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Par Brad SAFARIK

Strategic abandon: Angolan peasantry under MPLA domination

Sous la direction de M. Michel CAHEN

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TITRE français

L'abandon stratégique : la paysannerie angolaise sous la domination du MPLA

RESUMÉ français

Le passé colonial a longtemps servi comme guide pour le gouvernement angolais et sa vision de réimaginer les espaces futurs dans la périphérie. Cependant, une confluence d'influences historiques et d'intérêts politiques a entravé la revitalisation du secteur au détriment de la production agricole et des angolais ruraux. Avec le secteur agricole comme toile de fond, nous essayons de montrer comment le modèle illibéral de la reconstruction de l'état a profité de sa présence 'socialiste' prolongée dans l'économie rurale pour retarder le développement des initiatives économiques indépendantes, a privé la paysannerie des ressources publiques, et a investi significativement dans des parties segmentées où le contrôle des ressources reste dans les flux d'influence des élites. Cette stratégie a effectivement abandonné une grande partie des populations rurales, bien que le monopole sur le pouvoir de la distribution des ressources se soit affaibli avec l'arrivée des acteurs non-étatiques dans la campagne. Ce nouvel élément a permis le renforcement de la capacité de pouvoir d'agir (*agency*) endogène rural, exemplifié par la formation de *Rede Terra* et sa campagne nationale pour influencer la dernière loi de la terre. La domination via l'abandon s'avère une stratégie efficace pour imposer son autorité où elle est la plus faible. Cependant, une intention véritable de diversification économique exigerait une approche plus populaire. Il reste à savoir si le gouvernement est disposé à renoncer à sa stratégie de domination.

MOTS-CLÉS

Angola, économie politique, espaces participatives, mouvement social, société civile, question(s) agraire(s), développement rural

English ABSTRACT

Angola's colonial past has served as a symbolic lodestar for the government's plans reimagining the future spaces of the countryside. However, a confluence of historical influences and partisan political aims has weighed heavy on the plans behind revitalizing the sector to the detriment of agricultural production and rural Angolans alike. With the agricultural sector as its backdrop, we attempt to expose how the government's illiberal peacebuilding model has intentionally used its prolonged 'socialist' presence in the rural economy to stunt private economic initiatives, deprived its peripheral populations of public resources, and only significantly invested in segmented areas where resource control remained within elite channels of influence. This strategy effectively abandoned large swathes of rural communities, though the monopoly hold on the power of resource distribution was broken down with the arrival of Non-State Actors in the countryside. The entrance of this new element allowed for the strengthening of the capacity of endogenous rural agency, exemplified by the formation of *Rede Terra* and its national campaign to influence the latest land law. Domination through abandon has proven an effective strategy of imposing its authority where it remains the weakest, though any real attempt at economic diversification would require a more popular approach. It remains to be seen whether the government is willing to renounce its strategy of domination.

KEYWORDS

Angola, political economy, participatory spaces, social movement, civil society, agrarian issues, rural development

TÍTULO português

O abandono estratégico: o campesinato angolano sob a dominação da MPLA

RESUMO em português

O passado colonial angolano tem servido como uma estrela guiada pelo governo em sua reimaginação de espaços futuros na periferia. Entretanto, uma confluência de influências históricas e de alvos políticos pesou nos planos da revitalização do sector económico em detrimento da produção agrícola e das populações rurais. Tendo o sector agrícola como pano de fundo, tentamos, na nossa pesquisa, explicar como o modelo iliberal de reconstrução do país se tem aproveitado da presença 'socialista' estendida pelo governo na economia rural, a fim de tolher as iniciativas económicas particulares, privando as populações de recursos públicos, investindo significativamente só em áreas segmentadas onde o controlo dos recursos permaneceram dentro de canais de influência das elites. Essa estratégia, efetivamente, abandonou grandes partes das comunidades rurais. Embora, o monopólio sobre o poder

da distribuição de recursos se tenha fragilizado com a chegada dos atores não-estatais nas periferias. A presença desse novo elemento permitiu o fortalecimento da capacidade endógena da ação (*agency*) rural, exemplificado na formação da Rede Terra e sua campanha nacional mobilizada em torno da nova lei de terras. A dominação pelo abandono se revelou uma estratégia eficaz na imposição de sua autoridade onde ela permaneceu a mais fraca, porém qualquer tentativa genuína de diversificação económica requereria uma abordagem mais popular. A questão que fica é se o governo está preparado à renunciar sua estratégia de dominação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Angola, economia política, espaços participativos, movimento social, sociedade civil, questões agrárias, desenvolvimento rural

« L'abandon stratégique : la paysannerie angolaise sous la domination du MPLA »

Résumé français détaillé de la thèse

Le sujet choisi est le résultat d'un projet à la fois personnel et professionnel. Je me suis toujours intéressé à ce qui est marginal et subalterne, particulièrement dans les milieux ruraux et péri-urbains et à leurs liens avec le monde urbain. Cette curiosité vient peut-être de mes origines américaines, au Kansas, un État marginalisé et mal connu des États-Unis. Pendant mon parcours universitaire, cette approche fut d'abord concentrée principalement sur l'Amérique latine et les dynamiques en œuvre dans la longue histoire des conflits de terres. Mon mémoire de Master à l'IEP de Bordeaux, intitulé « The Evolution of Development Models in the Brazilian Amazon: The Transition Towards Sustainability? The Case of the Terra Legal Amazonia Program » fait foi de cet intérêt. L'attention particulière de l'IEP pour les études africaines m'a incité à élargir mon champ d'intérêt géographique et à créer des liens entre mes études sur l'Amérique latine suivies aux États-Unis et l'Afrique. Mon intérêt par la langue portugaise a facilité cette fusion avec le monde lusophone qui est le fruit de l'histoire coloniale du Portugal. Le projet d'étude de départ envisageait une étude comparative entre l'Angola et le Brésil. Mais une étude de terrain en 2017 m'a fait prendre conscience de l'importance d'un travail centré sur l'Angola.

