



**ACADIR-ANGOLA**

ASSOCIAÇÃO DE CONSERVAÇÃO DO AMBIENTE  
E DESENVOLVIMENTO INTEGRADO RURAL



# Strategic Plan

2022 - 2026

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Letter from the President</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>8</b>
» Angola's Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Community Based Conservation (CBC) Context	
» ACADIR's History	
» The Cuando Cubango Province	
» The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA)	
<b>Situational Analysis</b>	<b>12</b>
» Achievements and Organizational Strengths	
» Organizational challenges	
» Organizational opportunities	
» Organizational threats	
<b>Vision, Mission &amp; Values</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Theory of Change</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Strategic Framework</b>	<b>22</b>
» Representative community structures are established and rights secured to natural resource management in Cuando Cubango	
» Wildlife, forestry and fisheries are effectively managed by communities in Cuando Cubango	
» Communities have improved food security and livelihoods	
» Management of natural resources is coordinated between transboundary partners	
» There is an integrated and inclusive approach to Natural Resource Management in Cuando Cubango	
» ACADIR is a stronger and more resilient organization	
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>31</b>



This strategic plan was facilitated by Maliasili with support from TNC and WWF

# Executive Summary



The lack of infrastructure, access to social services, poverty and displacement of thousands of people resulting from Angola's prolonged and devastating civil war, continues to be felt by both rural communities and wildlife decades after it ended. This is particularly true in Cuando Cubango Province, located in the Southeastern part of Angola, a province which saw many military confrontations, resulting in a significant reduction in wildlife numbers and marginalization of its communities.

However, the war also left a vast part of this province underdeveloped, with large tracts of undisturbed natural habitats, creating an opportunity to formulate an integrated and inclusive approach to community based natural resource management (CBNRM) that balances socio-economic growth and biodiversity conservation. Over the past few years, there has been a political shift, with laws and legislation passed in support of a more inclusive and coordinated approach to conservation that recognizes the important contribution of communities to the management of natural resources. Cuando Cubango is furthermore strategically positioned in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) to benefit from resources mobilized for sustainable development and biodiversity conservation, as well as from tourism and enhanced visibility facilitated by KAZA.

With over 20 years of experience working with communities in Cuando Cubango and as the government appointed organization to lead projects in both the KAZA TFCA and Luengue Luiana and Mavinga National Parks, ACADIR will play a key role in developing an integrated approach to CBNRM in the province. This new five year strategy details the steps the organization will take to realize its mission of equipping communities to access rights to and sustainably manage and benefit from natural resources in Cuando Cubango. ACADIR envisions a future where communities in the province have rights over natural resources, improved food security, increased social capital and a thriving natural resource base.

To achieve this vision, ACADIR will work with partners and collaborate towards the development of an integrated and inclusive approach to CBNRM in Cuando Cubango. Building on its two decades of work with communities in the province, ACADIR will continue to support the establishment of community cooperatives for increased rights to natural resources, and provide them with the tools and knowledge needed to better manage these resources in coordination with transboundary partners. Cooperatives will further provide a vehicle for communities to generate increased benefits from natural resources, a process ACADIR will facilitate and continue advocating for.

ACADIR will also invest significant time and resources in strengthening its organizational capacity and growth, which will be key to realizing the strategy over the next five years.

# Letter from the President



**Building on lessons from the past and looking confidently into the future, ACADIR is focusing on its institutional capacity to better support rural communities and wildlife**

ACADIR was founded in the midst of Angola's civil war, at a time when development and environmental NGOs were not a priority for the country. Rather, the priority was the survival of Angolans, the fight against famine and to respond to people's basic needs.

It is in this context that ACADIR started to raise its voice, working to marry community development and the sustainability of wildlife and the environment.

Looking back at ACADIR's first Strategic Plan, developed 16 years ago, we can see the progress we made over the years and our persistence to move forward, even when relevant legislation in the country was non-existent or un-supportive.

Although the Angolan Government has made progress in establishing legislation and mechanisms supportive to our work, we expect this process to continue evolving, so that we can be at a similar level to neighboring countries, with which we share ambitious projects. For the next five years, we will focus our efforts to ensure that communities have access to rights, the knowledge and the tools needed to manage natural resources in Cuando Cubango, resulting in improved livelihoods and food security.

ACADIR's internal strengthening and investment in its leadership, internal systems and areas of technical expertise, will be the focus of this strategic plan, so that we can become stronger and better set up for the work we want to do in the future, delivering relevant support to rural communities and wildlife in a sustainable manner.

I take this opportunity to thank our partners, who will walk with us through this journey to a better ACADIR.

**José Neto**  
President, ACADIR  
Menongue, March 30th 2022

# Background

ACADIR (Association for Environmental Conservation and Rural Integrated Development) is a pioneering NGO in Angola, focusing on environmental conservation and integrated community development in Southeastern Angola, working closely with local communities in and around the Luengue-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks. Since it was founded in May 2001, ACADIR has worked on issues of conservation agriculture<sup>a</sup>, combating wildlife crime, freshwater fisheries, community based conservation and community mobilization. ACADIR's long history of community based conservation and the strong relationships it has built with the local communities in Cuando Cubango province have helped carve a crucial role for the organization as a key partner to the Angolan government and other local and international organizations. Working in some of the most remote areas of Angola, ACADIR has worked with dedication and passion to improve the lives of the people living in Cuando Cubango, and to restore and preserve the wildlife that once thrived in the area.

## Angola's Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Community Based Conservation (CBC) Context

Angola is a vast country (1,246,700 km<sup>2</sup>) endowed with an unusual diversity of landscapes, soils, climates, and ecoregions, which in turn host a rich biodiversity and a wide variety of biomes, ranging from the moist forests of the Congo basin in the North to the woodlands of Namibia and Zambia to East and South and the Namib desert in the south<sup>1,2</sup>. It is one of the most biodiverse countries in Africa, with over 6,500 species recorded<sup>2</sup>.

