Opening Roads to Angola’s Future

Daniela Kempf

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opening roads to angola’s future

by Daniela Kempf

The Humpty Dumpty Institute funded the Road Threat Reduction Project with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and HALO Trust. HDI opened several roads for the Angolan people, creating new possibilities for the developing government.

“now have no fear any more of going to my farm down the road,” said Francisco Luca, farmer and resident of Chitembo, one of the hundreds of communities located along a 20-kilometer (124-mile) stretch of a provincial road recently made safe from landmines in Angola’s Bie province. As a former soldier and the only local landmine victim from Angola’s devastating civil war, Luca knows about fear. HALO Trust, a U.S.-based demining organization, has found and destroyed booby traps and anti-tank landmines on this road leading from Kuito to Menongue, major section of the only road between Angola and Namibia.

Newly cleared roads allow families to travel and benefit the population of the area. For example, Laurinda Kana (also a former soldier) told me during my visit to Angola, HDI was responsible for closely monitoring the project and meeting the USDA’s strict reporting requirements.

The only way to travel from Luanda, Angola’s capital, to the Planalto region is by plane, as the roads are mined and in other worse conditions. I flew to Bambio in a small, rickety plane. After landing, I had to walk off set on a nine-hour, gut-wrenching Land Rover ride via recently cleared sections of the road to reach the current location of HDI’s demining project in Chimombo. I camped there that night with HDI’s demining teams and shared with them a food called ‘fungi’ for dinner while sitting around the campfire.

The following day I visited Rui Cunacque to observe a manual demining team clearing a project and meeting the USDA’s strict reporting requirements.

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