



Integrated Country Strategy

ANGOLA

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Angola, a strategically located, major oil producer with significant natural resources and economic potential, experienced a political milestone with the peaceful transition of government in 2017 after 38 years under a single ruler. Five years on from that transition, President Joao Lourenco is seeking re-election in a country that looks to rebound from six years of recession and the myriad challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and plunging oil prices. Now two decades removed from civil conflict, Angola continues to seek to diversify its economy, develop a more open and transparent society, enhance domestic stability, contribute to peace and security regionally, and improve the living conditions of its population.

Angola's potential, however, is tempered by a postwar history of poor governance and underinvestment, with relatively little of its oil sector wealth invested in health, education, and social services for its population. Corruption, while far less blatant than in years past, continues to plague all sectors of society. A sclerotic and cumbersome bureaucracy imposes further obstacles. As a result, Angola receives low marks for doing business, transparency, health, and education.

A fair, open, and transparent business environment is critical to Angolan efforts to diversify and build the country's economy, put the country on sound financial footing, and move away from its historical reliance on Chinese debt to finance the country's development. Similarly, an improved business climate dovetails with our broader goals to advance U.S. commercial interests and expand business opportunities for American companies. Despite some positive steps by the Angolan government to revamp investment regulations and improve fiscal transparency, corruption and bureaucracy remain pervasive and will not disappear overnight. As such, bolstering Angolan efforts to address corruption and modernize its laws will have a multiplier effect for our commercial efforts.

Angola is actively seeking U.S. commercial partnerships and technical training as the country expands its economic relationships with industrialized countries and regional neighbors. This commitment is evidenced by a series of major commercial diplomacy successes in the past two years in the areas of telecommunications, renewable energy, and traditional energy

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infrastructure development. To assist Angola in meeting its goals of improving its financial and governance systems, the U.S. supports technical assistance in regulatory adherence, financial transparency, and anti-corruption efforts. Through our technical assistance efforts, the U.S. is helping Angola's economy to grow inclusively and create opportunities for U.S. exports.

A stable Angola that exports peace and security in its neighborhood and across the continent will complement U.S. efforts and investments across the region. Angola has recast its international orientation and now seeks to broaden the country's partnerships away from its traditional allies, Russia and China. Angola's recent regional conflict resolution efforts in multilateral fora and its desire to expand and diversify its military cooperation dovetails with U.S. efforts to encourage and enable Angola to contribute to and lead regional peacekeeping efforts. Building on the 2017 U.S.-Angola Defense Cooperation memorandum of understanding would deepen the U.S.-Angolan military relationship and advance common priorities, such as maritime security, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and medical readiness.

On the domestic front, the Government of the Republic of Angola's (GRA) ability to deliver on pledges to its people to reduce corruption and increase access to quality education and healthcare will be key to the long-term success of a country with a median age of 16. President Lourenco has publicly promoted freedoms of speech and of the press. Yet, civil society is underdeveloped, frustrated by the pace of reform, and at times, stifled in its efforts to check government abuses. With national and, eventually, local elections on the horizon, Angola has the opportunity to solidify democratic progress and increase the responsiveness of government to citizen needs.

The United States has a long and successful history of supporting Angola's public health efforts, a partnership further bolstered by enormous efforts to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the President's Malaria Initiative work in partnership with Angolan governmental organizations to reduce disease and save lives, leading to a more stable country that can grow and prosper. Similarly, U.S. efforts to bolster Angola's

human capacity through educational and exchange opportunities provide a critical connection between our countries as well as a key avenue for development.

On climate change, Angola has a unique challenge as a major oil producing country that also boasts significant renewable energy potential. Its climate targets and plans are ambitious and reflect a genuine commitment to combatting climate change, although the country's potential to execute them will require support. In order to effectively manage its economy while also taking measures to address climate change, Angola will need to wisely utilize its existing resources to finance a transition to a clean energy future, an effort the United States can and must support.

