

THE ENDOGENOUS REINTEGRATION OF POST-CONFLICT ANGOLA SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT After the Angola war ended in 2002, particularly in eastern rural areas, many refugees who returned from Zambia through repatriation. However, studies have not clarified how the refugees called Mbunda people settled in a rural village and started new lives, forming relationships with people who went through diverse experiences under poor development facilities. Therefore, this study clarifies the returned farmers socio-economic stability as endogenous reintegration of the Mbunda people after their repatriation to post-war Angola. Since they returned, the Mbunda have been on the move, hosted by their kin, chiefs, and strangers who settled in rural villages by setting up their residential unit called *limbo*; they have sought the help of humanitarian organisation and national development programmes to settle and achieve autonomous food acquisition based on agriculture in rural villages. The returners also coexist with migrants and former soldiers with disabilities. Furthermore, when the Mbunda people returned, they relied heavily on the chief, who was educated in Portuguese, and an former MPLA soldier, who helped collaborate the national development in the rural area. Thus, this study clarifies that Mbunda reintegration has been characterised not by national frameworks but by the diversified social relationships among people who came from different backgrounds.

KEYWORDS: Autonomous food acquisition; Endogenous reintegration; Highly mobile farmers; Refugee; Repatriation; Socio-economic stability.

INTRODUCTION

After the Angola war ended in 2002, the country experienced rapid economic growth through its oil and diamond exports and urban population growth. However, significant problems remained, such as the presence of land mines, a high unemployment rate, and poor medical and educational service provision under the strictly centralised political system (Silva 2020). Especially in eastern rural areas after repatriation was implemented, many refugees who returned from Zambia remained under poor infrastructure.

Repatriation is a durable solution to the refugee problem. In sub-Saharan Africa in particular, repatriation and reintegration became important challenges after the 1990s in terms of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Following the Cold War era, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) declared the 1990s ‘the decade of repatriation’ because several conflicts ended at the time, and a large number of refugees returned to their countries of origin. Reintegration after repatriation is defined as sustainable repatriation, in which people return to and remain in their pre-conflict place of residence (Chimni 1999). Returners require economic, political, and social

stability to rebuild their lives and restore their dignity; therefore, repatriation is generally conducted after the country of origin has sufficiently restored its infrastructure to make humanitarian assistance and development programmes feasible (Hammond 2014). However, because the Angolan government had a weak relationship with humanitarian assistance, the autonomous reconstruction process of lives in eastern Angola can be seen as the endogenous reintegration process by the returners themselves after their repatriation to post-war Angola.

According to many previous anthropological studies, refugees have been problematically classified as citizens or representatives of a particular local culture (Malkki 1995). Malkki (1992) described the refugee situation in the sense that the modern system of nation-states has come to be *a national order of things* to emphasize that the nation is always associated with particular places and times. By presenting refugees' identities as mythical histories, Malkki reveals how refugees themselves understand the political and historical contexts both in which they are placed and were placed in the past. Thus, Malkki critically examined the understanding of refugees within the framework of the state, which assumes that refugees are temporarily displaced from their own territories.

In addition, the return of refugees does not mean that the political and historical contextualisation of the refugee's own life ends, and the daily life in the country of origin 'resumes' as before. Hammond (1999) further noted that, in Ethiopia, reintegrated returners promoted the creative process of innovation and the development of new strategies even though it was not their area of origin. Returners in Liberia have also demonstrated an entrepreneurial capacity to survive after repatriation (Omata & Takahashi 2018). Thus, after refugees return, their lives are transformed from the past, through innovative and entrepreneurial steps, as their resettlement is self-attained in the context of humanitarian aid and post-conflict reconstruction efforts of the state.

In contrast, there are many people who live in rural areas without a strong influence of development programmes on national frameworks. However, there is a limited amount of work on this topic, especially regarding the highly mobile farmers of eastern Angola, where I have been conducting research. The focus of the study, therefore, was not on national frameworks, but on how the refugee peasants, or the Mbunda people, settle in certain areas after their return, and how they autonomously acquire their own food and reorganise their social relations. Previous studies on highly mobile African farmers, who shift their livelihood to cultivation, showed a variety of strategies and social relationships employed to achieve autonomous food acquisition (Kakeya & Sugiyama 1987; Oyama 2002). Such a shift is a typical milestone for these farmers' socio-economic stability. Therefore, I set this autonomy as an indicator of the achievement of the returned farmers' socio-economic stability, as they reintegrated in Angola, and focussed on the social relations involved in this process.

Mbunda people fled from Angola to Zambia to avoid the Angolan war. They moved frequently even before the war with the chiefs' protection in Angola. After the war, they were hosted both as refugees by the UNHCR and as migrants by their kin, chiefs, and related ethnic groups from eastern Angola. Mbunda people lived together with not only relatives but also friends from Zambia, and in some cases even without chiefs' assistance (Murao 2012). Further, with IDPs in eastern Angola, injured former soldiers repatriated through the organised repatriation programme and reconstructed their lives based on shifting cultivation (Murao 2017). However, after the end of the prolonged war in sub-Saharan Africa, studies have not clarified how they settled in a rural village and started their new lives with their chiefs. In addition, because the Angolan government has implemented the development plan after the war, people's lives have been transformed not

only by the humanitarian assistance but also, indirectly, by the national development plan and economic status. It is important to know how the Mbunda reconstructed their lives under the weak influence of the development programme in Angola.

This study clarifies the returned farmers' socio-economic stability as the endogenous reintegration of the Mbunda people after their repatriation to post-war Angola. The study focuses not on categories of humanitarian aid but on different individual experiences and attributes. In particular, I examine the dynamics of the subjects' reconstruction of their daily lives via the help of development programmes, including humanitarian aid, in the highly mobile situation after beginning to return to eastern Angola; I do so by focusing on the role of Mbunda chiefs on development, their food acquisition strategies, and their social relationships.