With poverty and population growth as ultimate drivers<sup>2,3</sup>, habitat loss and resource overexploitation remain key challenges to Angolan biodiversity<sup>2,4,5</sup>, and Angolan livelihoods are heavily dependent on natural resources<sup>6</sup>. Some of the poorest areas, with difficult access to social services and markets, are also often the areas with the highest potential for CBNRM and community-based conservation. In these areas, people are strongly dependent on natural resources including wood and wildlife products, which often provide a safety net during times when agriculture crops fail or are damaged by wildlife<sup>7</sup>. While basic livelihood activities such as logging for timber, charcoal or firewood, bushmeat hunting, and bush burning to clear land for agriculture are key drivers of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss<sup>5,6</sup>, new threats are emerging that pose significant risks, such as mining for minerals and oil exploration, and industrial-scale timber extraction<sup>4,5,8</sup>. These challenges are compounded by high levels of poverty and unemployment, poor environmental awareness, presence of invasive species, human-wildlife conflict<sup>1,6</sup>, pollution, and lack of human, technical, and financial resources<sup>1,3,6</sup>.

Angola's civil war left a vast part of the country undeveloped and sparsely populated, with large tracts of undisturbed natural habitats: this represents an extraordinary opportunity for the creation of a development model that balances biodiversity conservation and socio-economic growth<sup>7</sup>. Since the first National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in 2006, the country has been devoting renewed efforts to biodiversity conservation, including through the designation of new conservation areas, surveys, infrastructure, and new policies<sup>7</sup>. Nevertheless, community engagement in conservation remains an opportunity due to the lack of legal frameworks to give communities rights over resources, small number of NGOs and civil society organizations plus lack of exposure to CBNRM/CBC models in other countries<sup>7</sup>.

*a - Conservation agriculture provides an approach to manage agricultural landscapes for improved and sustained productivity, resulting in increased economic returns and food security while preserving and enhancing the resource base and the environment. It promotes the maintenance of a permanent soil cover, minimum soil disturbance, and diversification of plant species.*

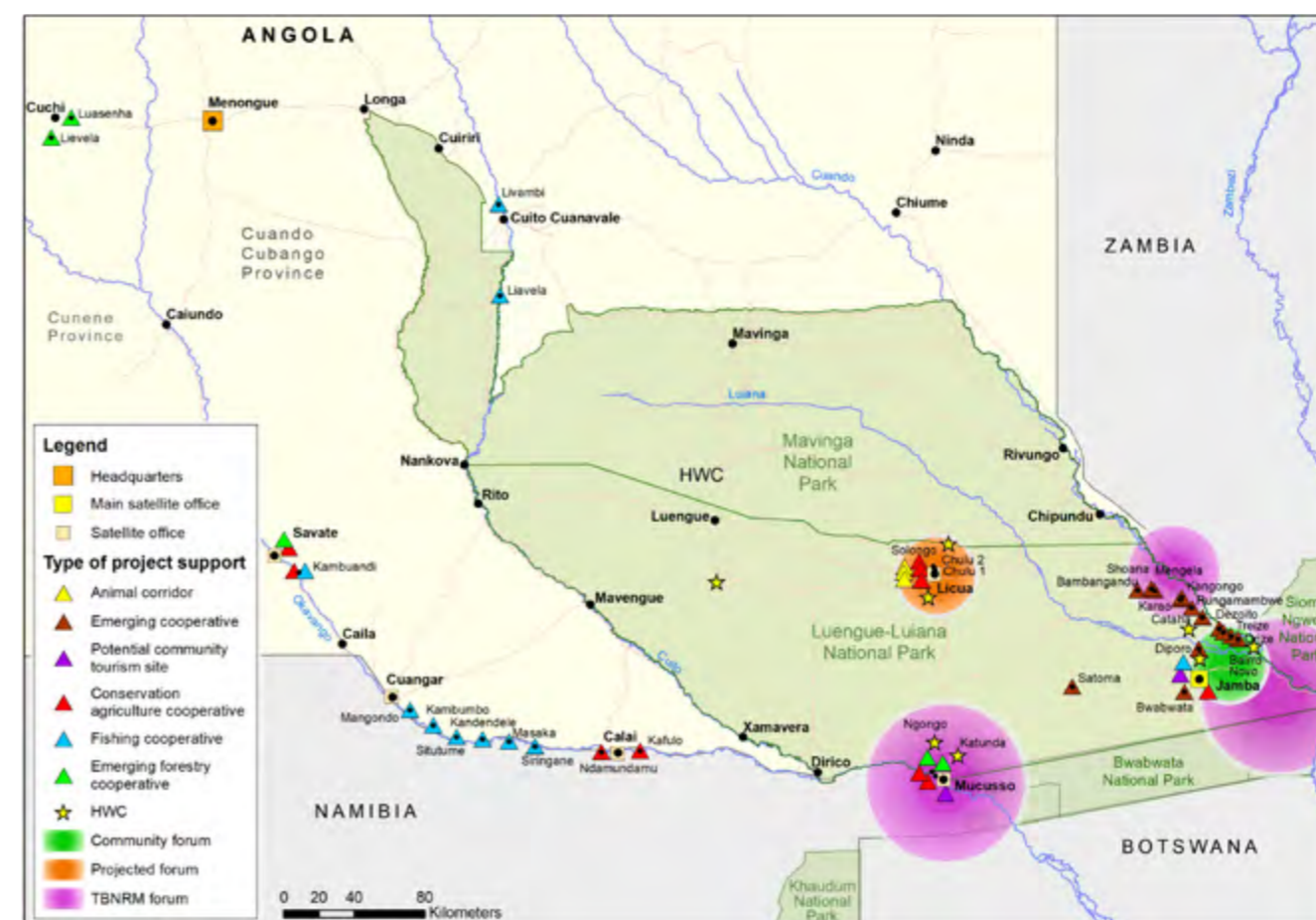
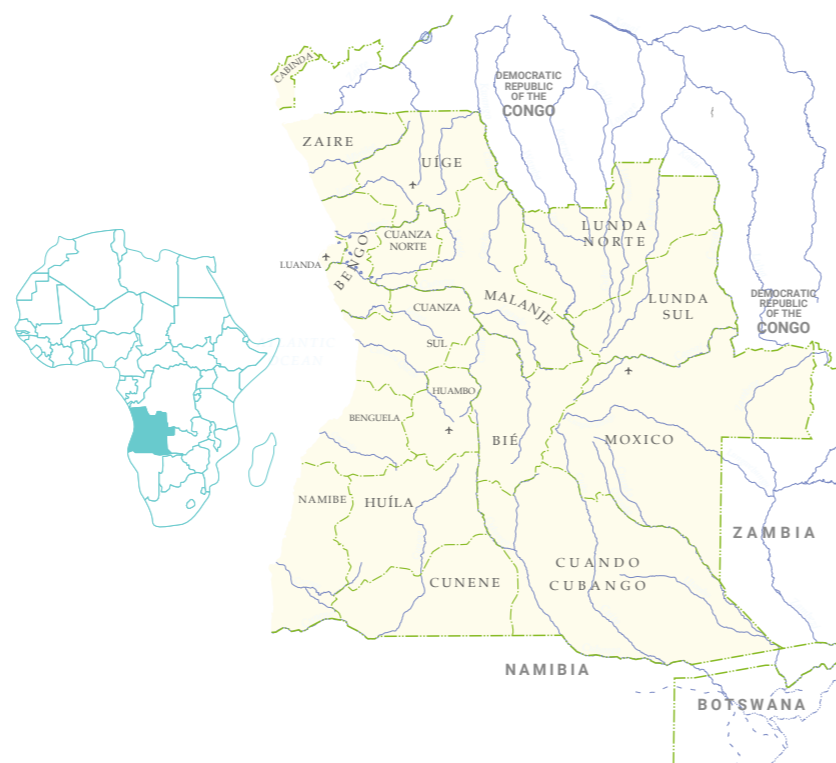
## ACADIR's History