Angola's potential is enormous, as are its challenges. While Angola has resource wealth, a growing population, extended periods of low oil prices, fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, and consecutive six years of recession mean the country must carefully manage its financial obligations. The United States is well-positioned to support Angola's continued positive trajectory toward becoming a more prosperous, secure, and sustainable partner with the understanding that success will require sustained engagement and investment on shared priorities.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Angola becomes more open and transparent.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Angola improves its business environment, expanding prosperity for both Angolans and Americans. (Links to USAID RDCS DO1: Inclusive Economic Growth Catalyzed)
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Angola increases the accountability of its institutions and reduces corruption. (Links to USAID RDCS DO2: Governance Strengthened)

Mission Goal 2: Angola advances domestic stability and contributes to peace and security regionally.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Angola expands regional and international diplomatic and peacekeeping contributions. (Links to USAID RDCS DO2: Governance Strengthened)
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Angola improves its internal stability through more democratic, capable, accountable, and resilient institutions. (Links to USAID RDCS DO2: Governance Strengthened and USAID RDCS DO3: Resilience of People and Systems Advanced)

Mission Goal 3: Angola improves its conditions for sustainable growth and development.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Angola develops institutions capable of supporting diverse economic growth. (Links to USAID RDCS DO1: Inclusive Economic Growth Catalyzed)
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Angola makes tangible progress to address the drivers of climate change and increases its resilience to deal with the effects of climate change. (Links to USAID RDCS DO3: Resilience of People and Systems Advanced)
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Angola improves access to and provision of quality health care. (Links to USAID RDCS DO3: Resilience of People and Systems Advanced)

Management Objective 1: Improve ICASS services provided by increasing the capacity and skills of the workforce through recruiting, training, and effective performance management.

Management Objective 2: Improve operational effectiveness and management controls by fully staffing USDH positions.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Angola becomes more open and transparent.

Description | In 2021, Angola ranked 177 of 190 countries on the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Report and 136 of 180 countries on the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index. Despite its large market size and potential opportunities, Angola is deemed one of the most difficult business environments in the world. A lack of transparency discourages outside investment while complicating operations for companies who work in the country. Similarly, a lack of transparency decreases trust in government among Angolans, who have long witnessed significant national wealth siphoned off by well-connected figures. According to the World Bank, Angola's biggest business challenges are access to credit, enforcement of contracts, registering property, resolving insolvency, and trade across borders. Angola's President has publicly stated his commitment to improving the business environment for trade and investment for U.S. companies. Mission Angola, collaborating with key trade and investment promotion partners, continues to work to improve the openness and transparency of the country and press the Government of Angola to tackle corruption through more effective law enforcement, regulation, governance, and capacity building. Expanding the independence of the judiciary will be a key step toward ending impunity for corrupt actors.

Objective 1.1 | Angola improves its business environment, expanding prosperity for both Angolans and Americans.

- **Justification** | President Lourenco has consistently stated his desire to attract U.S. trade and investment and is receptive to resolving the challenges that U.S. companies encounter in the Angolan market. The U.S. Embassy, working with the Angola Working Group (led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and AmCham Angola), the President's Advisory Committee on Doing Business in Africa (PAC-DBIA) and other stakeholders are collaborating to improve the ease of doing business for U.S. companies. This partnership will develop a multi-faceted strategy to identify barriers and challenges to U.S. companies seeking to trade with or invest in Angola; study what other countries have

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done to make improvements; train a cadre of Angolan government functionaries whose responsibilities include trade and foreign direct investment attraction; create an investment guide; and support a “Why Angola” marketing campaign. Valuable inputs from the private sector will inform U.S. Embassy interactions with, and support Government of Angola progress.

- **Linkages** | Successful implementation of this objective links with AF Bureau and inter-agency Prosper Africa goals to support trade and investment between the United States and Angola.
- **Risks** | Not achieving this mission objective risks the possibility U.S. companies could miss out on significant investment and market access opportunities, and that countries and firms less committed to a rules-based order could benefit. Continued lack of transparency in public institutions will undermine trust in Angola’s political and economic systems. To mitigate these risks, the United States should make transparency a key component of nearly all engagement with GRA officials.