To achieve the above, first I explain the research methodology used in the study. Secondly, I describe the historical background of migration of the Mbunda people and development in eastern Angola. Third, I clarify how the Mbunda chief's family set up a village and lived under a top-down development program since the war started in Angola. Fourth, I reveal the people's lives and social relationships with different attributes that makes cultivation and autonomous food acquisition possible in a rural village on the eastern border of Angola. Finally, I examine the features of endogenous reintegration of Mbunda people in post-conflict war Angola society.

RESEARCH METHODS

I. The local history of Mbunda migration and development in eastern Angola

There is little information on the migration history of Mbunda people in Angola, as only a few studies have been conducted on these people's lives. To address this lack of information, I conducted both extensive and intensive field surveys in eastern Angola for 7 months in total from 2013 to 2017. I began in Luena, the provincial capital of Moxico Province, and proceeded to Lumbala N'guimbo, which is the seat of the Mbunda king, along the main road to Chiume (Figure 1). After 2008, the first land act in Angola was established. In rural villages, traditional chiefs continued to rule after the war, distributing land and maintaining security, making it important to obtain information from the Mbunda king. I visited and interviewed the king in Lumbala N'guimbo to obtain a broad historical and contemporary picture of the Mbunda migration in eastern Angola. I explained my research purpose and plan to the king, who permitted my field research in rural villages.

Subsequently, I travelled to a few villages and explained my research to obtain informed consent; I also explained to the Mbunda chiefs and village headmen that I had the king's permission. After I received their consent, I interviewed thirty-six Mbunda people on the village history, their livelihoods, and agriculture. Throughout the interview process, I tried to learn how they reconstructed their lives after the war. Thus, after grasping the general context, N Village, which was ruled by the second Mbunda chief, NY, was selected because Chief NY best knew the Mbunda's traditional circumstances as well as their current situation. I explained my research for the sake of informed consent, and, with NY's permission, I began my intensive surveys of N Village.

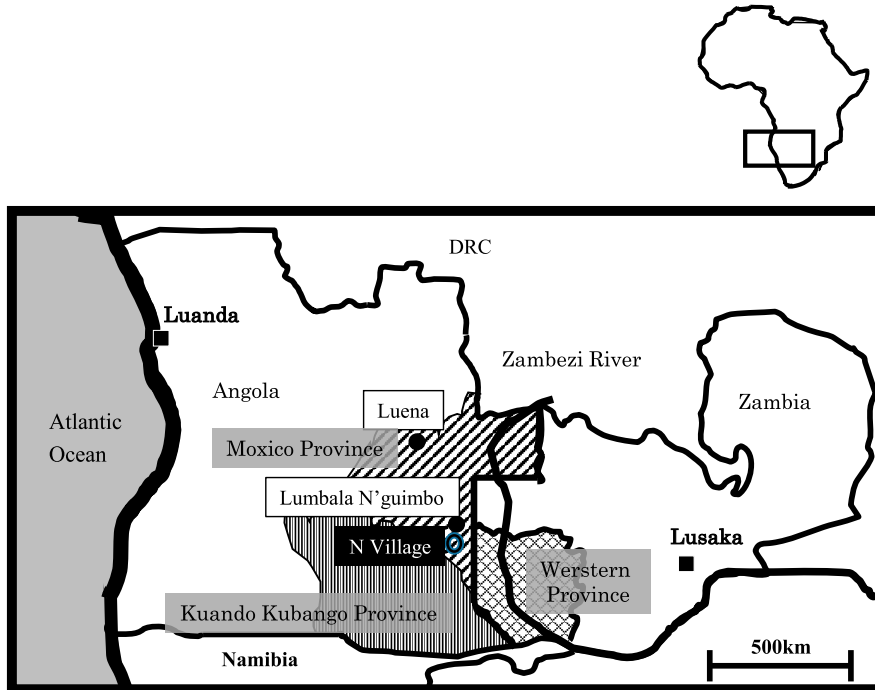


Figure 1 Research Site

II. Interviews and participative observation of life history and social relationships related with resettlement and autonomous food acquisition

Interviews with the villagers and participative observation were conducted in N Village over three months between 2013 and 2017. N Village is located 380 km south of Luena, the current provincial capital of Moxico Province, and 30 km south of Lumbala N'guimbo, along the main road that runs from the provincial capital. The interviews consisted of questions about the villagers' exile experiences, their lives in Zambia, repatriation and motivations for living in a rural village, their social relationships, and their food acquisition strategies. Forty-five adult Mbunda and Chokwe people were interviewed in the Mbunda language. The informants were primarily Mbunda people who had repatriated after fleeing to Zambia from Angola. Chief NY informed me that some people in the village were what they called migrants, that is, they had not fled the war and were not considered as refugees. I also encountered strangers, injured soldiers and migrants residing in the *membo* (plural form of *limbo*, the traditional residential unit of the Mbunda) of N Village. I proceeded to select six or seven households from different *membo* after I gathered some information on their background. I explained my research to the interviewees to receive informed consent and that I had NY's permission to conduct the interviews. Though I received permission from all interviewees to write about what I observed, personal information, such as the name of the village and the names of individuals, has been anonymised by me.