Je me suis intéressé au paradoxe angolais où le secteur pétrolier dominait presque toute l'économie, mais avec des autorités qui semblaient avoir une volonté forte de reconstruire leur secteur agricole. Le discours de diversification économique a toujours accompagné des rapports sur des conflits liés à la terre, sous les trois présidences depuis l'Indépendance. Je me suis alors demandé quel rôle jouait la paysannerie dans cette « diversification ». Lorsque j'ai commencé à creuser davantage cette question, j'ai découvert la formation d'un réseau d'ONG lié à la terre, *Rede Terra* (Réseau de la Terre) en 2001. Ce réseau a réuni la société civile, les populations rurales, les acteurs non-étatiques, et le gouvernement, autour de la législation projetée d'une Loi de la Terre. Une convergence historique se formait en Angola : pour la première fois dans l'histoire du pays, une jeune société civile mobilisée était invitée à collaborer directement avec son gouvernement autoritaire à la fin de la guerre civile (2002). La création de ce réseau a vivement suscité mon intérêt, élargi ensuite pour en comprendre le contexte historique. Ce fut là le départ d'un travail qui s'achève après cinq ans de recherches.

Comme je souhaitais mener un projet d'étude centré sur le milieu rural, je me suis intéressé aux liens entre cette nouvelle Loi de la Terre et l'intégration de la paysannerie dans la politique de développement économique via le secteur agricole. Cette approche, avec en centre d'intérêt les populations rurales et leurs pratiques agricoles, me semble pertinente pour plusieurs raisons : en Afrique subsaharienne, les phénomènes d'urbanisation et l'économie informelle, la pauvreté et la faim, les espaces péri-urbains en général, sont tous alimentés en grande partie par les événements qui se déroulent dans la périphérie des pays. En Angola cette population s'élève à plus de 10,5 millions d'habitants (34%) d'un totale d'environ 30,8 millions¹. Le développement du secteur agricole est donc un enjeu

¹ Base de données de l'Unesco, Objectifs de développement durable, Angola. Voir : <http://uis.unesco.org/country/AO> (accédé le 26 July 2020).

central pour l'avenir du pays où la paysannerie joue un rôle central dans la production agricole où elle cultive 92 % de la terre (IFC 2019 : 45). Il est important de comprendre comment le gouvernement cherche à tirer profit de cette production et des terres qui l'alimentent. Tous ces éléments ont dessiné les objets centraux de cette étude : la terre, la paysannerie et le secteur agricole.

Compte tenu des multiples faiblesses structurelles du nouveau gouvernement vis-à-vis des espaces périphériques à la suite de la guerre d'Indépendance, des périodes de guerre civile, de la très faible présence physique et administrative et surtout du manque d'investissement dans ces espaces, la question se posait de la structuration de l'équilibre du pouvoir entre le gouvernement et ses espaces ruraux. En réalité, la conquête du territoire par le gouvernement national n'était pas achevée en 2002 en raison de la guerre civile. Comment cet équilibre a-t-il évolué dans le temps avec l'arrivée et le départ d'autres acteurs sur le terrain ? Quelles traces coloniales subsistent dans l'approche du MPLA vis-à-vis de la paysannerie ? À quel point sont intégrées les populations rurales dans cette vision de reconstruction de l'État et des stratégies du développement national ? Quel est le rôle économique de la paysannerie et des terres dans la vision du parti-État du MPLA ? Qu'est-ce que la relation entre la 'diversification' de l'économie vers l'agriculture et le développement socio-économique des populations qui y travaillent ? À quel point cette 'diversification' de l'économie est-elle un instigateur des conflits de terre ? Avec cet épisode historique de négociations autour de la nouvelle Loi de la Terre comme arrière-plan, j'ai pu étudier les différents acteurs de cet épisode afin de trouver des réponses à ces interrogations.

I. Méthodes et démarches

Afin de mieux saisir les continuités historiques, j'ai décidé d'aborder la période de 1960 à nos jours. Cette période correspond au moment où le Portugal a commencé à mettre en place un système qui permettait plus de développement endogène pour sa « province d'outre-mer » afin d'apaiser les troubles sociaux qui avaient débuté dans la colonie et d'alléger le poids financier qu'elle représentait pour la métropole. C'est en particulier à partir de ce changement de stratégie que nous pouvons constater l'évolution de la place et de l'importance de la paysannerie dans le modèle de production économique du secteur agricole. Le Portugal appuyait la production paysanne pour nourrir les populations, gagner des bénéfices via les droits de douane et des impôts, et d'attirer l'investissement étranger dans le secteur agricole (Messiant 2006 : 70-71). En même temps, les producteurs endogènes étaient fortement contrôlés dans l'intérêt de donner un avantage compétitif aux producteurs colons. J'ai donc suivi le projet de reconstruction des espaces ruraux de l'Indépendance jusqu'à nos jours. Le suivi des différents acteurs actifs dans ce processus a servi de grille d'analyse des acteurs permettant de comprendre les relations entre le nouveau gouvernement et les populations rurales à une échelle à la fois macro (national), méso (provincial) et micro (local). Par ailleurs, cette analyse avait l'avantage de présenter soixante ans d'histoire contemporaine, avec une insistance particulière sur les quinze années depuis la promulgation de la nouvelle Loi de La Terre.

L'approche méthodologique propose une démarche progressive et sur différents niveaux, à l'échelle territoriale, administrative, et sociale. L'étude empirique analyse les visions grandioses du projet de reconstruction des espaces ruraux conçues par le président José Eduardo dos Santos et ses conseillers les plus proches. L'analyse

mésos se concentre sur la province de Huíla. Cette province a été choisie pour quatre raisons. Elle a la plus grande population rurale en nombre absolu comparée aux autres provinces, elle a des pratiques traditionnelles d'agriculture et d'élevage de bétail qui diversifient son économie rurale, elle a servi de base logistique pour des organisations humanitaires en raison de sa stabilité relative pendant la guerre civile, et elle est marquée par un historique de tensions envers le gouvernement central de Luanda. Du point de vue local, l'analyse micro se focalise sur les Gambos. Cet espace géographique est important, car un suivi de sa trajectoire historique d'engagement avec des acteurs non-étatiques et les populations locales révèle l'émergence du premier réseau informel sur les questions liées à la terre *O Consórcio de terras de Huíla* (Réseau de Terre d'Huíla) qui s'est transformé ensuite dans le réseau national *Rede Terra* (Réseau de la Terre). Après ces événements, les acteurs locaux des Gambos ont vécu eux-mêmes des conflits liés à la terre et tout particulièrement à l'eau. La stratégie de défense de leurs intérêts et l'accumulation de leur capacité d'agir (*agency*) constituent l'étude de cas au niveau local.

