



Angola North-Eastern Mission headquarters
Photo courtesy of Fabio de Matos.

Angola North-Eastern Mission

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José André dos Santos Gouveia, B.Th. (Theologische Hochschule Friedensau, Burg/Magdeburg, Germany), is currently serving as president of Angola North-Eastern Mission. He began his ministerial work in Luanda in 1988. He served as lecturer (1995-2008) and director (2004-2007) of the Adventist Theological Seminary in Huambo, while he also pastored Bétel Church. He later earned a degree in Educational Sciences at ISCED - Agostinho Neto University - Huambo/Angola.

Angola North-Eastern Mission is a church administrative unit of the North-Eastern Angola Union Mission of the Seventh-day Adventists.

Territory and Statistics

The territory of the Angola North-Eastern Mission of Angola, headquartered in the city of Malanje, consists of three provinces, which are: Cuanza North, Malanje, and Uíge, corresponding to 38.8 percent of the Provinces of Angola, with an area of 180,410 kilometers, 40 Municipalities, 130 Villages, and an estimated population of 2,546,844 inhabitants. The mission was organized in 2018 with 4 ordained pastors, 19 licensed ministers, and 1 commissioned minister. As of June 30, 2019, the mission had 40,439 baptized members, of which 20,473 actively attend Sabbath School, in 180 organized churches, and 383 church facilities.¹

Origin and Adventist Work in the Territory

The following information is based on the recollections of Elder Filipe Silaquo of about 108 years old, who lived in the village of Linha, one of those who was there long before William H. Anderson arrived in Cuale in 1925.² The acceptance of Seventh-day Adventist missionaries in Cuale was guaranteed since the Methodists were in Kessua since 1885, and the development that occurred there was evident because of the presence of the missionaries. Thus, Headman Linha used his common sense to accept the Adventist missionaries as an opportunity for the development of his area, as it happened in Kessua.³

Cuale Mission, established in 1934, had an impact on the growth and development of the Seventh-day Adventist work and message in northern Angola. The mission's influence increased when Cuale Hospital was opened and Dr. Hélio Moretti was transferred from Bongo to Cuale during that same year.⁴

The influence of Cuale Mission's outreach services was felt through its evangelistic work in Luanda from 1967 in its aim to reach the cities through urban evangelism, and to reach several young students who migrated from Colégio da Luz (School of Light) to the city. These, having completed Standard 4, began to seek better job opportunities, a better quality of life, and to continue their academic training in the large cities.⁵ The evangelistic work in Luanda was begun by Pastor Juvenal Gomes in 1953. Pastor Gomes held the first Sabbath School in Luanda (Baixa de Luanda) in the basement of a building belonging to Paula de Carvalho. This work led to the construction on August 15, 1969, of the Luanda Central SDA Church. This church, which was mainly catering for Europeans, was located at the Colonel Artur de Paiva, Lot No. 99 Avenue.

Meanwhile, the young people from Cuale, who were seeking new opportunities for education and social development in the city, met in small groups such as those located in the Popular District, and this led to the construction of the Cazenga SDA Church. These young people formed prayer groups and came together for Sabbath worship. That was how in the 1970s the second Seventh-day Adventist Church was opened in Luanda, in Cazenga neighborhood (known as the Church for Blacks).

With a massive exodus of members from rural areas to the cities, Pastor Vasco Cubenda was appointed director of the mission field in Luanda.⁶ After the attainment of national independence in 1975, the prospects of reaching the northeast and north of Angola, that is, the provinces of Cabinda, Zaire, Bengo, Cuanza Norte, and Uíge, became possible. Cuale Mission continued to play an important role after the withdrawal of European missionaries who were pressured by the political-military liberation struggle in 1975. They left the administration of the church to the natives.⁷ A few years later, the church in the north of Angola grew and led to the development of a new dynamic administrative vision of the Angola Union Mission and São Tomé, leading to the organization of the territory in the north of Angola into the North Angola Mission/Association in 1982, composed of seven provinces, whose first president was Pastor Domingos Suquina.⁸

According to the testimony confirmed by Elders Bartolomeu Panzo and the late Mário Zua, the driving motive of the missionary in developing the Cuale Mission, whose services were accepted and crossed the frontiers of the region, was the planting of teaching centers in several regions, which thereafter served as Area Coordination Centers from 1940. Each center served as a primary school in addition to being used for Bible teaching in the villages.