HISTORY OF THE MBUNDA PEOPLE AND DEVELOPMENT IN MOXICO PROVINCE

I. Mbunda society and the influence of colonial government

The Mbunda people are a Bantu-speaking people who mainly live in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eastern Angola, and Western Zambia (Von Oppen 1996). Previous studies have noted that the Mbunda people originated from the Luba and Lunda Kingdoms of the DRC (McCulloch 1951; Cheke 1994). The chiefdoms flourished under their king. After they arrived in Upper Zambezi in Angola, the ninth king expanded the territory further, trading materials such as arms, hoes, crops, and animal skins with other ethnic groups, including the Chokwe, Luchazi, Luvale, and Lozi. The groups sometimes fought each other over intermarriages and territory.

The Mbunda people lived along small rivers and engaged in agriculture in shifting cultivation fields and wetlands located near these rivers. They practised shifting cultivation that was based on pearl millet farming, hunting, gathering, and fishing. After the Portuguese arrived in Angola, they also began to cultivate cassava and maize that they ate as a thick porridge, and which remains a staple food in the region, as well as boiled maize, harvested early while it was still green.

A Mbunda *limbo* comprises three to four generations of matrilineal kin who reside together. A *limbo* is traditionally a political and reciprocal unit with a headman. According to the Mbunda in Angola, the headman of a *limbo* is responsible for deciding where the people belonging to that *limbo* will cultivate. The chief rules over a few *membo* and distributes their land as well as resolves problems and conflicts there.

The mobility and settlement of Mbunda people were affected by Portuguese colonial government's invasion of Moxico province. Though the Portuguese colonisers were famous for their migrant policy, which brought many poor Portuguese people to the Angolan plantations at the northern and western borders, the Portuguese population within Angola remained small before World War II (Hodges 2001). The eastern part of Angola was not occupied until the Atlantic slave trade ended in 1836. After the Berlin conference, as the number of migrants from Portugal increased through development projects, the inflow of foreign agencies was restricted. Thereafter, Portuguese colonisation began to focus on the eastern part of the country. Angola's oil production began on the western coast in 1956; however, except for the diamond mine in north-eastern Angola that was discovered in 1912, there were no other natural resources in the eastern part of the country. In 1911, the Portuguese colonial government established its administrative office at Moxico Bairo, south of Luena. Though the Portuguese colonisers-built irrigation around the main towns in Moxico, such as Luena, and infrastructure throughout the central highlands and towns in Moxico, they did not establish their main mineral-based development projects there. Though its development project in the Lumbala N'guimbo area, the Portuguese colonial government built its office, a main road, and tax collection centres, where the Mbunda could exchange their local products for cash. Thus, the Portuguese exploited those at the Angolan eastern front through both infrastructure and local production.

In 1914, when the Mbunda chiefs were killed by the Portuguese colonial governor, many Mbunda people fled into the bushes, and further to Zambia. In 1919, an additional office was built in the same province, in Lumbala N'guimbo. The colonial government forced residents of these areas to pay taxes in the form of silver, wild animal skins, meat, beeswax, honey, and labour; the chief and headman of the *limbo* were killed if they did not pay. The Mbunda in Moxico were also taken to mines as labourers by British colonisers; this also caused many to flee to Zambia because they did not want to participate in forced labour.

Thus, the Portuguese colonisers forced the Mbunda to migrate to Zambia without their chiefs and kins, unlike the past.

II. Settled without Mbunda Chiefs' Rule after fleeing to Zambia

The Angolan War of Independence began in 1961, after Portugal and Britain divided Angola's border in 1926. Mbunda people joined the conflict as freedom fighters. The MPLA was based in Moxico Province and the border area of Zambia. During this time, the Portuguese colonisers set fire to villages, and more Mbunda people fled to Zambia; they stayed in local villages, and refugee settlements where they received humanitarian aid in the form of maize, rice, beans, vegetables, and so on. The Mbunda people in local villages settled with chiefs, kins, and acquaintance, and mainly cultivated cassava. In contrast, in the refugee settlements such as Meheba and Mayukwayukwa, the Mbunda and other refugees resided together in a bureaucratic manner and were able to cultivate fields on their own.

When Angola gained independence from the Portuguese colonial rule in 1975, a civil war soon followed. More people, including the Mbunda, escaped from eastern Angola where the MPLA was mainly fighting with the guerrilla forces of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Only a few Mbunda remained in these rural parts of eastern Angola until the end of the war.

During the war, most of the Portuguese in Moxico Province returned to Portugal. In the nearby area of Lumbala N'guimbo, the battle between the armed forces of MPLA and UNITA continued until the war ended, but they protected the residents in the surrounding areas.

The MPLA forces distributed food and other materials and evacuated locals, including Mbunda people, to provide them with education and job training opportunities in Luanda (*Jornal de Angola*, July 10, 1977).

In 1999, after the UNITA headquarters in Jamba, Cuando Cbango Province, which lies to the south of Moxico Province, was attacked, the MPLA overwhelmingly dominated the battle. Six months after the attack, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi was killed in Moxico Province. Lumbala N'guimbo and Luena, where the Mbunda people resided, were also occupied by the MPLA. By this time, all bridges and other infrastructure had been attacked, and all key locations had been heavily mined.

Following the signing of the Luena Memorandum of Understanding in 2002, the adversarial relationship between the Mbunda and others became one of symbiosis. Soon after this peace accord was signed, a national poverty reduction strategy was proposed by the government. The government advanced the country's development by collaborating with Chinese developmental investors to mine oil and other natural resources, which meant that Angola received less Western-backed development and aid cooperation than other developing countries. Simultaneously, 10 UN agencies, 80 international NGOs, 300 local NGOs, and many other government agencies were engaged in humanitarian aid efforts. These economic and humanitarian development programmes were concentrated on the western coast under the centralised government system; schools, hospitals, cultural centres, markets, and supermarkets were also built in the Lumbala N'guimbo area because the local administration in Angola had always been a mere form of administrative de-concentration since the colonial reform in 1869 (Silva 2020). Though a multi-party-political system in the Constitution of 1992 replaced the former single system with a formal system of local self-government, which remains as yet unimplemented, political intervention in eastern Angola has been weak. Under the post-war political circumstances, eastern Angola was ruled by the MPLA military for peace keeping of the eastern border area where the war

ended.