- 2001** ▶ ACADIR is founded
- 2002** ▶ End of civil war in Angola  
First Annual General Meeting is held, Director's Board is elected
- 2004** ▶ Inception of the first regional project (Every River Has Its People) consigned by The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) to the three member countries (Angola, Botswana and Namibia)
- 2006** ▶ Inception of regional projects for the integrated management of the Cubango/Okavango Basin
- 2007** ▶ Building of ACADIR's HQ office in Menongue begins
- 2008** ▶ First provincial conference of the indigenous communities in Cuando Cubango, and allocation of the first identity documents to these communities, a process led by ACADIR
- 2009** ▶ Approval for the inception of project for the inclusion of indigenous communities in Cuando Cubango  
National Policy on Forests, Wildlife and Conservation Areas is approved
- 2010** ▶ Presentation of the KAZA TFCA Regional project in Cuando Cubango Province, for which community consultations were led by ACADIR
- 2011** ▶ Mavinga and Luengué-Luiana National Parks are created as part of the strategic framework of the National Network of Conservation Areas in Angola  
ACADIR's office is inaugurated by the the Municipal Administrator of Menongue
- 2012** ▶ In the scope of the Southern Africa Regional Environmental Program (SAREP), ACADIR is endorsed by the Ministry of Environment, through INBAC, to undertake the Land Survey on Biodiversity in the Okavango Basin
- 2013** ▶ ACADIR leads the process for the socio-economic survey of the communities living in the Angolan component of KAZA TFCA
- 2018** ▶ First wildlife count in the Luengué-Luiana National Park, led by ACADIR in partnership with WWF Namibia and the National Institute of Biodiversity and Conservation Areas (INBAC), and in collaboration with partners in Namibia and Zambia
- 2019** ▶ The National Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2025 is approved, through which ACADIR work is implemented
- 2020** ▶ Through INBAC, the Angolan Government endorses ACADIR as the focal organization to implement projects in the Luengué-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks
- 2021** ▶ ACADIR is mentioned by the President of Angola, João Lourenço, as the focal Angolan organization for work in the KAZA region

## The Cuando Cubango Province

The Cuando Cubango Province, in the Southeastern corner of Angola, borders Namibia to the south and Zambia to the east. Spreading over 199,049 km<sup>2</sup> and with a population of over 600,000 inhabitants, the province is characterized by its remoteness and minimal infrastructure. During the Angolan conflicts, the province saw many military confrontations, and was one of the strongholds of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) until the end of the civil war. These factors greatly contributed to the marginalization of the region.

In 2011, Angola's two largest protected areas were designated in Cuando Cubango Province: Luengué-Luiana National Park (45,818 km<sup>2</sup>) and Mavinga National Park (46,072 km<sup>2</sup>), which meant an uplisting and significant expansion of the already-existing protected areas in these areas (Luiana Partial Reserve and Mucasso Game Reserve)<sup>9,10</sup>. Together, they cover half of the Cuando Cubango Province. These national parks were severely affected by the civil war, depleting wildlife numbers. Although populations are slowly recovering, widespread elephant poaching and bushmeat hunting are pervasive threats to biodiversity in this region<sup>11</sup>.



## The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA)

The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area is a transnational initiative formalized in 2006, signed into treaty in 2011, and recognised by SADC (Southern Africa Development Community), with the vision that conservation can be the economic driver of the region, resulting in thriving landscapes for wildlife and people<sup>7,12</sup>. It covers 519,912 km<sup>2</sup> spanning five countries: Angola, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, and is the largest terrestrial transboundary conservation area in the world. It harbors a rich biodiversity, and it is home to the largest remaining contiguous population of the African bush elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), with about 250,000 individuals. Luengué-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks form the Angolan component of a KAZA TFCA.

