

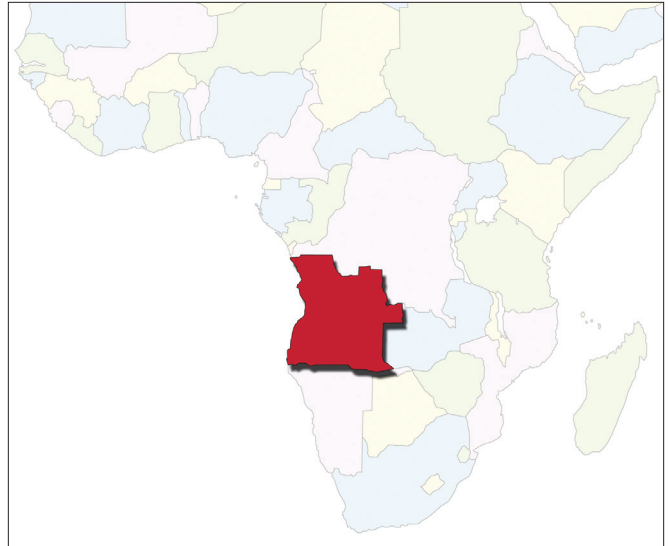
MEASURE Evaluation in Angola

Compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Angola's HIV/AIDS problem has been modest. With an estimated two percent of the country's adult population living with the disease, Angola's rate is half that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, its neighbor to the north, and just over an eighth that of Zambia, its neighbor to the east. However, Angola's heretofore low rate of infection is precarious. Booming youth populations, coupled with increased cross-country travel since Angola's decades-long civil war ended in 2002, threaten to trigger a more severe HIV/AIDS epidemic.

"The key thing in Angola is that their borders were pretty much closed while HIV exploded in the countries around them," said Sarah Hileman, technical lead for one of MEASURE Evaluation's activities in Angola. "Their rate is much lower because of this. But now there is a big fear that their own HIV epidemic will explode, so there is urgency to implement programs" Hileman explained.

Because nearly 70 percent of Angola's population is younger than 24, MEASURE Evaluation's HIV-related work in the country has been adapted to emphasize HIV risk factors among youth. MEASURE Evaluation has been assisting its research partner, Population Services International–Angola, in the technical aspects of conducting a PLACE study.

PLACE refers to "Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts," a rapid assessment tool used to monitor and improve HIV/AIDS prevention program coverage at venues where HIV transmission is likely to occur, such as bars where people meet new sexual partners and places where intravenous drug users share needles. Sharon Weir and Ties Boerma developed the standard PLACE protocol for MEASURE Evaluation in 1999. The protocol has since been implemented in more than 14 countries, and adapted for applications to meet



COUNTRY FLAG



DEMOGRAPHY

Population: 13,338,541

Population Growth Rate: 2.034%

Age Structure:

0–14 years: 43.2%

15–64 years: 54.1%

65 years and over: 2.7%

Death Rate: 23.4 deaths/1,000 population

HIV-RELATED DATA

Adult HIV Prevalence: 2% (2009 est.)

People Living with HIV: 200,000 (2009 est.)

OTHER RELEVANT DATA

Infant Mortality Rate: 98 infant deaths/1,000 live births

Total Fertility Rate: 5.6 children born/woman

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 610 maternal deaths/100,000 live births



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specific information needs in a given context. PLACE is recommended by the World Health Organization, USAID, and the World Bank as a tool to identify and document gaps in coverage of HIV prevention programs.

Angola's PLACE study is especially critical because very little data on HIV and HIV risk in Angola exist. The country's civil war, which lasted from 1975-2002 and destroyed much of the nation's infrastructure, greatly exacerbated the challenge of monitoring HIV trends.

"Because Angola is coming out of so many years of civil war, there is a lot of capacity building to be done," Hileman explained. "There are few research organizations there, and there is not a lot known about sexual behavior, especially among youth."

Hileman proceeded to describe a clear and robust effort to make up for lost time in Angola. "There's a real sense

that things are on the up and up," she said. "Things are on the move. There's a lot of construction everywhere, and the same movement is happening in terms of the public health field. There's a sense that there's a lot of work to do, and a lot of training to be done."

MEASURE Evaluation and PSI plan to conduct five PLACE studies in different areas of the country. The first study centers on Rocho Pinto, a poor neighborhood in Luanda, Angola's capital city and main urban center. The second study will include sample areas of the nine municipalities that comprise Luanda. MEASURE Evaluation is providing technical assistance in implementing these first two studies, with the goal of leaving the remaining PLACE studies to PSI-Angola to complete, thereby building monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity in the country. Once the studies are completed, a technical report detailing the findings and ensuing policy recommendations will be developed jointly with the relevant stakeholders.