An organised repatriation programme for Angolan people returning from Zambia was conducted from 2003 to 2006 by the governments of Angola and Zambia, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UNHCR. In Moxico, returners (including the Mbunda people) were first accepted in prominent cities such as Luena, Luau, and Lumbala N'guimbo. Thereafter, they began to move from these cities and towns to other areas across the country. Some reception centres, including that of Lumbala N'guimbo, were established in 1998 by the IOM and UNHCR, as part of the repatriation programme to provide a place for returning refugees once they had reached Angola. In addition, the IOM implemented a programme to reintegrate returners and internally displaced persons.

Nevertheless, by 2011, there were approximately 50,000 Angolan refugees in Zambia (UNHCR 2012). When the Zambian government enacted the Cessation Clause in 2012, Angolan refugees lost their refugee status. Organised repatriation was conducted and nearly 25,500 refugees returned to Angola. Some returners left their relatives behind, who remain as former refugees in Zambia. Some Mbunda returners in Lumbala N'guimbo shifted to other areas, while some others started settling in rural villages near Lumbala N'guimbo.

RECONSTRUCTION OF A RURAL VILLAGE

As mentioned in the previous section, when the Mbunda established the village before they escaped to Zambia, they settled with a chief and kins. Colonial rule and the Angolan conflict forced the Mbunda into an unprecedented long-term and systemic social collapse. In this section, the restructuring of the village will be clarified through the example of N Village. The section will describe in detail the rebuilding phase the village, beginning with the resettlement of the chief and others.

In 2014, the population of N Village was 1,471 persons. Of those villagers, most were Mbunda; there were also a few Luchazhi, Luvale, and Chokwe people, who are also Bantu-speaking. N Village was founded before the colonial era by the seventh king of the Mbunda's traditional authority. Today, there are six divisions in N Village. These have been anonymised as the divisions by me, were named after living persons. Division No. 1 was the first to be founded, followed by No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, and No. 6.

The village chief, named NY, was instrumental in the reconstruction of the village, allowing people to return immediately after the conflict had been resolved. Owing to his intervention, the area that Chief NY governs is one of the most populous in the region. Though the first Land Act in Angola was enacted in 2004, thus far, N Village has remained under the traditional land tenure system of its chief, as in other areas in Moxico. This situation differs from urban locations, where there have been land conflicts among newcomers and original residents. In N Village, it was easy for each party to obtain land because, following negotiations, Chief NY decided where the newcomers would stay.

Today, the subsistence of N Village is managed through plant gathering, poultry husbandry, forestry conducted in the primary forests, and, above all, agriculture. Much like other villages in Moxico Province, the people of N Village practise shifting cultivation in the upland fields and small-scale cultivation in the kitchen gardens of their residences. Cassava and maize produced through shifting cultivation are very important to the villagers, not only as staple food items but also as cash crops.

Today, every household in the village sells cassava and maize. The tradition of cooking cassava into a thick porridge has continued in the post-war decades. Villagers soak the cassava for three days in a stream, dry it, and then sell the dried product at local markets in

Lumbala N'guimbo or Luena. Maize also became a staple food after the war; however, pearl millet, which was cultivated before the conflict, is rarely seen today.

Hunting of animals with guns is carried out widely, and the meat is subsequently sold. Villagers also earn money through farm work, the construction of roads and schools, and by selling gasoline, meat, dried fish, maize, and cowpeas. Ex-soldiers of both the MPLA and the UNITA are all registered and receive a pension of US\$180 per month.

After the war for independence began in 1964, many people in N Village fled to Zambia or joined the war as soldiers. After Chief NY joined the war, a few of his family members and villagers remained, some fled to Zambia, and others stayed in the forest near N Village. According to Chief NY's second wife, life in N Village during the war differed significantly from today.

Case 1. Chief NY's second wife (born in 1974)

In 1982, Chief NY's second wife moved to N Village from Cangamba with her sister, where they lived with their relatives. After Cangamba was attacked in 1983, the sisters remained in N Village. Between 1982 and 1992, when the UNITA occupied Lumbala N'guimbo, the MPLA hid in the forest and by the river while the former remained in the towns. They did not attack the civilians and both groups gave food to the villagers.

Many buildings were destroyed by both armies in Lumbala N'guimbo. By 1990, MPLA and UNITA helicopters came five days a week, meaning the villagers could not eat in the evenings. Owing to this situation, even after the Bicesse Accords in 1992, it was very difficult to rebuild a military base in Lumbala N'guimbo. After some time, the MPLA reinitiated its fight with the UNITA, and the civilian supporters of the MPLA opposed those of the UNITA. In 1992, the UNHCR began to distribute food in the area. The UNITA returned to N Village and began to attack villagers and the UNHCR. At night, the villagers that were hiding in the forest returned to harvest pearl millet and cassava.

In the late 1990s, UNITA forces attacked the MPLA in Luena for 40 days. The MPLA flew over from Luena to Lumbala N'guimbo to bring soldiers, who dropped from the aeroplane. The MPLA occupied northern Lumbala N'guimbo and surrounded the area to protect civilians. Chief NY returned, by which time his first wife had already left the village; he then married his second wife. In 1999, the MPLA bombed Lumbala N'guimbo and reoccupied the territory. After the UNITA reported those soldiers who had once attacked the MPLA base in Luena, it attacked Lumbala N'guimbo again. At that time, many people, including Chief NY's second wife, fled to the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement in Zambia, eating honey and bananas along the way.