The KAZA TFCA has the potential to greatly benefit Cuando-Cubango, and vice-versa. The province is now strategically positioned in KAZA TFCA to gradually recover wildlife populations and to absorb an expanding elephant population from neighboring countries. Additionally, it harbors the headwaters of the main tributaries of two of the most important watersheds on the continent: the Okavango and the Zambezi. While this province is critical to the success of KAZA TFCA and has massive conservation potential, it can also greatly benefit from the resources mobilized under KAZA TFCA for sustainable development and biodiversity conservation projects, as well as from tourism and enhanced visibility facilitated by the transboundary initiative.



# Situational Analysis



## Achievements and Organizational Strengths

- ▶ **Working with communities:** One of ACADIR's key strengths is their capacity to engage with communities, work closely with them and to harness their support and respect through honoring commitments and promises, as well as successfully delivering on projects. It is this relationship with communities and the skills required to successfully work with them (e.g., knowledge of local languages, intimate understanding of the region, its history, its challenges and two decades of engagement with them) that is the cornerstone strength of ACADIR.
- ▶ **Unique focus and approach:** With both nature and communities at the heart of their mission, ACADIR focuses on both sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. There is currently no other such organization in Angola, and ACADIR is one of the few organizations operating in the Southeast of the country. Moreover, they are the only community conservation NGO in the country that combines a solid track record of successful projects, trusted relationships on the ground and in government, and the commitment to both wildlife conservation and the wellbeing of local communities.
- ▶ **Long trajectory and capacity of the organization to survive over time:** ACADIR has faced difficulties since its establishment in 2001 and has been able to navigate them successfully. ACADIR's knowledge of the context and local environment, the communities and their needs, and the intricacies of local government have allowed them to survive and grow as an organization, stay afloat, participate in very diverse projects with various partners, remain committed to their mission to help local communities and grow their reputation as a trusted partner in the region.
- ▶ **Good reputation amongst stakeholders:** ACADIR are widely perceived as a trustworthy organization able to deliver on their commitments, and make a significant difference in the lives of thousands of people in this remote and impoverished part of Angola. ACADIR also enjoys the reputation of honesty, integrity, and commitment to delivering on promises, and effectiveness. They are known to achieve substantial and timely results for their projects, which translates into tangible benefits for communities.
- ▶ **Good relationship with government:** ACADIR's capacity to deliver on project commitments, coupled with their good relations amongst stakeholders in the field as well as the good connections with government and public relations skills of its Board of Directors has led ACADIR to becoming a trusted partner of the national government. This good relationship has culminated with the Ministry of the Environment designating ACADIR as the point NGO for KAZA TFCA and Community Based Conservation (CBC) in the country.
- ▶ **Organizational culture and human resources:** ACADIR has an organizational culture that attracts motivated, dedicated, and hard-working individuals. ACADIR staff is dynamic, open to new ideas, willing to learn and grow (both individually and as an organization). The organization and its staff are passionate to make a difference in the lives of communities and the conservation of Angolan biodiversity. The language skills in the team are also of note: multiple team members speak English, all speak Portuguese, and multiple persons speak one or more of the local languages from the intervention area.
- ▶ **Committed leadership:** The current leadership of the organization is one of its key strengths. The Executive Director is the face of the organization amongst the beneficiary communities and local government, who respect and trust him. The organization's president is praised for his skill to steer the organization from Luanda, his connections amongst the political sphere, and diplomacy skills, which enable him to act as an ambassador for the organization and to open the necessary doors to get the work going.
- ▶ **Regional exposure, experience, and network:** ACADIR has had extensive exposure to work in other countries in the region through regional projects and cooperation at KAZA level. This endows them with a wide network of colleagues and partners working in the same fields and from which to learn and import best practices, as well as with enhanced access to project development and funding opportunities.

## Organizational challenges

► **Internal capacity:** There is a need for increasing professionalization of the different roles within the organization, and to address key capacity gaps/ specialization in a number of areas. The Executive Director is an effective and inspiring leader for partners, communities and the team. But there is dependence on him to get things done, limiting efficiency and posing significant succession risks. Nurturing in-house leadership potential can mitigate this risk.

► **Remoteness of intervention area:** Southeast Angola is well known for its remoteness, basic and degraded infrastructure, difficult access, basic living conditions, land mines, complex political background, and overall difficulty to operate. The province is impoverished, politically marginalized due to the history of violent conflict, and is prone to droughts. Communities are highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods.

► **Financial sustainability:** ACADIR relies completely on donor-funded projects for their operations, with their financial solvency limited by current projects. Hence, programme development and securing of new funds is a constant worry for the organization, which has led to them adapting their work to donor requirements and interests, instead of looking specifically for funding opportunities that align with their core values, objectives, and strategy. Moreover, ACADIR's reactive approach to donors and responsiveness to funding opportunities often leads to the work being structured around time-bound donor-funded projects.

► **Communication and outreach:** ACADIR has no communication strategy or dedicated staff in charge of developing or sharing content about its work. There is great potential for the expansion of ACADIR's communication and outreach activities to better communicate their work, projects, and successes, which could in turn attract further attention of potential donors to the organization, enable more successful fundraising and enhance their work at the policy level.





