

Angola

SIM is involved in church planting and discipleship, community development, and medical and HIV/AIDS ministries in Angola.

Angola is the largest Portuguese-speaking country in Africa. It is located on the southwest coast of Africa. Opportunities for the gospel are wide open as areas that were once inaccessible become reachable — and are asking for help! SIM works in evangelism of unreached peoples, discipleship, medical care, theological education, and church planting.

Current SIM Ministry

A lasting ceasefire since 2002 is allowing SIM workers and the Union of Evangelical Churches (UIEA) to travel into areas that were behind battle lines for 40 years. Amidst suffering and deprivation, churches have multiplied as fleeing believers started new congregations wherever they were able to settle. Now the challenge is to help meet their need for discipleship and leadership training as well as relief from suffering. It will be important to build oneness among churches that used to be on opposite sides of the conflict.

The church has a three-fold priority for the next few years: urban church planting/discipleship, medical work, and education. SIM seeks to partner with the UIEA in these ministries.



Church leaders are being trained at the Menongue Bible Institute (practical ministry training) and the Lubango Theological Seminary (college-level education). Graduates of these two schools serve churches throughout the nation. Meeting human need takes three primary forms: medical care, agricultural development, and relief work. The deprivations of war and the proliferation of land mines have produced a seemingly endless need for medical ministry. Missionaries who offer agricultural assistance in unreached areas gain a ready hearing for their message of God's love. The mission and the church are working together, in Christ's name, to bring stability and faith to the returning war refugees who have suffered so much.

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SIM's Partner Church

The denomination called the UIEA (União de Igrejas Evangelicas de Angola), started in 1914, was formally established in 1977 with its headquarters in Lubango. SIM personnel are considered part of the Missionary Department of UIEA and work in partnership with the church.

History of Christianity

The first Catholic mission to the Congo kingdom arrived in 1491 and centred on northern Angola's São Salvador. The initial group consisted of Franciscans, Dominicans, Canons of St. John the Evangelist, and secular priests. A widespread church was formed during the next century under the remarkable Christian King, Afonso I. Afonso's son, Henrique, became the first black African bishop in Catholic history. After a promising beginning, the ravages of the slave trade caused the disintegration of both kingdom and church. Since 1940, Catholicism has grown in Angola, and Vatican II has made the Catholics less hostile toward Protestants.

The first Protestant mission to arrive was the British Baptists who opened a mission at São Salvador among the Bakongo of northern Angola in 1878. Two smaller groups, founded by independent missionaries, have also worked among the Bakongo—the Angola Evangelical Mission which arrived in Cabinda and the coastal area south of the Congo estuary in 1897, and the North Angola Mission which entered Uige (Carmona) in 1925.

Several missions have been active among the Ovimbundu. The Evangelical Church of Central Angola unites the work originally begun by the American Board in 1880 and the United Church of Canada in 1886.

The region west of the plateau and extending south to Sá da Bandeira (now Lubango) was occupied by the Phil-Africaine Mission, which began in 1897 and since 1908 has been supported by the Swiss Reformed Churches. Adventists, who first appeared in 1922, are also found among the Ovimbundu although they have extensive work in the Moxico and Lunda of eastern Angola as well. Brethren missionaries have worked among the Chokwe and Lunda of the northeast since 1884. Southern Angola under comity was assigned to the Africa Evangelical Fellowship. Originally called the South Africa General Mission, the AEF entered Angola in 1914. The Alliance of Evangelicals was founded in 1974 and is now composed of ten denominations.

The Bakongo have become the most Christianised people in Angola (in 1960, 55.8% Catholic and 42.7% Protestant) with only 1.5% remaining traditionalist. There are hardly any Protestants in southwestern Angola, and Protestant activity was actually prohibited in the Kwanyama area along the southern border from 1914 to 1960.

Unreached People

The largely unreached tribes in Angola include the Mumuila, Mbwela (Nganguela), Mungambwe, Kwangali, Himba and Nyaneka.

Please pray for

- Safety amidst uncertain and perilous transportation.
- Christians to be models of reconciliation and forgiveness, in spite of dealing with hurt and bitterness over the atrocities they have suffered.
- Effective ministry in light of the growth of HIV/AIDS — caused, in part, by increased ability to travel around the country.
- Wise response to the opportunity to care for refugees.
- Students in the Bible School and Seminary to be authentic followers of Jesus, growing in their ability to serve the church.

- Increased effectiveness in establishing urban churches.
- Pray for the granting of visas for Angola.

Opportunities

[Nurse Practitioner at Rio da Huila Clinic](#)

[Teacher for TEFL-ISTEL Seminary](#)

[All Angola Opportunities](#)

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