In 2001, the Angola government sent the MPLA military to Lumbala N'guimbo, which headed into the forest. The war ended in 2002, and Chief NY's second wife returned from Mayukwayukwa with him. Around that time, the MPLA and UNITA, including chiefs like NY began to call for people to return to Angola. After 2006, former residents repatriated to N Village, where they planted banana and mango trees.

Though most people fled to Zambia, Chief NY's second wife and her relatives stayed back hiding in the forest. They received food from both UNITA and MPLA militaries, who distributed supplies to civilians during the war. They also survived by gathering and eating forest products, along with some farming and hunting. After the war turned serious, they finally fled to Zambia, received humanitarian aid, and Chief NY's second wife reunited

with her husband.

Case 2: Chief NY (born in 1952)

I was born in N Village in 1952. By 1964, the mission school and government schools, including Portuguese schools, had been established in Lumbala N'guimbo. In 1964, when I was 12 years old, I fled with my father to the forest. After I left my father there, I attended a school that had been built in Sikongo in Zambia by the MPLA. They had brought teachers from schools in Lumbala N'guimbo to establish Portuguese-speaking schools in Zambia. The former King of the Mbunda, Mbandu II, fought with Agostio Neto, the president of the MPLA, who travelled to Lusaka in Zambia at that time.

Sikongo, where the MPLA was based, was supported by President Kaunda of Zambia. There, I was trained to be a medical doctor for two and half years because I chose to be a medic in the army camp. I returned to Lumbala N'guimbo in 1975 as a former MPLA soldier. In 1982, soon after I married my first wife, I was kidnapped by the UNITA.

The UNITA discovered that I was a doctor from an identification document I had and forced me to work as a UNITA medic. I worked at the hospital in Lumbala N'guimbo for 15 years: then taken to Cuito Cuwanabali in Cuando Cubango. I worked in the UNITA hospital there, after the place was attacked by the MPLA. Chief NY fled alone and returned to N Village. My first wife had remarried because she had been told by UNITA soldiers that I was dead. I then married my second wife, but she fled to Zambia in 1999 because the UNITA began to attack civilians in N Village. I decided to escape to Mayukwayukwa in 2001 to reunite with my second wife.

I stayed with my wife in Zambia until 2002 when we repatriated to N Village. I received a hoe, a tent, a pot, a knife, beans, maize, cooking oil, cabbage seeds, cassava stems, and sweet potato from the UNHCR. I stayed at the UNHCR's reception centre after I repatriated; my mother, who had remained in Angola because she wanted me to be a chief called me back to N Village. Twenty-five of my relatives, including my seven children, stayed in Moxico Province during the war. These relatives had fled to another village near the Zambian border; however, they did not cross the border. My father did not want to escape to Zambia because I had been taken by UNITA soldiers and could get killed. My father and relatives, thus, returned to N Village where they remained under MPLA protection. After I returned to N Village, I found some people who had previously stayed with me in another division. Because food was scarce, my relatives and I remained in the forest to hunt and fish. We did have cassava growing in our fields, though. After a year, we began to harvest maize that was given to the relatives by the UNHCR and achieved autonomous food production. Around that time, former UNITA soldiers attacked us, and the MPLA protected us as they had done before.

Chief NY's mother, who was a chief herself, remained in the N Village to live with her son and help him. They survived on hunting and gathering. After the war ended, the MPLA and UNITA armies urged people to return to the area; even Chief NY sent messages to recall people. At the same time, Mbunda chiefs, such as NY, reconstructed their lives on their own. His family was coincidentally protected by the MPLA military based in Lumbala N'guimbo during the war; because Chief NY was a former MPLA soldier who could speak Portuguese, the family was protected by the MPLA even after the war ended. Even the local government of Lumbala N'guimbo invited him to join their conference to discuss

the promotion of the national development plan in the area. Chief NY actively worked on the national development plan as one of the agents of the central government. As a result, a market in Lumbala N'guimbo as well as new roads, bridges, schools, and health centres were built. Later, when more people returned to N Village, they were easily able to reconstruct their lives.

Many returners, including Chief NY, relied on the help of their kin and the chiefs that had remained. In particular, prominent leaders such as Chief NY who had the military experience and could speak Portuguese took important roles in the Mbunda people's reintegration into the Angolan national political system by participating in the implementation of national development plan in rural areas. In N Village, at the same time, the individual experiences of many returners included restarting their daily lives by getting help from different sources including the development programmes.

N Village was indeed uninhabited intermittently during the conflict. Therefore, for the Mbunda people, life was not just about rebuilding their lives from the ground up and protecting people, but also about dealing with unexploded ordnance, landmines, remnants of UNITA guerrillas, and the difficult situation that follow the conflict.

DYNAMICS OF LOCALS' REINTEGRATION PROCESS

While Chief NY rebuilt N Village after learning Portuguese and serving in the military during the conflict, many people began to move and settle in N village. This included not only people born in the village, but also people from outside the village, wounded ex-soldiers and women who had married and moved to Zambia. This section clarifies how they reorganised social relationships in N Village to achieve autonomous food acquisition.

Before Angola's civil war, N Village was located some distance away from the main road. After this road was abandoned after being partially built by Portuguese colonisers in 1961, it was determined to be an optimal site for development by NGOs and the National Demining Institute under the government in collaboration with Chief NY. The road was fully revamped after the civil war and a new bridge was built. In 2014, primary schools, water supply facilities, and clinics were constructed under the national development plan in both Lumbala N'guimbo and N Village. In this way, a national development project and humanitarian aid implemented during certain periods affected the Mbunda people's lives.