Objective 1.2 | Angola increases the accountability of its institutions and reduces corruption.

- **Justification** | President Lourenco has prioritized anti-corruption throughout his term. The government passed legislation on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism and updated the public contracts law and penal code to discourage corruption. The establishment of the National Asset Recovery Service and a National Director for Preventing and Combatting Corruption demonstrate the government’s institutionalization of accountability measures and attempt to recuperate the stolen assets for the benefit of the population. Challenges remain, however. Key anti-corruption leaders express concern about the lack of institutional capacity and need for technical assistance. Some institutions with oversight roles continue to push for better access to the public institutions they are tasked with monitoring. Delayed municipal elections slow efforts to decentralize decision-making and management of public resources.

- **Linkages** | Successful implementation of this objective links with the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption and the AF Bureau's third objective: Supporting key African states' progress toward stability, citizen-responsive governance, and self-reliance; JSP Objective 3.3 (Combatting Corruption).
- **Risks** | Failure to address this objective makes it more likely that pervasive corruption continues to undermine public confidence in Angolan institutions and increases the risks for potential U.S. companies considering entry into the Angolan market, and thereby increasing the country's fragility.

Mission Goal 2 | Angola advances domestic stability and contributes to peace and security regionally.

Description | Angola's domestic stability will improve through efforts to expand citizen rights, entrench democratic processes, and improve government responsiveness to citizen needs.

The 2022 national elections provide a high-profile opportunity for the GRA to affirm its commitment to continued democratic reforms. While the government's timeline to hold long-delayed local elections remains unclear, doing so would mark an important effort on the path to decentralization and would increase access to representation for underserved rural populations. Internationally, Angola plays a leadership role both within the region and across the continent. While the country retains political, economic, and military ties with historical allies such as Russia and China, Angola actively seeks to diversify its partnerships with the United States and other Western allies and expand efforts to increase stability in the region. In the past five years, Angola has systematically raised its participation in international organizations, including the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), where it plays a key role in efforts to broker peace amongst Great Lakes Countries. In addition to hosting multiple summits under the ICGLR rubric to promote peace in the Central African Republic, in 2021 Angola deployed a small number of troops in support of the SADC Stand-by Force in Mozambique, its first such deployment under new laws allowing Angola to deploy peacekeepers to multilateral missions. The five-year anniversary of

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our 2017 MOU on military cooperation presents an opportunity to further military ties, particularly on peacekeeping and maritime security, and bolster Angola's capacity to expand security in the region. This outcome is contingent on Angola's success in bolstering domestic stability through a deepened, sustained commitment to democratic processes. As such, we must continue efforts to support civil society, bolster a free, capable, and independent press, support the independence and professionalization of Angolan institutions, and foster increased respect for human rights for all citizens, with a focus on historically targeted groups.

Objective 2.1 | Angola expands regional and international diplomatic and peacekeeping contributions.

- **Justification** | Angola has a respectively large and capable military with units that could support international peacekeeping missions. Additionally, in recent years Angola has sought to broaden and strengthen its bilateral and multilateral diplomatic relations and has worked to expand its regional influence. Increased participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions provide a tangible contribution to its relations with regional partners and will allow the Angolan military to utilize its capacity to engage more effectively with regional partners. Additionally, effectively utilizing its military to support regional peace would support Angola's growing diplomatic efforts across the region, as shown by its positive contributions to stabilization efforts in the Central African Republic through the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The United States is positioned to more actively engage with Angola on regional diplomatic efforts and to bolster Angola's ability to effectively deploy peacekeeping forces to multilateral missions. Effective collaboration on this front would support Angolan efforts to export security across the region.
- **Linkages** | This effort directly supports JSP Objective 1.4: Counter instability, transnational crime, and violence that threaten U.S. interests by strengthening citizen responsive governance, security, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. It also supports JRS Bureau Objective 2.3: Reduce Instability and Internal Violence that Threaten U.S. Interests in Africa, as well as the National Security Strategy's effort to

reinforce multilateral institutions, such as the UN. Last, it supports the National Defense Strategy objective to strengthen alliances and attract new partners.