## Organizational opportunities

- ▶ **KAZA TFCA:** Southeast Angola plays a key role in the environmental sustainability of the wider KAZA TFCA region. If well managed, these landscapes have the potential to enormously expand the conserved areas of the KAZA TFCA region, and protect one of the world's most unique and important freshwater ecosystems. The KAZA TFCA initiative has brought unprecedented attention to Cuando Cubango and protected areas therein, while creating numerous opportunities in the form of trans-boundary projects, transfrontier cooperation and availability of funds. ACADIR is strategically positioned to leverage on these new opportunities thanks to its past work, existing network, and recognition by the Angolan Government as the focal point organization for KAZA TFCA.
- ▶ **Scaling Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in Angola:** The government has also recognized ACADIR's expertise in the fields of CBNRM and community-based conservation. KAZA TFCA offers an excellent platform for cooperation, peer learning, and exchange across boundaries, which would enable Angola to benefit from regional experiences to develop CBNRM and CBC initiatives adapted to the Angolan context. In parallel, ACADIR's beneficiary communities are highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. Ensuring their voice and participation in conservation projects will be essential to guarantee the conservation of Angolan biodiversity and the recovery of its wildlife populations. Although there is a lack of recognition of community rights over the land and resources therein in Angola, there are other entry points for local-level CBNRM-CBC initiatives, such as associations and cooperatives, with which ACADIR is already working. As part of this, ACADIR could leverage the success of their wildlife rangers to collect stronger data and combine data from all villages to build a wider picture. This would allow them to measure the impact of their work over time, and the data itself will be valuable once a baseline and trajectory are established.

- ▶ **Advocacy and communications:** ACADIR is well positioned to contribute their expertise and influence in advocating for land and resource user rights at the national level, and in making sure the voices and needs of the communities living inside the Luengué-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks are heard. Investing in communications and partnership with other organizations working towards the same goal could make ACADIR the national leader able to amplify the voice of local communities at the policy level and a key national-level advocate for sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and community empowerment.
- ▶ **Develop capacities in the communities:** To build on the trust and sense of ownership that has been developed with local communities and ensure continuity of interventions, there is a need for ACADIR to continue to invest in developing the skills and institutional governance capacity of community members. Hence, the shift towards improved natural resource governance, livelihoods and opportunities in this remote part of the country will benefit from ACADIR's continued presence in the field to lead the way and ensure community engagement.
- ▶ **Supportive legislation:** A Strategic Plan for the expansion of Angola's conservation area system was published in 2018 by INBAC. A specific objective is included in the plan to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making, with communities contributing to management of the natural resources. The Cooperatives Law of 2015 creates conditions for the establishment of cooperatives, including by singular and/or collective entities to provide direct support to its members. The law emphasizes the need for cooperatives to work toward the sustainable development of their communities through policies, plans and projects approved by the members.

## Organizational threats

- ▶ **Lack of successful long-term conservation programmes in the country:** Angola has a limited track record of successful long-term conservation initiatives, either in protected area management or in CBNRM-CBC. There is currently little expertise and best practices to anchor conservation approaches in an Angolan context and no commonly held vision or model for community conservation in Cuando Cubango Province. The lack of recognition of community rights over land and resources in Angola pose a further threat to ACADIR's work, and emphasizes the need to influence and advocate for changes in policy.
- ▶ **Weak civil society and conservation landscape:** There are very few influential civil society organizations in Angola, compounded by the wariness of the government regarding NGOs. There are no models of national conservation organizations or rooting of conservation and natural resource issues in Angolan society. There is also effectively no private sector dedicated to conservation interests and issues through wildlife and nature tourism. This situation also makes recruitment of qualified personnel more complicated, due to the scarcity of candidates with solid experience in civil society and/or conservation.
- ▶ **Governmental context unfriendly to NGOs:** It is widely reported that the Angolan Government regards NGOs with a certain suspicion. This, together with the difficult operating environment, has led to the closure (or de facto non-operation) of most environmental NGOs founded after the end of the civil war. It will, as such, be important for ACADIR to nurture the existing good relationship with the government in a continued manner, and ensure that both are working in the same direction, with the same objectives.
- ▶ **Competition for funds:** The context in Cuando-Cubango is one of competition for funds amongst the existing NGOs rather than a culture of strong local partnerships.
- ▶ **Overstretching, or growing too much too fast without proper consolidation:** ACADIR is experiencing a bonanza of interest from many partners and incoming projects. The abundance of work raises concerns about the growth of ACADIR, and whether they will be able to bring in the necessary human resources, internal systems, and development of necessary capacities to absorb this growing portfolio and continue delivering results that are up to the expectations created by their reputation.
- ▶ **Leadership strengthening:** There is concern over what the future of the ACADIR would be like if the Executive Director were to leave the organization. Because most decisions pass through the director, this can become unmanageable as the organization and his workload grows. Building a strong leadership team is essential to the success of ACADIR.

# Vision, Mission & Values



## VISION

Communities in Cuando Cubango Province have rights over natural resources, improved food security, increased social capital and a thriving natural resource base.



## MISSION

To equip communities to access rights to and sustainably manage and benefit from natural resources in the Cuando Cubango province.



## VALUES

**People first** - We work to first and foremost address people's needs. We envisage a future where rural communities are strong, well-organized and thriving.

**Local solutions** - We believe the best solutions to the problems we work to address are locally owned and locally driven by communities in Cuando Cubango.

**Commitment** - We are committed to Cuando Cubango, its people and wildlife. We take challenges head on and work hard to achieve our mission.

**In it for the long haul** - We know change takes time. Our focus is on the long term success of the communities in Cuando Cubango and we will take every step towards achieving our mission.

**Trusted relationships** - We know we cannot go far alone, so we invest in trusted relationships with our partners and the communities we work with.

**Joy** - We take pride in our work, and our passion infuses everything we do. Joy, laughter and togetherness are essential ingredients to how we work as a team.