À l'origine, je suis parti de l'hypothèse que la création de la *Rede Terra* était la preuve d'une agitation sociale parmi les populations rurales, liée aux conflits de la terre poussés par la volonté du gouvernement de « diversifier » l'économie vers le secteur agricole. L'organisation non gouvernementale (ONG) *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente*, (ADRA, Action pour le développement rural et environnemental), qui est l'ONG la plus importante et la plus expérimentée sur les questions de développement rural, a produit une étude spécifique qui a servi de catalyseur à mon projet d'étude. Intitulée « *Pesquisa sobre Diferendos e Conflitos de Terras e as Formas da sua Resolução* » (Étude sur les différends et les conflits de terres et leurs formes de résolution), elle semblait annoncer l'existence d'une révolte rurale « organisée » et « visible » qui devrait être traitée comme une « urgence » (Santos & Zacarias 2010 : 13). Je voulais comprendre davantage la source de ces dynamiques sociales, en particulier comment la population rurale, pourtant très marginalisée, avait pu s'organiser de cette façon. Mais, mon étude sur le terrain durant l'été 2017 a dévoilé la réalité : un tel mouvement social rural n'existait pas. Ce constat a fait basculer mon projet d'étude, mais il représentait aussi un apprentissage de grande importance et une clé d'analyse : toujours prendre en compte le risque de biais provenant de l'enquêteur (moi) aussi bien que de l'enquêté, les agents ou les organisations qui sont des parties intéressées (*stakeholders*) sur le terrain. Après mon retour en France, j'ai réfléchi aux réalités vécues en tant qu'observateur externe de la situation. J'ai pris la décision de réorienter mon approche et de questionner « pour quoi » les populations rurales semblaient ne pas se manifester pour défendre leur terre et leurs moyens traditionnels d'existence face à une menace constante d'instabilité. Malgré cette réorientation, mon étude sur le terrain restait pertinente et révélatrice, car les difficultés d'organisation auxquelles sont confrontées les populations rurales servaient de fil rouge tout au long de mes enquêtes et de mes recherches sur place.

L'étude de terrain était conçue autour de cet épisode de *Rede Terra* et ses acteurs. Je cherchais à vérifier l'existence d'une « organisation sociale » rurale pour ensuite interroger ses motivations et ses capacités quantitative et qualitative de mobilisation. C'est pour cette raison que je me suis rapproché d'abord de la *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, la confédération des associations et des coopératives d'Angola), pour les acteurs économiques ruraux et de la *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Unité technique de coordination de l'aide humanitaire) pour les ONG. J'ai ensuite questionné les ONG et les acteurs sur place qui se trouvaient dans la littérature autour de la formation de *Rede*

Au départ, j'avais l'intention de réaliser des entretiens directement avec les communautés rurales qui faisaient partie de cette mobilisation civique de *Rede Terra* ou qui étaient assistées par les ONG. Cependant, l'UNACA a fait obstacle tout accès aux coopératives et aux associations paysannes. Les responsables de l'UNACA n'ont pas « empêché » mon accès physiquement, mais ils n'ont pas donné leur accord pour rencontrer les paysans des coopératives et des associations. Je ne les ai donc pas contactés afin de ne pas provoquer des conséquences négatives ultérieures pour eux, surtout en contexte d'élections présidentielles. Je n'ai donc pas pu approcher les populations rurales dans la Huíla et aux Gambos. La présence de voix rurales locales dans cette étude aurait considérablement enrichi mon analyse et mon argumentation, mais le déroulement difficile sur place n'était ni prévu ni voulu. C'est pour cette raison que j'ai mis l'accent sur une analyse triangulaire entre le parti-État et ses institutions, les populations rurales en général, toujours au pluriel pour démontrer le caractère hétérogène de ces populations, et les impacts des acteurs non étatiques nationaux et internationaux. Par ailleurs, avec le faible développement de la société civile angolaise, tout particulièrement en milieu rural, cette approche semblait la plus appropriée.

Cette étude pluridisciplinaire est alimentée par les domaines de la sociologie, de l'économie, l'histoire, l'anthropologie et les sciences politiques. C'est la **recherche exploratoire** qui définit le développement rural selon les autorités et les programmes mis en place par les institutions, ainsi que les formes de la capacité d'agir (*agency*) investies par les populations rurales. C'est la **recherche analytique** qui approfondit les points de convergence entre le gouvernement et la périphérie dans le domaine social et économique. C'est la **recherche évolutive** qui interroge sur la politique de développement de la paysannerie et son intégration au secteur formel d'agriculture depuis l'époque coloniale. C'est la **recherche multidimensionnelle et à différents degrés** qui analyse les rapports du pouvoir entre l'État « par le haut » et la société civile engagée « par le bas » au niveau national, provincial et local.

Le but de cette recherche était donc multiple : combler une lacune dans les connaissances et préciser les savoirs acquis. Je me suis donc engagé dans un projet de thèse visant à combler un vide en matière d'information sur l'évolution du développement socio-économique dans les espaces ruraux, mais aussi dans la proposition d'une lecture critique permettant d'interpréter les caractéristiques des enjeux liés au développement du secteur agricole, notamment en lien avec le gouvernement et son « abandon stratégique » des populations rurales. À l'heure actuelle, relativement peu d'études existent spécifiquement sur la relation entre le MPLA, les populations rurales et les espaces périphériques dans le domaine du développement socio-économique. C'est pour cette raison que cette recherche s'est organisée autour d'une approche pluri-territoriale, afin de mieux explorer comment cette relation se construit à différents niveaux : national, provincial en Huíla, et local dans les Gambos. Par ailleurs, beaucoup de travaux en Angola se concentrent sur des analyses des élites dans la société, ce qui se justifie étant donné l'extrême influence et pouvoir que cette petite partie de la population joue dans le pays. Cette étude a aussi creusé ces questions, mais son apport est, je crois, d'avoir cherché à dévoiler les capacités d'action de la population civile, en particulier des populations les plus marginalisées.