- **Risks** | Investments to train and assist peacekeeping forces risk being underutilized if Angola does not exercise the political will to utilize those resources in an external mission. This risk can be mitigated through sustained senior-level dialogue on mutual U.S.-Angolan security priorities, particularly given the fact Angola consistently requests greater engagement with the United States.

Objective 2.2 | Angola improves its internal stability through more democratic, capable, accountable, and resilient institutions.

- **Justification** | Despite the reforms in democratization, governance, and human rights made since the 2017 election of President Lourenco, significant challenges remain including the fragility of its institutions. Many non-government actors are frustrated by the pace of promised reforms and it is widely perceived that the ruling party of 46 years continues to use government institutions to extend its tenure. The 2022 national elections provide a high-profile opportunity for the Angolan government to show it remains committed to continued democratic reforms and decentralization of power. The Embassy has an opportunity to work with the government, like-minded missions, and civil society to encourage and support a credible election process, equitable media access for candidates, and transparency in voter registration and vote tabulation. The country's first local government elections, affirmed in the 2010 constitution and originally planned for 2020, have faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, procedural debates, questions institutional capacity, and hesitancy by the ruling MPLA party to risk losing authority at the local level, where the President currently has the ability to appoint local leadership. Local elections would be a positive step in Angola's democratization process, giving people direct and more accountable representation at the local level of government. Angola civil society is underdeveloped and lacks the capacity and access to counterbalance the centralized government authority.

- **Linkages** | This effort directly supports JSP Objective 1.4.
- **Risks** | A primary risk is the possibility of democratic backsliding in a country ruled by a single party since the end of civil conflict. High-level, sustained engagement, such as through the Summit for Democracy, can play a role in driving mindset changes among Angolan leaders. Additionally, increased mission engagement and ongoing training opportunities provided through grants, partnership with like-minded missions, and international NGOs can strengthen civil society organizations, enabling them to take on greater roles in governance.

Mission Goal 3 | Angola improves its conditions for sustainable growth and development.

Description | Angola faces numerous challenges in its health and education systems as well as its efforts to address the drivers and impact of climate change. On the education front, many school-aged children from underserved communities find it difficult to enroll in primary and secondary school because of a lack of space, and the number of registered teachers does not meet the increasing demand of this young country. English also continues to be a barrier. Poor English-language instruction in primary and secondary education continues to make it difficult to recruit suitable candidates for many U.S. government programs which require proficiency in English. On environmental issues, Angola is blessed with abundant natural resources for renewable energy, including hydro, wind, and solar potential. The economic reality, however, is that oil and gas production will remain the key driver of Angola's economy, with the sector currently producing more than 60 percent of GDP and 90 percent of export revenue. Angola has set ambitious climate targets and takes the threat of climate change seriously. The key challenge for Angola going forward will be to leverage its oil and gas wealth to finance the transition to clean energy, in addition to developing adaptation strategies to address climate-related disruptions. In the health sector, a lack of data for decision making, poor governance, and an overly centralized and inadequately resourced health system stifle progress. Additionally, inadequate allocation of resources leads to procurement of poor-quality drugs and medical supplies, while unqualified personnel are made responsible for health

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systems. The Mission will engage across the health, education, and environment areas to bolster Angola's capacity to sustainably develop its human and environmental potential.

Objective 3.1 | Angola develops institutions capable of supporting diverse economic growth.

- **Justification** | Angolan citizens are increasingly participating in key U.S. government exchange initiatives, yet Angola continues to face unequal representation when compared to its SADC-country peers, due to lack of English language proficiency among young, qualified professionals and a dearth of relationships between Angolan and U.S. institutes of higher learning and research organizations. By establishing new, targeted partnerships with government offices, private sector actors, universities, and non-governmental organizations, the Mission plans to boost access to U.S. government English language offerings, increase the number of exchanges, and develop ties between Angolan and U.S. educational and research institutions.
- **Linkages** | Joint Strategic Plan Strategic Objective 1.5: Build Support for American Values; JSP Goal 2: Promote Global Prosperity.
- **Risks** | Building the capacity of Angolan youth to seize these opportunities is vital to diversify the economy, reduce youth unemployment, and sustain peace and stability, given the youth bulge. Unless we address this fact, we continue to face the risk of a future generation of Angolans lacking the technical skills to contribute to the country's growth and stability. Expanding our focus areas for education and exchange beyond Luanda is our most effective mechanism to support broad-based access and growth beyond the capital and mitigate the risk of not meeting this objective.