The Most Influential Teaching Centers and Their Leaders

Teaching Center	Year Opened	Commune	Pastor Responsible
Cunga	1940	Cuale	Filipe Chimuco
Zena	1945	Forté República	Paulo Epanca
Hoque	1945	Cuale	Elias Samuconda
Mussabo	1945	Cuale	Francisco Chitabo
Nzuzu	1945	Forté Republica	Josué Epanca
Kihuhu	1950	Cuale	Evaristo Silvino
Sabuca	1950	Cuale	João Francisco
Cangundo	1950	Cuale	José Noé

Teaching Center	Year Opened	Commune	Pastor Responsible
Kitanda	1950	Cuale	António Ulombe
Sandango	1969	Cahombo	Gomes Noé

Penetration of the Advent Message in the Province of Uíge

The penetration and expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Province of Uíge occurred in a more extraordinary way, if we compare with others that had or did not have the direct action of the foreign missionaries. In that province the church was started by a group of Protestant Christians, who began to live there in 1961. Because of the critical experience their area faced after the beginning of the national armed struggle, many Christians had to perform their services in clandestine ways, as their church was banned by the colonial government.

These Christians, residing in the village of Bengo, located 24 kilometers from the Municipality of Puri, were motivated by elder Adão Pedro, formerly a member of the Evangelical Church of North Angola (IENA). He had despaired of worshiping in his original church, for the reasons already mentioned. In 1968, to satisfy his thirst for the gospel, he convinced the brothers: Augusto João, Venâncio Mineira, Manuel Dala and João Baptista, (the latter served as a spokesman to carry the message of victory to other residents within the village), in clandestinely meeting in order to hold regular services once a week and, consequently to study the Holy Bible. Once they were accepted, they started and gradually won many others. Domingos Veríssimo reported:

With this gradual integration of new converts, the group has grown enormously. Because of the suspicion of being betrayed, religious meetings began to be held clandestinely and in different places around the municipality. Their first meeting started in the kamaque forest, Lussalala, moments ago, and so on.⁹

According to Adão Pedro, at this time, regents were placed as spies of the people so that a stranger could not appear in the village or hold religious meetings (since their Protestant pastors were [being] suspected). This was done because they realized that many of the natives would be willing to get involved in a revolt like the one that happened in the country. According to Adão Pedro, the administrators transmitted the instructions received from the administrative posts on Sundays so that all the residents of the village had an obligation to be present. To this end, the group preferred to start worshiping on Saturdays so that they would not be discovered.

During their Bible studies, they remembered to study the Ten Commandments of the Law of God, found in the book of Exodus 20: 3-17. So, everyone felt the need to keep the moral Law of God, not excluding any of the points, and also began to keep the Sabbath as a day of worship to God. With the growing number of people, many were fearful and insecure, even going so far as to give up in the face of the rigidity that was noted in the surveillance process. Therefore, it was reported to the local authorities, as witnessed by Adão Pedro.¹⁰

Contact Between Uíge Sabbath Keepers and Seventh-day Adventists

The penetration and development of the Adventist Church in the Province of Uíge started in 1948 by Pastor Domingos Paulo sent from the Cuale mission. Pastor Paulo established the first Sabbath School in Uíge in the locality of Bengo–Cangola. The first Sabbath School members were Fernando Kagica, Pedro Senduca, Madalena Chico, Daniel Queta, Luísa Zua, Amadeu Kamueji, Tito Caxiculo, Jorge Quitanda, Joana Quitanda, Joana Kajica, Miguel Zua, And Moisés Zatula. The gospel spread from Cangola territory, Comessa and Baia (1959), Tunda–Massango (1973), Cawessa (1973), Magarage (1974), and Dengue/Quinvula (1980) by the work of Adventist youth or voluntary missionaries who went from village to village and preached the gospel. However, the Holy Spirit was working with other groups of people in the village of Bengo–Puri.

The first contact of this group of Christians with Seventh-day Adventists was not premeditated, but it was possible through a young merchant from Malanje, known as Brother Figueira, in order to exercise his commercial activity in the village of Kimuinga. Having been identified as a Seventh-day Adventist, he learned through the local population about the existence of a group of Christians who worshiped on Saturday, but they were not Seventh-day Adventists, nor did they belong to any official denomination. However, Figueira went to Bengo-Puri and met some members of this group. Motivated by their contact with the young man, they wrote a letter to the director of Cuale Mission, requesting material help, with regard to Bibles, hymnals, and some other Protestant books that they knew, such as: the *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Heart of Man*, and the *Catechism*.¹¹

In turn, knowing that the mission director lived near the well-known Adventist hospital of Cuale, in Malanje, Figueira went there and sought to inform the missionary who was there about the group of Christians located in Bengo-Puri, whose resemblance to Seventh-day Adventists was Saturday as the main day of worship.