Cela ne signifie pas que d'autres travaux n'existent pas. C'est pour cette raison qu'une synthèse de l'existant me semblait nécessaire, d'autant plus avec le manque généralisé d'études et de données fiables sur le sujet. Dans un pays où l'appareil administratif est à peine présent dans les espaces ruraux au niveau local, les chercheurs sont obligés de trouver des méthodes novatrices pour étudier les dynamiques sociales dans ces espaces périphériques. En raison du manque relatif d'études scientifiques sur le sujet, j'ai mené une recherche afin de collecter un maximum de travaux de « littérature grise » des ONG, des rapports gouvernementaux, des institutions internationales de développement et de finances et leurs agences. Le but général de ce projet était donc de rassembler les connaissances acquises à titre qualitatif et quantitatif. Cela pourrait aider d'autres chercheurs à trouver les sources et les informations nécessaires pour fonder ou approfondir leurs propres projets d'étude. Cette thèse contient peut-être plus de pages que d'habitude. Cette volonté de rassembler des recherches produites sur le sujet dans le même document en est la raison principale.

II. Théorie et organisation

Après mon retour en France et à la suite d'une réflexion sur mes entretiens et sur la réalité observée sur place, j'ai été très marqué par le phénomène d'absence là où j'avais cherché l'activité. En conséquence, je me suis engagé dans une réorientation qui exigeait une réorganisation de mes idées. J'ai commencé alors à creuser cette idée d'« abandon » qui réapparaissait souvent dans la littérature et qui était très prégnante sur le terrain. Ces observations m'ont mené à formuler la thèse de l'« abandon stratégique ».

L'étude est inspirée par une perspective marxiste de l'économie politique entre des groupes sociaux, spécialement la paysannerie, mais point forcément des « classes ». Cette approche est appuyée par une théorie d'écologie politique de la « pénurie structurelle » proposée par Colin Kahl dans son ouvrage *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World* (2006). Kahl « a identifié deux voies alternatives causales 'stato-centrique' de la pénurie des ressources en conflit violent interne : les hypothèses de l'État failli et l'exploitation par l'État » (Urdal 2011 : 4). En combinant populations, pénurie des ressources naturelles, et conflit violent, l'approche modifiée de l'écologie politique a formé la base de ces deux hypothèses. À la suite de cette perspective, des effets secondaires apparaissent catégorisés sur deux niveaux. Le premier inclut la pénurie des ressources renouvelables, la marginalisation économique et les changements démographiques. Pour le second, les effets constituent une augmentation de la doléance sociale et la faiblesse de l'État (Woodrow 2000 : 175). Deux autres variables, le « groupement » et l'« inclusivité institutionnelle » déterminent quels pays seront susceptibles de traverser des conflits liés à l'exploitation par l'État. Le « groupement » fait référence à la probabilité de l'émergence des efforts de mobilisation sociale, ce qui dépend du niveau de division des populations selon les différences ethno-raciales, religieuses, et selon les classes. L'« inclusivité institutionnelle » concerne la mesure selon laquelle « une gamme diverse d'acteurs sociaux ont la capacité d'influencer le gouvernement et, en particulier, l'exécutif » (Kahl 2006 : 25-27).

Avec un État faible au centre de l'analyse, Kahl a formulé une branche théorique en écologie politique basée sur une « pénurie structurelle » des ressources produite par des facteurs politiques et pas par des facteurs naturels. Cette théorie trouve ses origines dans les théories de la production des conflits causée par la croissance

démographique et la dégradation des ressources naturelles proposée notamment par Thomas Homer-Dixon, et la théorie de l'économie néoclassique. Dans la théorie de Thomas Homer-Dixon, le concept de « marginalisation écologique » représente une clé importante. Selon son postulat, la croissance démographique pousse certaines parties subalternes de la population dans des espaces marginalisés et peu productifs. Dans les espaces ruraux angolais, ce processus se déroule à côté des populations rurales, atteintes directement par les solutions économiques néo-classiques proposées par le gouvernement. La pensée économique néo-classique réfute la théorie de Homer-Dixon car elle considère que l'évolution de la connaissance scientifique et de la technologie peut répondre aux besoins essentiels de la population mondiale. Dans le secteur agricole angolais, cette mentalité est ancrée dans l'idéologie politique du gouvernement qui considère la « modernisation » et l'industrialisation du secteur comme la solution ultime. Cela s'est traduit principalement par la construction de sept fermes étatiques agro-industrielles, construites et financées par les Chinois.

Cependant, la gestion gouvernementale de ces fermes s'est très mal déroulée, avec une perturbation institutionnelle importante pendant ces années fondamentales d'installation. Conçu comme la solution à la production agricole nationale par le régime de José Eduardo dos Santos, l'investissement de centaines de millions de dollars investis n'a que très peu promu la paysannerie qui représente la source principale de la production agricole dans le pays. Par ailleurs, la création de ces fermes sur les terres fertiles a poussé les populations rurales vers des terres encore plus marginalisées et moins fertiles. Cela prouve certains aspects de la théorie de Thomas Homer-Dixon, tandis que la présence des fermes agro-industrielles symbolise la croyance économique néo-classique des solutions supposées de la supériorité technologique.