Objective 3.2 | Angola makes tangible progress to address the drivers of climate change and increases its resilience to deal with the effects of climate change.

- **Justification** | At COP26, Angola committed to increase the percentage of its national energy supply derived from non-carbon sources to 75 percent by 2025. Its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) indicate a genuine commitment to addressing climate change, and the GRA has emphasized climate initiatives as areas of policy priority. To successfully transition away from carbon-intensive energy production, however, will require a major restructuring of Angola's economy, especially since it failed to wisely invest earnings from the earlier era of oil and gas production. Climate change is also having a visible impact on Angola's most vulnerable citizens, with the ongoing drought in southern Angola a clear example.
- **Linkages** | This effort directly supports JSP Strategic Objective 1.2 on securing ambitious climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes, including supporting effective Paris Agreement implementation.
- **Risks** | The Angolan economy's heavy reliance on oil and gas production presents a significant barrier to conducting the rapid energy transition that is necessary to keep global warming with the 1.5 degree C target.

Objective 3.3 | Angola improves access to and provision of quality health care.

- **Justification** | Healthy women and children are among the best indicators of national stability and progress. By working with the GRA and local private sector and non-governmental partners to strengthen the Angolan health system, we will build and maintain resilience and security for the U.S. and other regions around the world. Some of the high-impact interventions Angola needs to strengthen its health systems include access to HIV treatment, education/prevention, and care services; malaria prevention and treatment; and transferring skills in management of priority infectious diseases including COVID-19, malaria, and HIV/AIDS.
- **Linkages** | JSP Strategic Objective 1.1: Leadership in strengthening global health security.

- **Risks** | Risks associated with not achieving this Mission Objective include increasing the healthcare burden, especially with respect to infectious diseases like malaria and HIV, as well as future pandemics. Increasing engagement with national and international partners will avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the efficiency of our assistance, minimizing the risks to this objective.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Improve ICASS services provided by increasing the capacity and skills of the workforce through recruiting, training, and effective performance management.

- **Justification** | Improving the capacity and skills of our workforce will improve ICASS services and strengthen the ability of all U.S. Government agencies at post to meet their mission goals. Recruiting people with the correct skills and then training them appropriately are primary factors in improving job performance and increasing the level of professionalism among our staff. We expect longer term gains in competence, staff morale, and professional satisfaction that lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, recruiting to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is key to a stronger, smarter, and more creative foreign policy.
- **Linkages** | JSP commitment to revitalizing diplomatic and development workforce and infrastructure; White House Executive Order 14035; White House Executive Order 13985.
- **Risks** | Failure to improve the capacity of the workforce will lead to decreased post morale, continued recruitment and retention challenges, and decreased ability to meet our other goals. A heightened focusing on advancing DEIA will prevent unnecessary blind spots and make for a smarter and stronger approach to policy.

Management Objective 2 | Improve operational effectiveness and management controls by fully staffing USDH positions.

- **Justification |** Fully staffing USDH positions is a significant step to maintaining management controls. Long gaps in positions hampers oversight and overburdens the employees who cover the gapped positions. Reduced oversight hinders our ability to maintain momentum in customer service and LE Staff training. We expect to see consistent improvement in effectiveness in management sections that have full-time USDH staff on site.
- **Linkages:** JSP commitment to revitalizing diplomatic and development workforce and infrastructure.
- **Risks |** Failure to fully staff our USDH positions, in particular as the mission takes on responsibility for diplomatic relations with Sao Tome and Principe, will decrease mission effectiveness and hinder our ability to achieve mission goals.