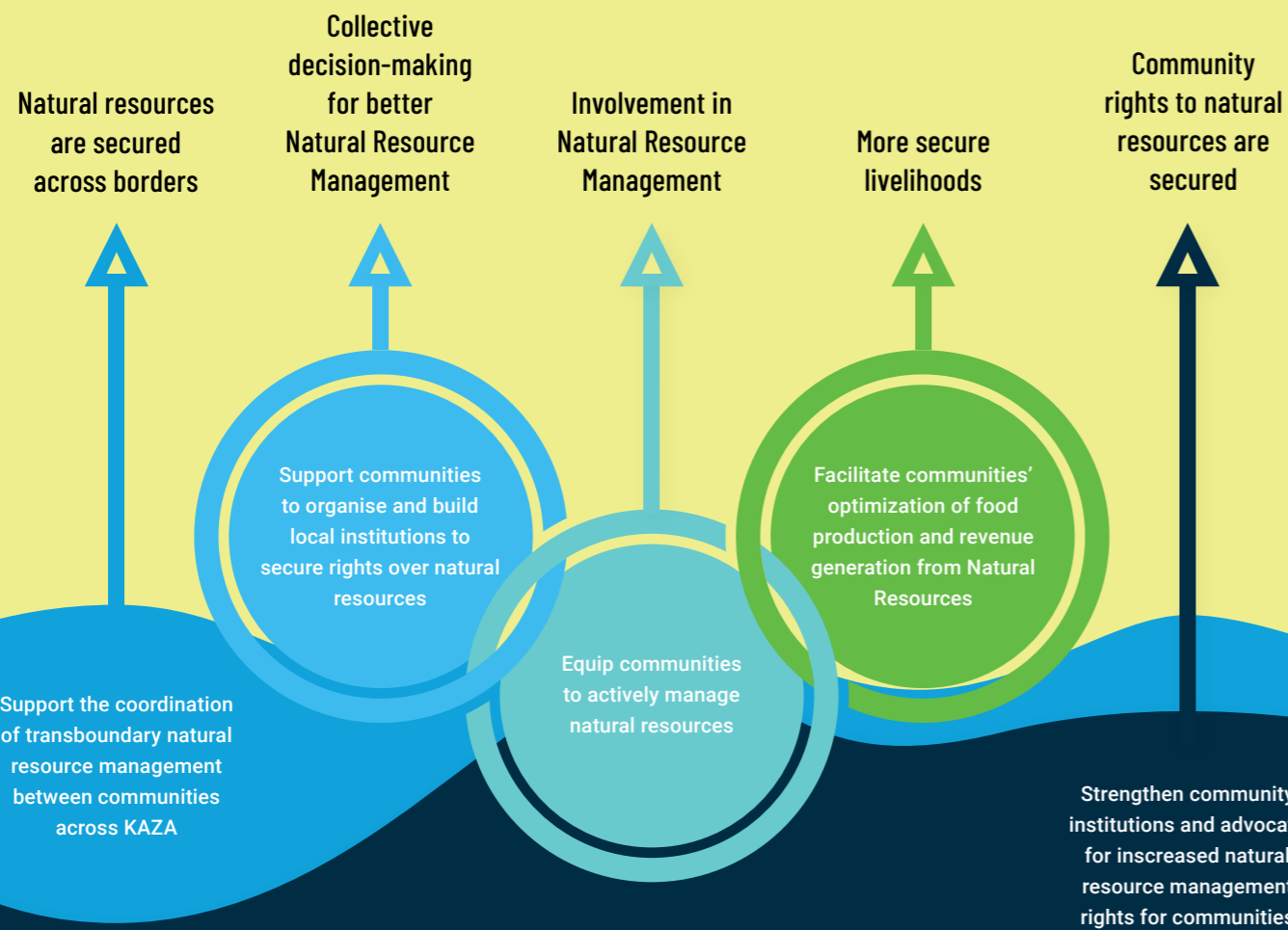
**Unity in diversity** - We form a team with people from different backgrounds, experiences and vision. We are aware that this diversity enriches our ideas and perceptions, opens doors to various possibilities in solving problems and carrying out the tasks on which we focus.

## VALUE PROPOSITION

With a long track record and over 20 years of experience and field presence in Cuando Cubango, ACADIR is uniquely positioned to pioneer community based natural resource management in Angola. Working with some of the most remote communities in the country, we have a unique and deep understanding of the historical and social context in which they exist. We recognize that a thriving people and healthy ecosystems will only be possible if community rights and access to natural resources are recognized, with decision making power lying in their hands.

# Theory of Change

Communities in Cuando Cubango are successfully managing and benefiting from their natural resources



ACADIR's work is based on the belief that the success of local communities and natural resources in Cuando Cubango is deeply intertwined. For the next five years, ACADIR will focus its efforts in supporting communities to organize themselves in representative institutions, which will help raise their voice and empower them to take on a more active role in managing the resources on which they depend. This will include strengthening collaborations towards an integrated approach to CBNRM, both in Angola and across the KAZA TFCA landscape. Underpinning this work will be ACADIR's contribution to building a common vision for Community Based Natural Resource Management in Cuando Cubango, making sure communities' voices are heard and actively included in this process.

# Strategic Framework

ACADIR's five year strategy is structured according to six pillars. Working in close collaboration with provincial and national level stakeholders (government, other NGOs and INGOs), ACADIR will contribute to the development of an integrated and inclusive approach to CBNRM in Cuando Cubango Province by building strong representative community structures. The resulting cooperatives will provide communities with legitimacy and a platform through which they will have access to and be able to benefit from natural resources, contributing to increased food security and social capital. ACADIR will equip communities to develop their own management and monitoring systems to make informed decisions to better manage natural resources and river basins (at both provincial and transboundary levels), in coordination with transboundary partners.

Anchoring these pillars is ACADIR's investment in its organizational capacity and growth, which will enable the organization to realize the strategy. Within each pillar, ACADIR will measure impact through the achievement of the following goals:

## Primary Goals for ACADIR's work in Cuando Cubango Province



## 1 Representative community structures are established and rights secured to natural resource management in Cuando Cubango

A foundational principle of CBNRM is that communities have rights to natural resources. In Angola, the overall lack of recognition of community rights over land and resources has limited local communities' capacity to manage and benefit from these resources. However, current Angolan legislation includes provisions that enable the use and management of natural resources through the creation of cooperatives. By taking advantage of this legal framework, ACADIR supports communities to organize themselves into representative institutions to access rights over resources. These institutions represent and are accountable to their members, and are responsible for making decisions about resource use. They act as vehicles through which communities have access to funding, including government support. Forums are platforms used by cooperatives from neighboring villages to share information and make decisions that affect the overall development and wellbeing of the represented communities. Through the use of forums, cooperatives can coordinate efforts and share best practices.