Ces deux théories apportent des éclaircissements importants sur les dynamiques du milieu rural angolais, mais elles passent à côté de certains éléments nécessaires à une meilleure compréhension de la réalité sur le terrain. La théorie d'écologie politique proposée par Colin Kahl apporte des réponses sur certains points fondamentaux. En ce qui concerne la théorie de Thomas Homer-Dixon, plutôt que se concentrer sur la croissance économique et la dégradation environnementale comme source principale des conflits, l'écologie politique met l'accent sur le besoin de se concentrer plus sur les aspects historiques et les origines structurelles des inégalités sociales. La dégradation et la rareté des ressources naturelles sont deux éléments à considérer, mais une analyse sociohistorique depuis l'époque coloniale expose les vraies racines de la position marginalisée de la paysannerie dans le système économique conçue d'abord par les colonisateurs portugais puis poursuivie par le gouvernement autoritaire angolais. L'idéologie de ce dernier adhère à la théorie économique néo-classique. Or, cette théorie seule ne prend pas en compte les décisions prises par des intérêts purement politiques.

Mon projet d'étude se réfère à la théorie de Kahl sous le constat que cet « abandon » est en réalité la stratégie choisie par le gouvernement pour conserver sa domination sur des espaces où sa présence est la plus faible. En raison de cette faiblesse, cette domination s'exerce d'une façon indirecte, mais clairement formulée. Je postule donc que le gouvernement a manœuvré dans une position de domination politique dans les espaces périphériques par une stratégie délibérée de contrôle systématique des ressources qui circulent dans ces espaces. Cependant, une originalité de mon approche étudie les « ressources » contrôlées par cette politique bien au-delà des simples

ressources naturelles. Elle vise plutôt toutes les ressources mobilisables. Les ressources physiques, naturelles, administratives, financières, symboliques et idéologiques sont toutes contrôlées par cette stratégie de domination des espaces ruraux. Cette approche m'a permis de mettre l'accent sur les causes et les effets des décisions politiques du gouvernement envers les populations rurales.

Cette posture du gouvernement servait à la fois à contrôler le développement des acteurs économiques ruraux, la paysannerie, mais aussi à fortifier une stratégie de renouvellement du pouvoir politique et économique dans les périphéries par le biais d'une pratique de clientélisme avec une segmentation spécifique d'acteurs économiques, une nouvelle bourgeoisie rurale, fidèle aux autorités. Dans l'espace géographique où l'influence et la présence du gouvernement sont les plus faibles, le fil théorique principal est donc l'articulation d'une « privation de ressources » vécue par la paysannerie, orchestré par des facteurs politiques. Les motivations derrière cette stratégie du gouvernement sont des calculs politiques conçus par un parti-État résolu au maintien du contrôle sur les moyens de production et l'accumulation des ressources dans le milieu rural.

Ce deuxième constat est important à souligner dans la thèse de l'« abandon stratégique », car il délivre la preuve qu'une stratégie de développement a bien été employée par le gouvernement. Cependant, les investissements sont dirigés selon une idéologie forte de la modernisation et de la commercialisation du secteur agricole, un secteur qui ne concerne qu'une petite minorité de la population rurale. La source principale de la production agricole dans le pays, la paysannerie, ne bénéficie pas de ces investissements. L'« abandon stratégique » porte une double intention : contenir la croissance d'une paysannerie difficile à contrôler et soutenir, d'une manière directe et indirecte, l'émergence des quelques fermes-ranchs et des éleveurs de bétail « modernisés » qui restent sous la main des acteurs politiques.

Ces actions reflètent des pratiques d'un État « prédateur » qui manipule les biens publics au profit d'une minorité d'élites sociales qui ont un accès direct aux leviers du pouvoir d'État. Les politiques économiques rurales sont conçues autour d'un discours de la « diversification » de l'économie, destinée à la modernisation et la commercialisation du secteur agricole. En réalité, ce secteur ne représente que 8 % de la terre cultivée et constitue 3% de l'emploi dans le secteur (IFC 2019 : 45). Les bénéficiaires de cette supposée « diversification » sont

« essentiellement les leaders du MPLA, les membres actuels et anciens du gouvernement, les officiers haut placés, les membres de l'armée et les hommes d'affaires – bref, tous les groupes sociaux liés aux élites au pouvoir ou en formation (ou au moins ceux qui savent comment contourner les institutions compétentes » (Pacheco 2000 : 4).

La promotion socio-économique de la paysannerie ne figure pas dans ces politiques. En réalité, elle est défavorisée par une pratique décrite par René Lemarchand comme « la politique de la pénurie » (Lemarchand 1980). Autrement dit, l'économie politique rurale est délibérément guidée par un motif « d'abandon stratégique » de la paysannerie.

Cette approche théorique et ce plan de recherche sont soulignés par trois études de cas, scindés en sept

chapitres, divisés en trois parties. L'introduction présente une mise en perspective de l'étude. Elle propose une définition aux termes utilisés (la domination, l'*agency* politique, la société civile, l'organisation non-gouvernementale (ONG), l'organisation de la société civile (OSC), les acteurs non-étatiques (ANE), le réseau) et les acteurs clés (la paysannerie, l'UNACA, le MPLA, l'UTCAH, et les institutions publiques), ainsi qu'une justification du choix géographique des Gambos et de la province de Huíla en tant que laboratoire d'organisation sociale et lieu de création du premier réseau de la terre. L'étude sur le terrain dans ces espaces était la clé pour recueillir des documents originaux non-publiés sur cette expérience.

La collecte de ces informations fut vitale car les données officielles sur les espaces ruraux sont rares et peu crédibles. En particulier, l'information sur l'économie rurale est extrêmement désorganisée. En 2015, le Centre d'études et de recherches scientifiques (CEIC) de l'Université Catholique d'Angola a souligné que les politiques de développement rural ne peuvent pas atteindre un minimum de qualité sans connaître l'identité et les caractéristiques des producteurs ruraux (CEIC 2015 : 87). Les institutions considérées les plus fiables, comme la Banque mondiale (BM) et l'Organisation internationale pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO) dépendent souvent elles aussi des données officielles (CEIC 2012 : 77 ; Pacheco, *et al.* 2013 : 314). Les lacunes scientifiques décrites justifient le besoin de l'étude. Les démarches méthodologiques étaient choisies en fonction de cette réalité. Dans le but de combler ces lacunes, j'ai choisi de mener des entretiens semi-directifs avec les acteurs actifs sur le terrain, de collecter et comparer un maximum d'études des ONG, des institutions internationales, et du gouvernement, et de réviser minutieusement l'histoire de la relation entre l'état et la paysannerie.