In those days it was enormously difficult for colporteurs to secure books. After receiving the letter, the missionary decided to request from the administrative post of Cuale, for a guide that would help him to travel to Uíge, as

confirmed by the pioneer Adão Pedro:

As the letter went on for three weeks and we had no answer, we thought it was betrayal, and we were afraid. One day we saw a man coming on a motorcycle. Brother Figueira was carrying the letter; we jumped for joy! We met Pastor Leonardo Calungo with him. He was from Bongo, [near] Huambo; he worked in the village of Nema, near the Commune of Bengo, Cangola. We asked you a lot of questions about the Holy Bible! [His responses] convinced us. So, later I accompanied him to the Puri Administrative post. And he said to me: With that certainty we will bring the Bibles and other books that we have, because they are not part of our studies. The pastor traveled that same year in 1969, returned and brought a box of Bibles.¹²

After returning to the Cuale Mission, Pastor Felipe Calungo asked Brother Adão Pedro to attend the mission, at the end of 1969.¹³ After arriving in Cuale, Pedro had no contact with the mission director, but, coincidentally, there was a commission composed of members of the Southwest African Division, to whom Pedro presented the need to know the gospel of Christ. He also asked that they be given workers to lead the congregation; namely, the brothers: Baptista Calumba, Ferraz Gabriel, and Venâncio Mineira Dala. The trips made during this period, of which the most striking was made at the beginning of the seventies where he traveled with brother Narciso Rogério, a recent member of the congregation. At the time Rogeiro was already a teacher in the village of Kisseque Lulovo, Puri, and studying a Bible course by correspondence from the Bongo Mission, near Huambo. He was motivated by a leaflet with the title: "From Saturday to Sunday." Finally the Bengo-Puri group requested to be baptized, and 'Cuale mission was sent to baptize them in 1972.

In 1980 some Adventist members from other areas, living in Negage, began to meet at the house of Brother Castigo de Nascimento, from Cuale, Malanje. At that time he was responsible for Hotel Mirage in Negage and was a resident of Cassamba. This group included: brothers Forção Cadicuni, Domingos Veríssimo Panzo, Beirão Catenda, Adelaide Martins, and Feliciano Martins. The latest to come from Wemita, in the municipality of Kangola, was Pastor Roberto Ngonga. After his acquisition of a piece of land in the village of Negage, he became the director of the Mission District of Uíge. He assigned Pastor Narciso Rogério to be the pastor of the church of Negage, in 1985, after he had finished his course of study in Theology at Bongo.

From the Cuale mission, Adventist presence arrived into Bengo-Cangola, Bengo-Puri, Negage, then Uíge the capital city. Uíge Central Church was organized in 1990 by Pastor Roberto Gongga in the town of Candombe Novo. In 1997 the areas surrounding the Candombe New Town had become targets of the war during Angolan civil war. The Uíge Central Church moved to Mbembangango's neighborhood, along Street D.

However, since Mbembangango's neighborhood place was small, in the same year (five months later), the church moved to a warehouse located in the Industrial Zone, where they remained until 2004, after the construction of the new church building in Zone No. 1 of Papelão's neighborhood, in front of ISCED Uíge.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the end of the armed conflict allowed the church in 2002 to have rapid growth. Such church growth led the church building to be demolished and replaced by a large and modern church building of a representative character that is awaiting its completion and inauguration.

Pastors who worked in the Province of Uíge: Joaquim Manuel (died in 1961), (Cangola), João Justo (forced to leave Cangola by civil war in 1985), Roberto Gongga (1970-1991), Floriano Branco (Uíge Central), Domingos Samuel (Uíge Central), Henriques Chimuco (Bengo-Puri and Cavua), Narciso Rogério, Juvenal Gomes V. Xirimimbi (Uíge Central Church), Bondoso Afonso (Bengo-Puri Church), Florindo C. C. Chiconjo (Negage Church), Adão Dala Hebo (Bengo-Cangola Church), and Tito Mateus Zua (Uíge Central Central).