**Success:** Communities are making collective decisions regarding the management of natural resources

### Objective 1

- » Support the establishment and registration of community natural resource management cooperatives, which are, in turn, organized under representative forums

### By 2026

- » 29 cooperatives (14 agriculture, 3 forestry, 6 wildlife and 6 freshwater) and 5 community forums are established in the communities of Cuando Cubango

### Objective 2

- » Support the establishment and registration of fishing cooperatives

### By 2026

- » 12 fisheries cooperatives are established in Cuando Cubango

### Objective 3

- » Support the establishment of community representative structures in Mavinga and Luengué-Luiana National Parks

### By 2026

- » Representative structures have been established by communities living in Mavinga and Luengué-Luiana National Parks

## 2 Wildlife, forestry and fisheries are effectively managed by communities in Cuando Cubango

Angola's war had a significant impact on wildlife and other natural resources. Over-exploitation of bushmeat has led to the collapse of several species, both inside and outside protected areas. Poaching, bushmeat hunting and illegal logging continue to pose a significant threat to wildlife and forestry resources in Cuando Cubango. Climate change is further impacting both communities and wildlife, with lower rainfall often leading to crop failure, increasing human-wildlife conflict as animals move into settlement areas in search of water, and increased sedimentation in streams and rivers. Combined, these issues further threaten the survival of both people and natural resources. Because the communities living in Cuando Cubango, including those in and around protected areas, are highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, they are critical to the recovery and preservation of wildlife and biodiversity in the province. One of ACADIR's priorities in the next five years will be to equip communities with the necessary skills, tools and systems needed to have a voice and lead the management of natural resources.

**Success: Communities are collecting and using wildlife and other natural resource data to sustainably manage these same resources**

### Objective 1

- » Establish a wildlife, fisheries and vegetation monitoring system for decision making and adaptive management

### By 2026

- » A tool is designed with cooperatives for local collection of wildlife related data
- » Community natural resource monitors submit monthly reports to community forums

### Objective 2

- » Support the recruitment and training of game scouts and community resource monitors

### By 2026

- » 54 game scouts and 30 natural resource monitors based in the communities are in place, representing and reporting to 5 community forums

## 3 Communities have improved food security and livelihoods

Decades of war, the consequent displacement of thousands of people and the unsustainable use of natural resources have significantly depleted Cuando Cubango's resources, contributing to food insecurity of the many communities who live in the province. Climate change will further exacerbate this situation and likely put additional pressure on natural resources and ecosystems as communities cope with the impact on their crops, reduced water supply and increased Human-Wildlife conflicts. The establishment of community institutions opens many opportunities for communities, including the commercial use of forest resources and fisheries. These institutions also allow communities to market products and establish partnerships to sell their products. Working with community institutions, ACADIR will facilitate the establishment of markets, support communities to establish legal enterprises, connect communities with service providers and advocate for fair dialogues and agreements between all parties.

**Success: Communities in Cuando Cubango have more secure livelihoods**

### Objective 1

- » Facilitate the adoption of conservation agriculture methods to improve food security and reduce human-wildlife conflict

### By 2026

- » 1,000 farmers are adopting conservation agriculture methods
- » Conservation agriculture farmers have annual yields of 600 tonnes of maize, sorghum and other dry land crops
- » 200 farmers have vegetable gardens and harvest 35 tonnes of vegetables

### Objective 2

- » Facilitate the establishment of community tourism enterprises

### By 2026

- » 2 tourism enterprises are established and are generating direct income to communities

### Objective 3

- » Facilitate the establishment of markets for non-timber forest projects

### By 2026

- » At least 2 non-timber forest product income-generating initiatives have been facilitated

### Objective 4

- » Support fishing cooperatives to access markets

### By 2026

- » The revenue of community fishers has doubled

## 4 Management of natural resources is coordinated between transboundary partners

Because the Mavinga and Luengué-Luiana National Parks form the Angolan part of the KAZA TFCA, there is great potential to benefit from the support and opportunities arising from this initiative. The success of the initiative will be the success of each of the countries involved, for which strong coordination will be needed. As wildlife moves freely across the borders of different countries that form the KAZA TFCA, and the fact that the use of the Cuando and Cubango rivers has impacts further downstream, it is important for the management of these resources to be coordinated. Working in both parks and in Cuando Cubango more broadly, ACADIR is well-positioned to support and spearhead efforts for closer coordination between the different countries and institutions involved.

**Success: Natural resources are secured across KAZA**

### 📌 Objective 1

- » Support the establishment of Transboundary Natural Management (TBNRM) Forums

### 🕒 By 2026

- » 4 Transboundary Natural Management (TBNRM) Forums active
- » At least one annual meeting is held between each of the TBNRM Forums

### 📌 Objective 2

- » Establish a training program on sustainable river management

### 🕒 By 2026

- » 50,000 people are mobilized and trained in programs for the sustainable management of the Cuando and Cubango river basins

### 📌 Objective 3

- » Promote transboundary lesson learning

### 🕒 By 2026

- » A study tour between transboundary partners to promote lesson learning is held annually
- » A new approach/initiative informed by the study tour is piloted by ACADIR

## 5 There is an integrated and inclusive approach to Natural Resource Management in Cuando Cubango

The economic development and the recovery and preservation of Cuando Cubango's ecosystems and wildlife is dependent on the intervention of a wide range of actors. Different institutions, including the Angolan government, civil society organizations, international organizations and local communities all play an essential role in ensuring that natural resources are managed in such a way that guarantees their sustainability and benefits the communities living in the province. As the government appointed focal organization for the KAZA TFCA and OKACOM, and building on two decades of work in the region, ACADIR can significantly influence and contribute to the development of an integrated and inclusive approach to CBNRM in Cuando Cubango, especially in ensuring that communities' interests and needs are taken into account.