La première partie contient les deux premiers chapitres. La perspective historique du secteur agricole et la paysannerie est centrée sur son rôle dans la construction des espaces ruraux depuis l'époque coloniale jusqu'à nos jours. L'accent est mis sur le contrôle tardif de l'occupation physique du territoire, finalement achevé en 1922 (Broadhead 1992 : 19). La stratégie coloniale de contrôle territorial fut conduite avec l'aide d'entreprises et de capitaux étrangers, qui sont demeurés influents après l'indépendance.² Des épisodes de continuité rythment ces deux périodes dans les questions sociales, économiques et la gouvernance. Le deuxième chapitre s'appuie sur cette histoire pour présenter l'argument théorique. Les concepts clés qui forment la base théorique de cette étude sont le pouvoir, la capacité d'agir (*agency*), et la distribution des ressources. La compilation des théories de l'économie néoclassique, des néo-malthusiens dirigé par Thomas Homer-Dixon et de l'écologie politique conçue par Colin Kahl prépare le terrain des preuves présentées dans les chapitres suivants.

La deuxième partie est divisée en trois chapitres. Le premier dévoile les essais de l'institutionnalisation des espaces ruraux après l'indépendance, y compris ceux du parti d'opposition UNITA. La transition incomplète de la période du « marxisme-léninisme » vers une économie néolibérale explique certaines incohérences dans la politique économique depuis l'indépendance, combinée avec la guerre civile prolongée. Après la guerre civile, le gouvernement a choisi de poursuivre la reconstruction nationale essentiellement sans assistance extérieure. Une telle collaboration, comme celle décrite par l'étude organisée par le FAO, USAID et l'Union européenne *New*

² Voir Tableau 3 – Key foreign companies in agricultural commercialization, §1.1.6 et §1.3.2.

Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) de 2005³, aurait rendu nécessaire une supervision considérée comme inacceptable par le gouvernement sorti récemment victorieux de la guerre civile. Les grands investissements publics effectués dans le domaine du secteur agricole (Société du développement des périmètres irrigués (SOPIR), le Programme de Restructuration du système logistique et la distribution des produits essentiels pour la population (PRESILD, les chaînes des supermarchés « Nosso Super » et « Poupa Lá », le Programme d'acquisition des produits agricoles (PAPAGRO)) sont tous décrits et leurs défauts analysés. Ce chapitre révèle qu'un manque de ressources financières n'était pas à la source d'un secteur agricole dysfonctionnel. La question réside plutôt dans la faible capacité technique, logistique, et organisationnelle du gouvernement. L'analyse de l'instabilité du ministère de l'Agriculture et ses huit reformulations entre 1991 et 2020 révèle cette instabilité et ses différentes visions.⁴

Le chapitre quatre examine l'internationalisation de la campagne et l'équilibre du pouvoir à la suite de la guerre et les efforts de reconstruction qui ont suivi. Les différentes organisations qui appuient la société civile sont divisées et analysées en sept groupes : (1) les ONG nationales, (2) les ONG internationales, (3) les organisations religieuses, (4) les médias, (5) les syndicats et des organisations professionnelles, (6) les réseaux thématiques, et (7) les ONGs « des élites de base »⁵. Les collaborations créées pendant cette période parmi ces acteurs étaient importantes dans leur soutien à l'émergence des acteurs de la société civile et des organisations endogènes, qui sont aussi analysés. Les influences (militaire, financière, économique, politique, sociale et organisationnelle) de ces acteurs étrangers ont eu des effets profonds sur la relation entre le gouvernement et la population. Certains partenariats institutionnels comme le FMI, la Banque mondiale et la Commission européenne ont facilité cette convergence. Au moment même où le gouvernement devait collaborer avec certains, il a dû restreindre d'autres acteurs (le secteur des ONG et des OSC) afin de garantir sa domination politique.

Le chapitre cinq commence par le suivi des études de cas avec une explication sur la situation des tensions autour de la question de la terre et les intérêts différents entre les acteurs qui y travaillent. Il développe le contexte du cas de *Rede Terra*, qui fait le lien délicat entre la société civile au sens large, le gouvernement et les conflits autour de la terre. Cette étude de cas national met aussi en évidence le développement de la société civile rurale dans la province spécifique de la Huíla, où elle prépare le terrain également à la troisième étude de cas dans les Gambos. *Rede Terra* se concentre sur l'histoire du développement du secteur des ONG et l'importance de la terre dans un pays en pleine transition sociale et économique au sortir de la guerre. Le réseau essaie de révéler leurs capacités organisationnelles pour s'engager directement avec le gouvernement autoritaire et l'influence relative de la population pendant cette période. Malgré des efforts sans précédent, le bilan de ce moment reste très marginal. Le chapitre précédent (quatre) sur l'internationalisation des espaces ruraux met en évidence le contexte inédit de cette participation étrangère dans son contexte national, vu l'importance des organisations et des donateurs étrangers dans l'histoire de la formation de *Rede Terra*.

Les chapitres six et sept constituent la troisième partie. Le chapitre six examine de plus près les mécanismes

³ Voir §3.3.1 Decision time: Diversify or double down

⁴ Voir Tableau 19 – Evolution of the Ministry of Agriculture

⁵ En anglais, «grassroots elite NGOs »

de la domination par l'« abandon stratégique » de la paysannerie par le gouvernement. Le chapitre commence par la succession des restrictions imposées aux ONG depuis la guerre civile qui réduisent leur capacité d'intervenir auprès des populations. Il aborde par la suite le rôle de l'UNACA et sa politique de « capture » des coopératives et des associations paysannes. Les faiblesses structurelles de l'UNACA sont ainsi présentées, spécialement les difficultés du processus administratif produit par la bureaucratie et les problèmes de paiement des agents. La présence directe de l'État dans le secteur agricole est ensuite élargie pour démontrer à quel point l'intervention du gouvernement dans l'économie agraire est dominante, mais très inefficace. Cette inefficacité est montrée plus largement dans le deuxième cas d'étude sur les fermes agro-industrielles construites par les Chinois et financées par des emprunts avec la Chine.