Penetration of the Adventist Message into Cuanza North Province-- Cacochi locality –Quilungo, 1973

The message of the Sabbath and the Seventh-day Adventist Church reached the Cuanza North Province in an interesting way. According to Gabriel Cúdia Teque, one of the first members in Cuanza North, interviewed by Filipe Calunga reported that the Adventist message arrived in the Province of Cuanza North in a miraculous way. It was in June 1973 when a Catholic priest, Cisto Cudizola, traveled to Luanda helping his assistant catechist from the Municipality of Quiculungo, who was ill after returning from this trip, brought a Holy Bible with him!¹⁵

Days later this Bible became the study guide for the Cacochi community and the premise expressed by the Creator God was discovered in (Genesis 2: 1-2) "and when God finished his work on the seventh day, he rested on the seventh day of all his work..." This launched the curiosity of a Catholic and Protestant group to study the Bible further, discovering Exodus 20: 8-11 and other texts in the Bible that indicated the Sabbath as a Holy Day such as Exodus 16:26; Nehemiah 13:17; Isaiah 56:2; 58:13, etc.

In order to overcome the doctrinal deficiency of their new church, the separated group of their traditional churches decided to send an emissary, Brother João Luciano Kudimuena to Luanda in order to get more information. There they were instructed to contact the Cateco Cangola region, in which the Adventist Church of the Seventh-day was already established and developed.¹⁶

In October 1973 the brothers, Gabriel Cúdia Teque and João Luciano Kudimuena, the latest to come from Luanda, undertook a trip to the Cateco-Cangola commune belonging to the Administrative Post of the Council of Duke of

Bragança (Kalandula), Malanje Province, where they were received by Pastor Paulo Epalanga. With the news reaching the administrative authorities of the Administrative Post of the Quiculungo Council of the existence of a new strange religion observed by a smaller group of citizens from the village of Cacocho, immediately the arrest warrant was issued for brothers Gabriel Cúdia Teque, Conceição Domingos, João Luciano Kudimuena Panzo, and Pedro Henda.¹⁷

The news about the arrest of the new adherents of the Advent message, as well as what happened at the Púri and Cangola-Uíge, arrived at Cuale Mission, and urgently the director of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission, Carlos de Assunção Esteves, traveled to Quilungo in company of Pastors Domingos Suquina and Silva Henriques to request authorization to open the Adventist Church in that locality and, at the same time, for the release of the new believers. During the visit of the pastors to Cacocho, an extraordinary and miraculous healing of a seriously ill man happened through prayer.

It happened that a middle-aged man was seriously ill so that his family members sent the news of his poor health, and his being on the verge of death, to his distant relatives. The two pastors from Cuale visited the patient and prayed for him. Hours later the patient recovered and asked for food, having lived with the illness for more than five years, as João Luciano Kudimuena Panzo, affirmed.¹⁸ This information was also confirmed by Brother Paulo Matari, first worker of the Global Mission (1996-1998) in N'Dalatando capital of the Cuanza North Province. He reported the arrest of the new followers of the Sabbath in Quiculungo around the months of September to November 1973 and the miracle of healing in Cacocho.¹⁹ However, due to the difficulties brought about by the Angolan Civil War, the place only came to realize its first baptism ceremony in 1979. The first members to be baptized in Cuanza North were João Kudimuena Panzo, Pedro Henda, Gabriel Cúdia Teque, and Conceição Domingos. These were baptized in May 1979.

The first pastors placed in the districts of Cuanza North Province were: Enoque Manuel (1984); Domingos Sacassemene (1984); Simão Queta Canhamena (1986-1992); António Viegas (1993, 1994); António Jacinto (1999--2001); Mário Zua (2003, 2004); Esteves Francisco Domingos (2002-2013); Henriques Chimuco (2008-2010); Jacinto Francisco (2013-2015).

Penetration of the Seventh-day Adventist Message in the City of N'Dalatando – Capital City of Cuanza North

The arrival of the advent message in the capital of the province of Cuanza North was in 1987 through businessmen coming from Luanda. According to the Global Mission pioneer and one of the first members in this city, brother Paulo Matari, “the message bearers were itinerants who from time to time brought leaflets and made contacts with the northern people.” However, not being regular, the message took time to develop in the locality, until the administrative office of the North Mission Association placed the first pastor in this city, Simão Queta Canhamena (1988-1992).

The first churches to be organized in the Cuanza North Province was the Central Churches of N'Dalatando and São Filipe in the same city of Cazengo, on January 8, 2010, by Pastor Malaquias Ernesto.²⁰ At the first baptism held in the capital city (N'Dalatando), in Cuanza North, the following people were baptized: Isabel, João Sebastião, Belema, Álvaro, Manuel Diego, and Mateus Batista Toressa.