**Success: Community rights to natural resources are secured**

### 📌 Objective 1

- » Mobilize key institutions for alignment of priorities and different roles

### 🕒 By 2026

- » ACADIR is actively involved in annual stakeholder meetings
- » ACADIR is working closely with African Parks and the Angolan Government in the designing of the management plans for Luengué-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks

### 📌 Objective 2

- » Establish strong collaborative partnerships with institutions working in Cuando Cubango

### 🕒 By 2026

- » ACADIR's experience and partnership with local communities informs projects implemented by organizations (both local and international) and government institutions in Cuando Cubango
- » ACADIR has established 2 additional partnerships with local organizations working in Cuando Cubango

# 6

## ACADIR is a stronger and more resilient organization

To realize its mission and vision, and to successfully implement the strategic plan, ACADIR will need to invest in the capacity of its leadership and team, develop strong internal systems and a well functioning structure, establish fruitful partnerships and communicate its work effectively. Growing a stronger organization is a big priority for ACADIR in the next five years, and it will involve focusing on the following priorities:



### 1. Internal systems and structure

**Ultimate Goal: ACADIR has strong internal systems and a well structured and well functioning team**

#### Objective 1

- » Develop internal systems to improve operational effectiveness in response to ACADIR's growth
  - » Organizational manual comprising systems to better structure ACADIR's work.
  - » Revise and improve existing finance systems and manuals

#### Objective 2

- » Double ACADIR's annual budget by 2026

#### Objective 3

- » Develop a simple Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system to capture results and measure organizational impact

#### Objective 4

- » Restructure ACADIR's existing (and growing) team.
  - » The current organogram and internal communication (including work planning and meetings) and reporting systems will be revised, structuring the team into specialized departments, each with a lead and delegated decision making power.
  - » A robust staff performance management system will be developed which will, additionally, allow the management of ACADIR to identify emerging leaders in the organization.

#### Objective 6

- » Conduct a capacity needs assessment to identify the staffing gaps, and recruit key personnel to reduce pressure on the existing team and expand ACADIR's impact.

### 2. Technical capacity of the team

**Ultimate Goal: ACADIR's team has the technical capacity to implement all areas of the strategy and respond to the growth of the organization**

#### Objective 1

- » Identify the main needs of the existing team in terms of technical capacity

#### Objective 2

- » Identify and invest in training opportunities for ACADIR's field team in all areas of intervention (conservation agriculture, fisheries, forestry, river basin management, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and wildlife management)

### 3. Communications and fundraising

**Ultimate Goal: ACADIR's work is communicated effectively, both internally and externally**

#### Objective 1

- » Develop simple and high quality communications tools and platforms for ACADIR to communicate the impact of their work to a wider audience, and to attract a funding portfolio that provides greater resources for core operations, strengthens long-term partnerships, and engenders focus on their strategic priorities
  - » A functional and updated website
  - » Methodology for capturing and sharing regular updates
  - » Fundraising deck

### 4. Leadership

**Ultimate Goal: ACADIR's leadership is strengthened and responsive to the organization's growth**

#### Objective 1

- » Establish a senior management team

#### Objective 2

- » Identify emerging leadership and invest in mid-level management



# Endnotes

- 1 Government of Angola (GoA). (2012). 5th report to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 2 Huntley, B.J., Russo, V., Lages, F., Ferrand, N. (Eds.). (2019) Biodiversity of Angola. Science & conservation: a modern synthesis.
- 3 United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (2013). Angola Biodiversity and Tropical Forests: 118/119 Assessment.
- 4 Russo, V., Roque, P. & Krugmann, H. (2003). Country Report: Angola. In Tarr, P. (Ed.) Environmental Impact Assessment in Southern Africa. Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA), Windhoek, Namibia.
- 5 Kuedikuenda, S. & Xavier, M.N.G. (2009). Framework report on Angola's biodiversity. Ministry of Urban Affairs and Environment. Luanda, Angola.
- 6 Government of Angola (GoA). (2020). National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2025. Presidential Decree no. 26/20 of 6 February.
- 7 Oglethorpe, J., Russo, V., Neto J., and Costa, A. (2018). Communities and Biodiversity in Angola: Analysis of the legal and institutional framework for community-based approaches to conservation and natural resource management. WWF US, National Geographic Society, ACADIR and Kissama Foundation.
- 8 Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Angola (MARRA). (2009). National Forestry Resource Assessment (NFRA). Project no. TCP/ANG/3103 (D).
- 9 Tarr, P. (2016a). Management Plan for the Luengue-Luiana National Park, Kuando Kubango, Angola. Report to Southern Africa Regional Environmental Programme (SAREP).
- 10 Tarr, P. (2016b). Management Plan for the Mavinga National Park, Kuando Kubango, Angola. Report to Southern Africa Regional Environmental Programme (SAREP).
- 11 Funston, P., Henschel, P., Petracca, L., Maclennan, S., Whitesell, C., Fabiano, E., and Castro, I. (2017) The distribution and status of lions and other large carnivores in Luengue-Luiana and Mavinga National Parks, Angola. KAZA TFCA Secretariat (KAZA).
- 12 KAZA Secretariat. (2019). Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area 9KAZA-TFCA) website. Available from: <https://www.kavangozambezi.org/en/> (visited: 4 April 2021).





**ACADIR-ANGOLA**

ASSOCIAÇÃO DE CONSERVAÇÃO DO AMBIENTE  
E DESENVOLVIMENTO INTEGRADO RURAL

1º de Maio Street, Menongue, between IGT and MINARS buildings  
P.O. Box 34 – Menongue – Cuando Cubango – Angola  
Phone: +244 2492 82021  
Email: [info@acadir.org](mailto:info@acadir.org)