By contrast, N village was originally sparsely populated and uninhabited. The rural villages, such as N Village, had a surplus of land. The governors told Mbunda chiefs and the returners to live near the road for a brief period. After the village was rebuilt by chiefs, people who belonged to the village as well as migrants have returned to live together. The Mbunda is particularly kind to people who are unable to feed themselves immediately after their return. This hunger problem arose due to localised and hard-to-reach humanitarian assistance, and the negligible spill over of post-conflict economic growth.

I. Relatives in their own birthplace with humanitarian aid

Immediately after the end of the war in 2002, people who belonged to N village returned from Zambia, and like NY, they received humanitarian aid for a short time and rebuilt their lives with their relatives. Naturally, they normally used humanitarian aid as their first form of shelter and aid to achieve autonomous food acquisition, like other returners. Even when returners were returning to the place where they were born, they knew it would be challenging to restart their lives.

Case 3: AM (born in 1966)

I was born in N Village in 1966. I remained with my family and fled to the forest when soldiers came to inform us that the war was starting. I continued to run from the bombs, eating wild fruits called *makoro*, *limbango*, and *mushole*; then, I escaped to Zambia in December 1999 and lived in the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement. I returned on an aeroplane with my relatives and went to the reception centre to receive humanitarian aid, which included 10 kg of maize and some pans. My friend, who had repatriated earlier, helped me move back to N Village and achieve autonomous food accrurement through piece work. I received a maize meal that was different from what was available in Zambia and the same cassava stem varieties as in Zambia. We sell those crops at the market in Lumbala N'guimbo for cash income.

As the whole family escaped together to Zambia, AM and his family had no relatives to rely on in N Village. To return and begin their lives again, humanitarian aid alone was insufficient. AM found a friend who could help him and his family; in such cases, repatriation success depends on the capacities of the family who repatriated, the availability of family labour, and the resources they unexpectedly discover including social relationships and local development.

Case 4: MD (born in 1956)

I was born in N Village and fled to the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement in Zambia as a refugee before repatriating with my children in 2004. We left the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement on foot in July 2004, taking blankets, a mill of maize meal, and pans. We bought side dishes from fishermen and slaughterhouses, and stopped for a few days because my children were tired.

After we arrived at N Village, my family and I requested Chief NY to let us settle and requested other returners in different *limbo*, who had arrived earlier, to provide us with some food. We also went to the UNHCR reception centre and showed our refugee ID from Zambia. The UNHCR gave us a hoe, a tent, a pot, a knife, beans, maize, cooking oil, and cabbage seeds and, twice in three months, they provided us with enough food supplies. The UNHCR set up a tent in N Village and began the distribution of supplies for returners. I set up my own tent and began to cultivate new crops two weeks after I arrived. I also received cabbage, tomatoes, cowpeas, and maize and planted about 10 stems of cassava from the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement. However, these stems were not enough, and I asked for more from my neighbours. I planted maize, including an early maturing variety that was distributed by the UNHCR, which could be ready for harvest after four to five months, as well as early maturing varieties of cassava that could be harvested after three months. I also worked as a guard for a Portuguese construction company that built the road from Luena to Chiumi as well as the primary school and health centre promoted by the government's development policy.

After MD repatriated by himself, he first relied on Chief NY whom he already knew. Following this, he used humanitarian aid as his first form of shelter to achieve autonomous food acquisition with his kin, similar to those who returned in the organised repatriation. Though they were required to leave their refugee IDs at the border, MD managed to retain his own, just in case he needed it. At the time, most returners who repatriated themselves could not receive humanitarian aid, as the humanitarian aid policy often changed. MD secured further cash income by working as a guard and a daily construction worker at the

road and school that were built by the development programme. MD also opened a small shop at his house, thus gaining various other cash sources besides farming. MD's case shows that not only chief, kinship and the neighbour returner from different *limbo*, but also an entrepreneurial sense assists in the success of repatriation. Thus, the development plan promoted by both the government and Chief NY created important cash income activities in this area.

II. New relationships affected by location and intermediaries

The village had more than just the locals mentioned in the previous section, many villagers living in N Village were originally born in different villages of Moxico Province; the reasons they came to the village are various. As the reception centres where returners arrived were limited to those within Moxico Province, the UNHCR sometimes allowed them to return near their birthplace of origin, and sometimes to reception centres further afield. If their place of origin was uninhabited due to the conflict, or if their relatives lived in a different place than before the conflict, or if they did not know their place of origin or the situation of their relatives, they tried to resume their lives in a village different from their place of origin. Some were born in other villages and returned after repatriation; some came to N village because their birthplaces were far from the main road or Lumbala N'guimbo. In this way, N village in Moxico Province was populated by people from all walks of life, after the war. They began new lives in N village and found new relationships by focusing on different individual experiences and attributes, through settling and food acquisition. For example, JM was born in southern Moxico Province, relocated to Lumbala N'guimbo, and from there, fled to Zambia. After he repatriated, he stayed at the reception centre in Lumbala N'guimbo; from there, he did not return to his birthplace but stayed at N Village. Chief NY received many returners like JM, and distributed land to them for settlement and cultivation.

Case 5: JM (born in 1957)

I was born in Chiume and relocated to Lumbala N'guimbo, fleeing from there to the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement in 1965. I repatriated by aeroplane in 2008 and received humanitarian aid in the form of maize, tomatoes, cabbage, pumpkin, kitchen utensils, a hammer, nails, a tent, and water. When I was searching for a place to stay, I met Chief NY, who told me I could stay in N Village. I went to N Village, and Chief NY showed me K *limbo* in No. 5 division where the other NY villagers were staying. I received 50 kg of milled meal as aid from the UNHCR for six months. Although I did not bring any crops from the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement, when I began to cultivate the land, I collected cassava stems that remained in the fields. I cultivated cassava, fish, and made rope from trees and sold them in Lumbala N'guimbo.

