

About Angola



General Overview

Geography

- Located in Sub-Saharan Africa on the west coast, bordering Namibia, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo
- Area: 481,400 square miles (1.8 times the size of Texas)
- Capital: Luanda
- 18 provinces
- Mineral resources: petroleum, diamonds
- Climate: Coastal regions hot and humid; inland plateau regions more temperate

People

- Population of approximately 31 million
- Official Language: Portuguese
- Other National Languages: Chokwe, Kikongo, Kimbundu, Umbundu
- Over 8 major ethnic/language groups, the largest of which are:
 - Ovimbundu
 - Bakongo
 - Kimbundu
- Population with access to potable water: 56%
- Child mortality rate by age five: 8.1%
- GDP per capita: \$5,800 (purchasing power parity), yet...
- Population living on less than \$2 a day: 49%
- Demographic information uncertain due to the long period of war and the large number of refugees and internally displaced persons during this period

History

- Inhabited for thousands of years
- First millennium A.D. Bantu peoples arrive, displace Khoisan people
- 14th and 15th centuries: Kongo Kingdom flourishes
- 1482-1483: Portuguese arrive, slave trade begins
- 15th to 20th centuries: Angolan resistance to colonization, slavery
- 1671: Portuguese consolidate control of Kongo and Ndongo kingdom
- late 19th-early 20th centuries: Portuguese consolidate control of interior of Angola, including Ovimbundu kingdoms
- 1961-1975: Modern independence struggle
- November 11, 1975: independence
- 1975-2002: Civil war
- 2002-present: Government controlled by the MPLA, the faction in power at the end of the civil war

The UCC and Angola

- 1880: American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) sends 3 missionaries to central Angola, including one African-American
- 1922: African-American mission established at Galangue Mission; supported by American Missionary Association (AMA) and ABCFM

- 1955: Council of Evangelical Churches of Central Angola (CIEAC) formed
- 1975: Last UCC missionaries leave Angola as civil war starts
- 1979: CIEAC transformed into the national post-independence denomination Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola (IECA)
- 1980's - 1990's: UCC support for IECA continues, with periodic exchanges of delegations during times of relative peace
- 1990's: Southeast Conference supports landmine removal efforts
- 2000 - 2004: University Church/Trinity UCC of Chicago begin partnership work with IECA;
- Tuthill Fund of Illinois Conference provides funding for Canata Cultural Arts program, in Lobito, Angola
- 2004: Illinois Conference Annual Meeting hosts IECA delegation, adopts partnership with IECA
- 2005, 2009: Delegations from Illinois visit in Angola
- 2006-2007: Partnership team member Donna Dudley serves as mission co-worker with DASEP, social mission department of IECA.
- 2009 and 2013: Delegations from Angola visit in Illinois
- 2018: Two teachers from Illinois, Jenna Melberg and Louisa Mitchell, pilot an English language program in Huambo
- 2019: The Instituto de Línguas is founded in Huambo, with Louisa Mitchell serving as full-time teacher
- 2020: A delegation from Union Church in Hinsdale travels to visit Peregrinos Church in Huambo, Angola, as part of the first congregation-to-congregation partnership

Illinois Conference UCC/IECA Partnership

Mission Statement: Working together to build the one body of Christ in two different places

Purpose and Philosophy

- To build on historical ties between the UCC and IECA and between the U.S. and Angola
- To recognize and seize the many opportunities we have to learn from each other and grow together in discipleship
- To follow the priorities for projects and action that are set by Angolan IECA leadership

Current Projects

- To support IECA initiatives for church and community development, including:
 - The UniDondi project
 - The Language Institute
 - Dondi Hospital
 - Dondi agricultural efforts
- To continue and expand on education and outreach efforts to Illinois Conference congregations
- To build on existing congregation-to-congregation partnerships and to establish new ones in order to foster personal connections between IECA and UCC members
- To prepare for hosting and sending delegations in coming years