (170 miles) of roads connecting the provincial capital of Cabinda City to other parts of the exclave and to the frontier with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The provincial government is importing 152 new buses to take advantage of the new roads and improve connections between Cabinda City and other parts of the area.



A 20 km-long bridge over the Zaire River will facilitate communication with Cabinda

More than 30 of the buses are already on their way to Cabinda and the rest will be delivered by the end of the year.

Another road project will link Cabinda, which is cut off from the rest of Angola by the DRC, with the rest of the country via a 20-km connecting road that will include a bridge over the Zaire River. The road will cost an estimated £1.71 billion and is scheduled to be finished by October 2012 and connect the province to the town of Soyo, in Angola's Zaire province.

Transport to Soyo and the national cap-

ital of Luanda will improve long before the bridge is finished, however. A new, faster ferry will begin operation by the end of the year, cutting travel times from Cabinda to Soyo from three hours to one, and to Luanda from 15 hours to six. The new ship will carry almost four times as many people as can fit on the ferry currently making the trip.

Cabinda already has a new airport, which has been operating for a year. The facility has a 2.5 km runway that can accommodate planes of all sizes, and now handles more

than 100 takeoff/landing operations a day.

The airport already provides 60 direct and 270 indirect jobs, and will provide more as it grows. Future improvements to the airport include an illumination project that will permit night-time operations and a new cargo facility.

The port of Cabinda is next in line for improvements. A £67 million expansion plan includes a nine-metre-deep manoeuvring basin and an 80-metre access channel that will allow ships carrying over 1,000 tonnes of cargo to use the port. The new facilities will permit use of the port to increase more quickly and provide new employment opportunities.

Communications between Cabinda and the rest of Angola have long been a problem for the region, which is located about 200 km from the capital. The national government is working to resolve those difficulties by installing a new system of satellite communications that will link together the widespread regions of the country and permit faster transmission of voice, internet, data, television and radio.

Cabinda's path to diversification

Steps along the way to creating a robust non-oil economy include producing more of what Cabindans need

Cabinda is currently highly dependent on revenue from the oil industry, but the government is taking steps to increase the diversity of the province's economy and is encouraging the growth of agriculture, industry and fishing to help meet the needs of the region's residents.

The idea is to produce more of the products Cabindans need in their daily lives, including foods such as mandioca and bananas, or wood or other construction supplies for the many infrastructure and rebuilding projects currently underway.

The government is helping in these areas by improving the region's infrastructure, lending money for investment in new equipment and agricultural development, and in the case of fish-

ing by distributing new vessels and improving the support structure for fishermen.

The national government has provided smaller boats in fishing villages around the country, with Cabinda receiving many of them. The province also received a semi-industrial ship that will help increase the region's catch and provide more local food for Cabindans.

Cabinda's fishermen need the extra help because of difficulties that arise from the oil industry. Ships aren't permitted to get closer than a kilometre to the oil platforms, reducing the fishable area. To help compensate, Cabinda will get a new ice factory to help preserve the catch for sale to inland markets, and a new fishing port is also in the works. A series of mechanical shops has also been set up along the coast to help when ships develop engine trouble.



AGRICULTURE

Value-added gets an official boost

Cabinda's farmers and the provincial government are working together to help boost agriculture production so that they can provide the region with enough of the basic foods that are staples of the Cabindan diet.

The goal for the 2007/2008 farming campaign was to increase output of Cabinda's 38,000 family farms to 48,592 tons of foods including banana, mandioca, peanuts, corn, macunde beans and sweet potatoes from the 37,498 tons produced in the previous campaign.

"Our ambition is for our family agricultural sector to increase its production levels," says Alector Araujo, director of the regional government's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. "We're entering a phase in which we want our farmers to increase production by using new technologies."

Previous years' efforts to boost output have already helped, and Cabinda now produces surpluses of mandioca, banana and ginguba which are exported. Cabinda also produces pineapples for export, though increasing such exports are difficult at the moment because of a lack of transport infrastructure.

A better strategy now is to produce vegetables for the nearby Chevron oil camp at Malongo, said Araujo. Last year the camp bought produce worth £268,000 and that figure can be increased once more regular production and delivery can be arranged.

The regional government is buying greenhouses, and has sent a technician to Brazil to learn their greenhouse production techniques to help with this effort. A proposed liquefied natural gas plant would also boost demand for local produce.