Case 6: MM (born in 1949)

I was born in Luwazila and fled to Zambia when the war started. I repatriated to Lumbala N'guimbo in 2004. There was no one there when I returned to Luwazila; therefore, I travelled to N Village where others were staying. Because there were already two *membo* in the west at that time, I went to the eastern side, which was unpopulated, and Chief NY allowed me to live there. After repatriation, I received only one humanitarian aid donation, including pans, plates, an axe, a blanket, a tent, oil, cowpeas, salt, and 10 kg of maize. My father also brought maize seeds and

cassava from Zambia, and we sold the crops at the market in Lumbala N'guimbo.

MM could not find anyone in his birthplace but found N Village near Lumbala N'guimbo along the main road. Although some strangers like JM were given parts of others' *limbo*, as they arrived after N Village was populated, other strangers who arrived earlier like MM built their own *limbo* when they found vacant land. MM also brought seeds and cassava stems to plant so they could achieve autonomous food acquisition quickly and easily.

Case 7: KME (born in 1964)

I was born in Lumbala N'guimbo in 1964. I fled to Zambia in 1998, eating a wild potato called *bukola bwa ntamba* en route. I repatriated to Angola by aeroplane in 2004. As returners were allowed to bring up to 70 kg with them, I brought cassava stems to plant. During the war, my parents stayed in Lumbala N'guimbo; I returned to my parents' home and began selling charcoal. Later, I came to N Village because of the high living costs in Lumbala N'guimbo. I received humanitarian aid including a hoe, maize, and other foods. I cultivated improved varieties of maize seeds from these. After I arrived at N Village, Chief NY ordered his secretary to show me where I could live, which was when relatives and non-relatives began to live together. I sold maize and cultivated and sold cassava, which I cultivated. My *limbo* is the place where the first settler lived.

In KME's case, no relatives or friends could assist him in N Village; however, the chief and other villagers allowed strangers to reside there, including in the same *limbo*. Thus, the returning people who could not afford to live in a rural town began their lives in N Village. Though the Mbunda people lived with relatives and sometimes friends, in the same *limbo* in Zambia (Murao 2012), for the first time, strangers such as K and KME lived in the same settlement as their chiefs in the emergency after the war. Thus, in addition to the chief's protection, to be reintegrated, it was also important for the Mbunda people to be allowed to live with neighbours who are strangers and in a location near the local town with better infrastructure.

III. Post-war relationships with migrants and former soldiers

As mentioned previously, not only returners but also other people including migrants and former soldiers returned to villages in eastern Angola. Mbunda society is as highly mobile as it used to be. BK was one of the migrants who migrated from Angola to Zambia to get married.

Case 8: BK (born in 1948)

I was born in Mitete and got married at Liarui in western Zambia. When the war ended and the announcement from Chief NY of N Village came, all my relatives and I travelled to N Village on foot. My ex-husband was born in N Village; he went to Liarui in 1967 from the village, then to Makoma in western Zambia in 1972 to get married. He brought pearl millet, cassava, sorghum, and maize from Makoma to plant in N Village. While he was absent, his fields were destroyed by the UNITA. He was assisted by his friends when he repatriated in August 2003. When he returned, only his and Chief NY's *membo* remained—the surrounding area was just bush. He fished, gathered honey, and hunted animals to eat. I did not go to Mitete because it was very far away, and I had no relatives there.

BK did not receive any humanitarian aid, relying instead on relatives and friends in N Village. Like BK, some did not migrate to Zambia because of the war but to get married or visit their relatives, and then they could not return until the war ended. They did not have any cultivation fields in use like BK; therefore, they hunted and gathered to survive, and such fields were not essential for them when they began to live in rural Angola. BK wanted to return because rural Angola was her birthplace, and she had relatives there with whom she could live. In BK's case, however, she came to visit N Village and initially stayed with the relatives of her ex-husband because Mitete was very far away, and she had no relatives there after the war. This condition was sufficient for the Mbunda people to reintegrate with immigrants under the Mbunda chief's protection. The same applied to former soldiers.

As noted in previous studies, the reintegration of former soldiers from other countries into rural areas like Moxico Province has not been extensively examined (Hansen & Tavals 1999; Crisp et al. 2008). Generally, to reintegrate the former soldiers in rural areas such as N Village, it was necessary for them to stay near the main road because many of them had been injured during the war, and it was too difficult for them to undertake cultivation or non-agricultural activities on their own.

Case 9: NN (born in 1965)

I was born in Lutengoe in northern Lumbala N'guimbo, and then moved to Mushma when I was a child. I joined the war as a soldier and was injured in 1999. I went to the Mayukwayukwa refugee settlement in Zambia and then to a hospital in Matengo. I repatriated in 2004 while I was still living in the hospital with my family. Mushma was far from the hospital, and I could not walk because of my injuries. I decided to live in the village near the main road, and my children came with me. We found N Village and met Chief NY. As he let us choose a place to set our *limbo*, we selected the place near the main road. I received maize, a dish, a mosquito net, a tent, and a knife from UNHCR. Though I did not bring cassava stems with me, I cultivated hybrid maize and cassava. Early settlers worked for my family as labourers in my family's fields. I also fished, hunted, and gathered honey.

Like NN, many former soldiers who were born in the rural areas of eastern Angola, and who were injured in the war, lived near N Village. In Angola, there were few medical or welfare institutions to accommodate them. NN decided to choose the present place of residence because it was conveniently located near the road, next to other institutions that were established by the development; NN chose this rather than return to his birthplace or a place he was used to. NN's case and other similar cases showed that even injured former soldiers kept moving, undertook agricultural work, and continued to seek out relatives and connect with them.