En collaboration avec les autres compagnies publiques présentes, ce cas a été sélectionné afin de montrer qu'une stratégie d'investissement dans l'économie agraire était bien mise en place au niveau national. Il se concentre exclusivement sur les motivations et la vision du gouvernement sur sa stratégie de développement rural. Elle révèle les (in)capacités du gouvernement à mener une politique cohérente dans les périphéries. Comme j'ai essayé de le démontrer, le système était conçu pour positionner l'État-parti directement dans la partie productive de la chaîne de production agricole et pour ne prendre en compte que très secondairement la production potentielle des paysans. D'ailleurs, l'incompétence et la faible institutionnalisation de l'État ont mis en péril ces investissements aux conséquences fondamentales pour le futur du secteur agricole.

Le chapitre six se termine avec la troisième étude de cas qui montre une réalité vécue au niveau local dans les Gambos avec le projet de développement local du Père Pio. Cet épisode révèle les dynamiques en jeu dans un conflit autour des ressources, conflit encore une fois provoqué par la politique et point par ses causes naturelles, bien qu'elles existent aussi notamment à cause de la sécheresse. Cette étude de cas me semblait intéressante à inclure par la grande diversité d'acteurs qui furent mobilisés autour de ce conflit : les populations locales, les acteurs religieux, les pouvoirs traditionnels, les organisations de la société civile, les moyens de communication (presse, radio), l'administration locale et provinciale, et les éleveurs de bétail qui représentent cette nouvelle économie agraire « moderne » considérée comme la nouvelle bourgeoisie rurale. Bien que cette étude de cas ne puisse pas à elle-seule être représentative des conflits de la terre en Angola, elle montre bien la complexité de ces événements et les divers acteurs et enjeux sur le terrain. Il s'agit donc d'un exemple intéressant pour interroger ensuite toute la gamme des acteurs à l'œuvre dans des cas similaires.

Le chapitre sept se concentre sur la transition entre l'administration de José Eduardo dos Santos et de João Lourenço, le nouveau président. Il commence par l'étude des indicateurs de développement socio-économique d'Angola sous l'administration de Dos Santos entre 2000 et 2018. Par la suite, l'évolution du secteur agricole est analysée pour la même période qui montre la très faible part de la terre cultivée mécaniquement (3%), la petite présence de la terre sous production commerciale (8%), la présence encore dominante de la paysannerie dans la production nationale (80%)⁶. Suite à ces constats, la transition du pouvoir et l'arrivée du président Lourenço sont

⁶ Voir Tableau 34 – Select indicators of the evolution and state of agricultural sector

au centre de l'analyse du dernier chapitre. Un suivi des inflexions avec son prédécesseur confirme un changement fondamental dans la privatisation de 25 entreprises publiques actives dans l'agro-industrie, y compris les fermes construites par les chinois⁷. Cependant, le « nouvel » agenda politique confirme des continuités importantes dans la marginalisation de la paysannerie malgré le renouvellement du discours de diversification de l'économie vers le secteur agricole. La volonté de sortir l'État de l'économie rurale semble en marche, mais les ressources disponibles continuent de favoriser très majoritairement la nouvelle bourgeoisie rurale qui occupe le secteur commercial⁸.

III. Résultats

Ce projet d'étude a débuté à la recherche d'un mouvement social rural qui existait sur le papier, mais pas dans les faits. La réorientation de ce travail a permis d'étudier l'origine d'une absence là où nous recherchions une activité. Cette étude a réussi à démontrer, je l'espère, comment on peut analyser les rapports de pouvoir entre l'État en Afrique et ses populations rurales et le secteur agricole en toile de fond. Le secteur agricole a été identifié comme le lien le plus concret entre le gouvernement et la paysannerie, étant donné que l'appareil administratif est quasi absent au niveau local, hors des villes principales dans les provinces. Les ressources pétrolières du pays ont permis au gouvernement de procéder à une construction illibérale de l'État périphérique sans la pression traditionnelle de la communauté internationale marginalisée par l'émergence de ressources financières alternatives (Soares de Oliveira 2011 : 288). Ce manque de pression extérieure permet une perspective unique des motivations endogènes du gouvernement pour mettre en place son agenda de reconstruction. La désarticulation complète d'un secteur agricole jadis robuste a servi d'objet idéal pour analyser les influences derrière les stratégies de sa reconstruction. Une contribution de cette recherche aux études africaines, aura été de dévoiler des stratégies autoritaires de contrôle des espaces ruraux en Angola qui pourront ensuite être comparées ailleurs dans la région.

En tant que dirigeant du gouvernement, le MPLA a toujours cherché à créer le mythe d'un parti tout-puissant qui n'a pas seulement garanti l'indépendance du pays et ainsi assuré sa révolution « socialiste », mais qui a aussi réussi à se positionner comme l'entité indispensable pour le futur du peuple angolais. Le milieu rural n'a pas bénéficié de cette vision de reconstruction. Cette étude a donc creusé la source des disparités géographiques afin de démontrer comment le gouvernement a systématiquement bloqué, intimidé et affaibli les opportunités de développement socio-économique de la paysannerie. La stratégie prédatrice du MPLA dans sa quête de la domination des espaces périphériques est multiforme, allant au-delà des actions rentières traditionnelles.