The Organization of Angola North-Eastern Mission

These historical developments presented above show the growth of the church after the formation of the territory of northern Angola as a mission association. The results it produced led to the realignment of the North Mission Association into three administrative units of the church through an action or vote of Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Division (SID) Executive Committee in 2017. One of the three entities is the Angola North-Eastern Mission.

The laying of the cornerstone for the construction of the headquarters of the new mission in the city of Malanje was done in November 2017. Those responsible for this task were: Pastor Justino Paulo Jr., president of the North-Eastern Angola Union of Seventh-day Adventists, and Dr. João de Assunção Agostinho Fernandes, municipal administrator of Malanje.

The mission's first organizing assembly took place from February 2-4, 2018, at the Provincial Library of Malanje, and was attended by 149 delegates. They elected three directors, four regular full-time departmental officers, and three assistant departmental leaders to serve part time as advisers to the three directors. The elected administrators were: *President*: José André dos Santos Gouveia; *Executive Secretary*: Abel João Manuel; *Treasurer*: Joaquim Nzage Gonçalves Manuel.

Thereafter, the inauguration of the new office building took place on June 21, 2019, by the provincial governor of Malanje, His Excellency Norberto Fernandes dos Santos “Kwata Kanawa” and Pastor Justino Paulo Júnior, president of the North-Eastern Angola Union.²¹

The Institutions of the Angola North-Eastern Mission

Schools in Malanje Province

Polytechnic Institute: This is situated in Malanje Province, and was under construction from 2014-2019. Its official

opening took place in 2020. Teaching is currently done for the Clinical Analysis courses consisting of only one class of 15 students and another class of the Nursing course with 95 students, giving a total of 110 students in the institution.

Ebenezer School Complex No. 31--Aviation Field, whose classes reach the 9^h level plus modules 2 & 3, with a total of 1,566 students.

Schools in Uíge Province

Seventh-day Adventist Primary School in Candombe Novo, with a total of 1,630 students.

Negage Seventh-day Adventist Primary School, whose classes reach the 6^h level, with a total of 1,445 students.

Outlook

There are still many challenges to be faced in order to reach the minorities ethno-linguistics groups, especially the following:

The South and Southwest Zones comprising the municipalities of Quirima, Luquembo, Cangandala, and Cacuso, with the following ethno-linguistics groups: Songos and Kimbundo.

The East Zone comprising the following municipalities: Caculama, Quela, Cunda-Dia-Base with the following ethnolinguistic groups: Songo, Bângalas, and Holos.

The North and Northeast Zone comprising the provinces of Uíge and North Malanje with the following tribes: Kikongo, Kimbundu, Ndongo, and Malengue.

The Central Zone of the territory comprises: Ambaca.

The Angola North-Eastern Mission has organized a study project to identify minority groups for its outreach through evangelization and church planting. All areas identified have a Seventh-day Adventist church presence. The mission's greatest challenge in the next five years (2021--2025) is to reach the following minority groups: Holos, Bângalas, Songos, and Bacongos, as well as other small groups, namely: Lingalas and Zairenses on the northeastern border of the territory with the Republic Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Presidents

José André dos Santos Gouveia (2018-).

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NOTES

1. "Angola North-Eastern Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2020), 305.?
2. Alexandro Justino, *Preachers of Present Truth: History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Angola (1924-2004)*. Relgraphica, Portugal: 2007, 131.?
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6. Justino, 141.?
7. Mário Zua, interview by the author, June 13, 2016, Aviation Field, Malanje.?
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13. Filipe Calungo, interview by the author, December 19, 2020, Samba Caju.?
14. ISCED - Higher Institute of Education Science.?
15. Gabriel Cúdia Teque, interview by Filipe Calunga, December 19, 2020, Cacochi.?
16. Conceição Domingos, interview by the author, Cacochi, his native village, December 19, 2020.?
17. João Luciano Kudimuena Panzo, interview by Victor Tomás Vunge, July 11, 2014, Negage.?
18. João Luciano Kudimuena Panzo, interview by the author, December 19, 2020. Panzo directed the mission to go to Luanda to research the biblical truth about Saturday 1973.?
19. Paulo Andrade Matari, interview by João Albino Vunge. December 12, 2020, N'Dalatando, Cuanza Norte.?
20. Malachi Ernesto, interview by the author, February 5, 2014, Luanda.?
21. José André dos Santos Gouveia, personal knowledge form serving as executive secretary of the former Northern Mission Association (2008-2015), and as president of the Northeast Mission of Angola.?

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