Case 10: MKA

I was born in Chiume in 1937. My leg was injured when I fought as an MPLA soldier in Chiume. I was delivered to a hospital in Zambia, after which I could not walk properly. Before I returned, my brother was living in N Village. When I initially returned from Zambia to Luena through organised repatriation, I stayed for two weeks in the Sacasangi resettlement as directed by the Angolan government. As my brother was in N Village, I came to stay with him, and he bought a field. Though I could not walk properly, I could undertake works such as weeding and fishing, and I sold fish to be able to buy cassava stems. However, my shifting cultivation field was distant, so I could not walk there, and I had recently been thinking of moving from N Village to

cultivate maize near where I live.

It is evident from the study that the kind of humanitarian aid service returning former soldiers could receive depended on the specific time and place. MKA and his family could stay at the resettlement for a short term, but returners had to seek a permanent place to stay. Nevertheless, even after they moved to N Village, it was very difficult for those with disabilities to cultivate cassava in shifting cultivation patterns because the fields were very far from the residential area. Even MKA, who had his brother to rely on, had begun to seek out a new place to cultivate because he wanted more autonomous food acquisition to the other crops that he could cultivate near his house. The Mbunda chiefs and the kin provided alternative well-being support instead of public services to injured former soldiers.

Wounded soldiers who have returned home maintain their lives by moving frequently. They were supported by the programmes in post-conflict rural areas, such as colonial development, temporary humanitarian aid, restoration of hospitals and roads after the war, and also by the chiefs and his people in the villages he rebuilt.

CONCLUSION

As noted in the history chapter, Angola did not actively adopt a Western approach to development and humanitarian aid in the post-war period, as other African countries did. The country's approach to development and humanitarian aid has been very different. The rural area of eastern Angola, where the Mbunda in particular have rebuilt their lives, was limited to localised and short-term UN humanitarian assistance after the conflict in the east, except for a small amount of top-down government-led development and humanitarian aid. Under these circumstances, the Mbunda people who came to N village had to seek out everything necessary for their daily life. Mbunda have sought to make a living from agriculture, thus achieving autonomous food acquisition to stabilize the socio-economic situation. Hence, this study clarifies the returned farmers' socio-economic stability as the endogenous reintegration of the Mbunda people after their repatriation to post-war Angola by focusing on the experiences and attributes of individuals, rather than humanitarian aid categories. In particular, the study focused on the role of Mbunda chiefs and their social relationships through their food acquisition strategies.

First, the reintegration process, considering the highly mobile situation after they began to return to eastern Angola, was related to the new roles of the Mbunda chief who could speak Portuguese and was a former soldier of the government. However, after returners who were born in N village came back, they relied on humanitarian assistance for access to the local market and even to development strategies, like in case 3 and case 4. Those who were born in villagers other than N village in cases 5, 6, and 7, through their relationships with Chief NY, acquaintances, and relatives, chose to resume their lives in N village, which is close to the main road and convenient for living. Injured soldiers were supported by the programmes of post-war rural areas, such as colonial development, temporary humanitarian aid, restoration of hospitals and roads after the war, and by the chiefs and his people in the villages they rebuilt. It was important for reintegration that those chiefs, who were informally included in post-conflict local governance in Angola, promoted infrastructure development in the area.

Second, after repatriation, as shown through the section on the dynamics of local integration, they achieved autonomous food acquisition with the help of humanitarian aid and the reciprocal assistance of their kin, friends, and strangers who had settled in

the village earlier. Former soldiers with disabilities also continued to move and cultivate without the help of public social services as shown in cases 9 and 10. It was not only the presence of familiar places, such as their own hometowns, or of relatives and acquaintances who had been resettled before them, but also access to improved roads, public markets, medical and educational facilities, which had been made possible by the chief's involvement in state development on behalf of the central government. Thus, they lived with a mishmash of objects gathered from wherever they could find them.

Regarding the social relationships that assisted the reintegration, returners relied on the chiefs, who were in charge of registration and land distribution in villages. Many Mbunda people, regardless of whether they had relatives and friends in the village, were under the rule of the Mbunda chief in N Village. Returners normally did not decide where to go before they repatriated to Angola and seemed to make ad hoc decisions due to the prolonged war, such as in cases 5, 6, and 7. Even the returned people who could not afford to live in a rural town began their lives in N village, such as in case 7.

Compared to previous research, this study clarified that Mbunda reintegration has been characterised not by national frameworks but by the diversified social relationships among the people who had different experiences. Until they achieved autonomous food acquisition, Mbunda people in exile relied on the reciprocal distribution of land and food by their kin and Angolan communities who had arrived earlier (Murao 2012, 2014). They lived with not only relatives but also friends in the same *limbo* in Zambia in some cases (Murao 2012).

However, it was new for strangers to live in same *limbo* after repatriation in Angola. In the endogenous reintegration process, through their chiefs, their residential member relationships changed in the emergency situation after the war as well as during the implementation of post-conflict national development programmes such as humanitarian assistance.

This reintegration of eastern Angola, as previous studies in sub-Saharan Africa have shown, is not like that of returners who promoted creative innovation and development of new strategies in Ethiopia (Hammond 1999), and who demonstrated an entrepreneurial capacity to survive after they repatriated to Liberia (Omata & Takahashi 2018). It is a way of coexistence between different people in the eastern part of Angola—where the West is not the main source of support—through the diversification of the relationships between the inhabitants of the traditional residential unit *limbo*, in a context where different people who want to make a living from agriculture, with their own innovation and entrepreneurship, are not sufficient to achieve socio-economic stability.

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