Now that Cabinda is close to producing enough food for the local population, other agricultural projects are starting. Construction of a palm oil refining and bottling plant has already begun, and palm trees are being planted to provide supplies.

The local and national governments have various programmes to help farmers increase production. The national government has for years provided farmers all around the country with microcredits to help them acquire equipment and seeds, and the local government recently started a similar programme for Cabinda's coffee farmers.



INDUSTRY

Foreign partners and new industries

Cabinda's small but growing industrial sector is set to gain an important facility within a few years when the construction of the first phase of the Futila industrial park, located about 35 kilometres north of Cabinda City, is finished.

The provincial government hopes the park will attract factories that will help reduce Cabinda's dependence on imported goods, while at the same time creating good jobs and spurring job training programs for local residents. The first phase is expected to create 2,000 new positions and attract more than 60 companies.

The plan to build the park was first hatched 10 years ago, though the funding for the £24.8 million first phase only materialised this year. The national government and the provincial government are both contributing to the project.

The work of clearing about 110 hectares of land for the first phase has been finished, and now the area is being levelled and the ground prepared for the final stage of the park's development, the construction of infrastructure and buildings.

The project is off to a good start and construction should be finished in about three years, according to Geraldo Ndubo Paulo, Director of the province's Department of Industry, Trade, Hotels and Tourism.

The plan is for companies in construction supply and food processing to be among the first businesses to occupy the new park. The government hopes to see sawmills, brick and tile makers, plastics companies and cement makers in the first wave of companies.

The goal is for the businesses to make an immediate impact on Cabinda's economy by supplying basic necessities to residents and much-needed supplies for the booming construction industry in the region.

In later phases chemical companies and other businesses tied to Cabinda's petroleum industry are expected to make use of Futila's facilities. The site, which is planned to eventually expand to occupy 2,345 hectares, was chosen partly because of its proximity to Chevron Corporation's Malongo oil camp.



TIMBER

Spotlight on Cabinda's number two industry

Timber is Cabinda's second biggest industry after oil, and after years of neglect because of the civil war, the government and private banks are starting to lend to companies in the sector to increase production.

Angola's rapidly growing economy, which expanded at a real pace of more than 16% in 2007, has spurred demand for wood amid a years-long rebuilding programme following the end in 2002 of the civil war.

"The case for investing in the timber sector is irresistible because wood is needed for all the construction going on around the country," says Herculano Abil di Amori, owner of the biggest saw mill in Cabinda.

The Banco de Desenvolvimento de Angola, a state-owned lender set up in 2006 to help finance private businesses, recently made a loan to an outfit called So Cargas to buy two new industrial saws that will permit the company to increase output and quality and to satisfy more of its customers' needs.

More investments in equipment are needed to help the industry grow because of a new law that requires exported wood products to have undergone at least some processing within the country, says Alector Araujo, director of the regional government's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

"According to the new law, you cannot have wood production without transforming it, which means the government can only grant concessions to companies that have a sawmill so that we are not just exporting logs," Araujo says.

Any investment in Cabinda's timber sector also needs to be done under conditions that ensure that the production of wood from the region is sustainable, and not just cutting down forests without replacing them, he adds.

Cabinda's timber industry is undercapitalised partly because of the historical reluctance of banks to finance investment. That situation is slowly improving, says sawmill owner di Amori. In the past his company had to export wood to raise funds for investment, but now commercial banks are beginning to step in as they see the chance to make a profit, he says.

The corridors of learning open wide

In Cabinda, education is drawing a growing crowd as improvements show positive results



Two new professional centres will soon be inaugurated in the province in addition to a new engineering faculty at university

The education system in Cabinda has made great strides since the signing of the peace agreement in 2002 that ended more than 25 years of civil war and permitted the government to dedicate more resources to the needs of the country's citizens.

The government recognises the importance of improving the education system further on all levels to the country's future and its economy, and is committed to increasing education spending, according to Dr. Joao Chissina Mabila, Cabinda's Provincial Education Director.

"We want to guarantee an adequate education that will give all citizens the chance to help develop the country," says Mabila. The government has plans to "improve the system in terms of quality, teacher competence and social help for students."

The programme of social help is especially important for the youngest students, and it's here where the government has made a special effort. Out of the approximately 130,000 students in the primary education system, about 89,000 participate in various aid programmes.

The children in the programmes get milk and nutritious biscuits every day. They also receive two school uniforms and a pair of sandals per year, as well as a backpack containing six notebooks, pens, pencils and a pencil sharpener.

The next step will be to provide an oral hygiene kit. That programme is being prepared right now and will provide every child in school with a toothbrush, toothpaste and a pamphlet explaining to children what they need to do to take care of their teeth.

Even without all those programmes, the situation for primary education has improved tremendously since the end of the war. The number of students in Cabinda, including at the secondary and adult level, has risen to 150,000, from 70,000 in 2002.

In that same year, the region needed 400 more classrooms than it had, a figure that was cut to 100 this year and will be reduced to 50 next year as new schools are built and existing facilities are expanded.

Rochas' government has in the past five years implemented policies that now feed, clothe and equip 90,000 school children

Between the end of the war, the expansion of facilities and the number of teachers at work, the government has been able to slowly raise the number of years primary students go to classes. Primary education has been expanded two more years, from fourth grade to sixth grade, and the plan is to further extend the programme as it becomes workable.

Teachers have also benefited from the reforms to the education system. Their salary has tripled since 2002, and the total number of instructors has also increased, to 4,200 from 3,600 six years ago. Training programmes, for teachers and administrators, have improved, helping their students receive a better education as well.

The goal "is to give teachers and administrators more up-to-date training so they can better meet the new realities of the needs of their students," Mabila says.

The regional government is also working on expanding the educational possibilities for the provinces residents. Work has already begun on an ambitious plan to build a 90-hectare university campus south of the provincial capital, with the first brick laid in August of last year by Public Works Minister Higinio Carneiro.

The university complex will encompass 10 colleges, recreational areas, student residences and will even boast a maritime wildlife reserve. The campus' main building will house administrative offices, the central library and the main lecture hall.

The university project is for the long-term, but the government has more immediate plans that are already helping students starting from primary school through to the level of technical preparation for employment purposes. One technical school that opened recently is training workers for the country's hugely important oil industry and the national oil company, Sonangol.

The new school "will teach courses associated with chemistry and engineering to meet the demand from the oil sector," says Mabila. "We've also had direct cooperative efforts with Sonangol regarding the curriculum for the technicians we train."



HEALTH

New medical clinics are kept busy

The people of Cabinda are seeing their living standards improve daily as the government dedicates more and more of its oil revenues on basic requirements such as healthcare.

A new hospital was opened in August, equipped with £4 million in the latest technology, and specialising in cardiology, diabetes, blood analysis and other ailments affecting Cabindans. The new facility will spare people from the region a trip to the national capital of Luanda or further for many treatments.

As in other areas, the region's children are a special focus of the increased spending. A vaccination programme inoculated more than 130,000 little ones against polio in May and June. The kids also received a vitamin A supplement and anti-parasite medicine while getting the shots.

The government has begun to acquire mobile healthcare clinics that will also help improve the health of the region's youngest residents. The units will travel from school to school to do check-ups, diagnose illnesses and aid in the prevention of malaria and parasites.

The rest of the population is also benefiting from the increase in spending. In addition to the new hospital, an older hospital has been renovated and new clinics are being opened up around the province that will bring doctors and treatment closer to all Cabindans.

The 40-bed hospital at Cacong received a facelift and new equipment, and will specialise in pediatrics and maternity care, as well as offering general medicine and AIDS treatment. The facility has a staff of five doctors and 32 nurses.

New clinics have also been opened in the Massabi and Sanga Planicie areas. The Massabi facility has 25 beds, three nurses and can carry out clinical analyses that previously weren't available in the area. The people of Sanga Planicie have gained a facility with a maternity ward and a vaccination clinic that will improve conditions considerably for the local population there.

A canopy of green covers Cabinda's beauty

A lush landscape, tropical forests and idyllic beaches are all part of the province's natural splendour

Cabinda, with its sandy beaches, lush forests and abundant, exotic wildlife, has huge tourism potential. The local government is already promoting the province as a destination and is preparing to spend more on the infrastructure that is needed to attract visitors.

The region's biggest tourist attraction is the Mayombe forest and the gorilla population that lives there. The government has plans to develop parts of the forest and make it more hospitable for visitors and more productive for residents, all in an environmentally sound way.



"Mayombe is being protected and we're even building a tourist centre in the heart of the forest that will include a mini-hydroelectric plant to produce energy for the population, and a resort that will give tourists the chance to come in direct contact with nature and appreciate its beauty," says the region's governor, Anibal Lopes Rocha.

Mayombe is one of the largest animal and plant reserves on the planet, second in size only to the Amazon. It has many species of rare and valuable trees, as well as an animal population that includes gorillas, chimpanzees, elephants and parrots.

Cabinda's beaches are another part of the region's many attractions. Mandarin beach is a popular spot for bathers and sport fishermen, and for campers and canoeists as well. Landana is a beautiful, clean sandy beach where tourists and locals alike gather at the area's bars and restaurants.

Futila beach is close to the oil installations of Malongo, and so attracts many of the expatriates who work there. Malongo is one of the region's more developed beaches, with restaurants, bars and suites available for bathers.

The regional and national governments are committed to improving Cabinda's infrastructure to benefit tourists and residents alike. The budget for building and improving airports, highways, ports and other projects has more than tripled in recent years, rising to £167 million this year, from £48 million not long ago, according to Rocha.

The government is also promoting the region in other countries. Angola had a



The Mayombe Forest is so thick that locals refer to it as the 'vegetable sea'

pavilion at the Zaragoza International Exhibition held earlier this year in Zaragoza, Spain. The focus of that expo was water, and it included representations of the masked Bakama dancers from Cabinda. The ritual dancers are present at many Cabindan festivals. They represent spirits that are a link between the worlds of the living and the dead, and were included in

the Zaragoza expo because of their ecological background, in that the spirits are said to interact with plants and animals without causing them any harm, and because the dancers' costumes are partly made of biodegradable banana leaves.

As part of a growing focus on Cabindan culture, the local government is investing in the renovation of the Cabinda Regional Museum. Among the museum's many exhibits are displays of typical clothing, jewelry, household items, medicine, tools and weapons. The museum is also one of the most important centres for the study of Cabinda's rich oral history tradition.

Although the tourism industry can't hope to equal the importance to the regional economy of the oil industry, it is growing and employing more and more people. In 2006, the tourism sector's sales rose to 39 million kwanzas, with 12 million of that amount coming from hotels.

The region of Cabinda already benefits from a part of the revenue from its oil wealth. A proportion of the money the oil industry generates stays in the region to fund the local budget. The government is wisely dedicating some of that money to improving Cabinda's tourism industry in an effort to attract an increased number of visitors whose spending will boost employment and spur the region's economic growth.

2010 AFRICAN CUP

Province chosen to co-host Cup of African Nations

Cabinda will be one of four Angolan cities that will host the finals of the African Nations Championship football tournament in 2010, which will bring together national

teams, their fans and journalists from all over the continent to enjoy this important international sporting event.

The championship will give Cabinda an excellent opportunity to increase the world's awareness of what the region has to offer in terms of art, culture and travel.

Governor Lopes Rocha says, "This is our moment to show the world our great potential, and for tourists to see our uniqueness. It can open a door through which foreigners will feel attracted to Cabinda as a result of having contact with its offerings in the field of art, traditions and tourism."



A major construction plan includes a new, 20,000-seat stadium which will have special seating sections for VIPs, journalists and the handicapped. The plan also has a programme to increase and improve Cabinda's hotel offerings. The region currently offers about 280 hotel rooms, and that figure is planned to rise to 450 rooms by the start of the championship with the addition of three new hotels.

The construction programme, and the influx of tourism, will help spur the local economy, now heavily dependent on oil. The championship coincides with

government efforts to attract more tourism to the region and diversify sources of growth.

The regional government is also using the tournament for other beneficial purposes,

for instance to promote physical fitness among the population by encouraging more football playing amongst the province's youngsters.

Inspectors from the African Confederation of Football recently visited Angola to evaluate the preparations for the tournament. They were encouraged by what they found. Delays in the deliveries of construction supplies are now being overcome, and the province's stadium, hotels and other tourist infrastructure will all be ready in time for the event.



Small but mighty

The Province of Cabinda may be small in size but it makes up for it in potential. The province boasts tremendous agricultural and fishery wealth and vast amounts of offshore oil are being explored and extracted. In fact, Cabinda's oil accounts for nearly 60% of Angola's total. However, what makes Cabinda a success story is the way its resources are being managed and the special care that is being given to the environment so that these activities remain sustainable. Profits are infused back into the region so as to boost social and economic development. International investors are also attracted by Cabinda's highly skilled workforce and the government's notable lack of bureaucracy.

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