Cette stratégie était principalement conçue autour de la politique agricole qui a abandonné la source majeure de production dans le pays. L'investissement effectif est destiné soit à des entreprises publiques peu efficaces, soit à des fermes étatiques agro-industrielles construites par les Chinois, soit aux programmes de « modernisation » et commercialisation. Dans les trois cas, la paysannerie ne reçoit que très peu de bénéfices, bien qu'elle cultive plus de 90% des terres fertiles du pays. Cet investissement est donc réservé à une petite minorité de producteurs ou de groupes d'entrepreneurs qui représentent aujourd'hui une nouvelle « bourgeoisie » rurale. Avec le soutien du

⁷ Voir Tableau 39 – List of public companies linked to the agricultural sector set for privatization

⁸ Voir Tableau 37 – 2017-2018 budgeting for principal agricultural programs

gouvernement, ce groupe joue un double rôle. La priorité principale est de mettre en œuvre la modernisation du secteur par la capture des rentes agricoles. En outre, cette action va contrôler le développement de la paysannerie et ainsi éviter l'émergence d'une compétition avec l'hégémonie politique du gouvernement autoritaire au milieu rural.

Je crois avoir démontré les rapports de pouvoir qui existent entre le gouvernement, les populations rurales et les politiques conçues pour le développement du secteur agricole. La marginalisation systématique des paysans reste très ancrée. En outre, la présence forte, mais extrêmement dégradée de l'État, vestige de sa période « socialiste » et son retour par les fermes agro-industrielles, est une entrée clé pour comprendre les choix politiques qui alimentent le secteur. Sa domination et sa participation à la chaîne entière de production du secteur agricole sont réalisées à travers les entreprises étatiques (l'infrastructure d'irrigation des terres via *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento dos Perímetros Irrigados* (SOPIR, Société de développement des périmètres irrigués), la production industrielle produite par les sept fermes étatiques construites par les chinois, la distribution et la commercialisation des biens alimentaires de la main du *Programa de Reestruturação do Sistema de Logística e de Distribuição de Produtos Essenciais à População* (PRESILD, Programme de restructuration du système logistique et de distribution de produits essentiels à la population) et finalement le contrôle sur le main-d'œuvre rurale et l'organisation sociale à travers l'UNACA.

Au-delà du secteur agricole, l'investissement public dans les secteurs de la santé et de l'éducation reste aussi très faible. Depuis 1996, le budget du secteur de la santé n'a jamais atteint 7% du budget annuel et celui de l'éducation n'a jamais dépassé 9%⁹. Ce sous-investissement a plus d'effets négatifs dans les espaces ruraux, renforcés par les difficultés intrinsèques imposées par la géographie. Plutôt que d'augmenter ses investissements dans ces secteurs clés des services publics, le gouvernement a largement laissé ces responsabilités aux organisations non gouvernementales. Cependant, la présence continue des ONG représentait un fournisseur des ressources extra-gouvernementales difficiles à surveiller. En conséquence, les autorités se sont lancées en même temps dans un processus de restrictions des activités de ces mêmes organisations, ce qui a affaibli leur capacité d'assistance aux populations. Ces restrictions ont imposé une autre série de « privatisation des ressources » des rares organisations qui sont restées sur place. Avec ce dernier acte, la paysannerie était effectivement définitivement abandonnée à son sort.

J'insiste à l'issue de ce travail : le temps est venu de cesser de tenir le discours d'un gouvernement bienveillant envers le milieu rural, mais incapable de soutenir la paysannerie par manque de ressources financières ou par manque de connaissances techniques ou savoir-faire. Tous ces manques font partie de la réalité, mais leur existence et persistance sont en grande partie des choix politiques.

IV. Ouverture

Je suis conscient que mon travail ne représente qu'une très modeste contribution aux études rurales en Angola. Cependant compte tenu des lacunes scientifiques et universitaires autour du monde rural angolais, je

⁹ Voir Figure 1 – Education and health sector spending of total budget (1996-2020, as %)

considère qu'un certain nombre d'approfondissements et de pistes de recherches a été ouvert par ce travail. Pour conclure, cette recherche m'a permis de considérer de nouvelles pistes de réflexions que je souhaiterais développer dans le futur.

Tout d'abord, je souhaiterais creuser davantage certaines thématiques. Comme cette thèse était concentrée sur la province de la Huíla, grâce à l'apparition de *Consórcio de Terras de Huíla*, une étude comparative avec d'autres provinces aussi actives, comme le *Forum Terras do Kwanza Sul*, pourrait révéler d'autres dimensions autour des questions agraires et l'organisation sociale rurale. Un autre apport majeur à l'avancement de la connaissance des conflits de terre serait un projet collaboratif et interdisciplinaire afin de créer une base de données sur l'historique des conflits de terre en Angola, jusqu'à nos jours. Enfin, l'analyse institutionnelle mérite un approfondissement. La responsabilité de mise en œuvre des politiques du « développement rural » semble être divisée ou partagée parmi plusieurs institutions comme le ministère de l'Agriculture et le ministère de la Famille et de la Promotion des Femmes. Le sens même de « développement » est remis en question par cette étude qui a suivi les incohérences et les instabilités constantes concernant les politiques économiques rurales pratiquées par le gouvernement. Il serait donc important de creuser encore cette division afin de mieux comprendre qui est vraiment responsable de quoi en ce qui concerne la relation entre le gouvernement et les populations résidant dans les périphéries, y compris l'UNACA et le mouvement coopératif et associatif des paysans.

Ce sont quelques pistes que j'envisage pour poursuivre ce travail dans un domaine passionnant riche de multiples possibilités.

Outline

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	21
<i>Acronyms</i>	23
<i>Illustrations</i>	35
<i>Introduction – Walking gingerly through the hall of mirrors</i>	38
Searching for the sweet spot	40
Defining the terms	45
Identifying key actors	49
Maintaining marginal monopolies	50
A portrait in progress: The need for the research	52
Statistical voids: Rural Angola’s guessing game	57
Limiting the scope	60
Engaging the Gambos	63
Huila’s social synergies	67
Methods and measures	73
Some technical notes	76
Overcoming obstacles: A novice in a new world	78
The analytical proceedings	86
Part I – Cementing the foundation of rural Angola	91
<i>Chapter 1 - Governing a countryside in construction, a literature review</i>	92
1.1 Colonial traces and their transformations in rural Angola	92
1.1.1 The postponed push into the interior	93
1.1.2 The anthropological geography of Angolan agriculture	98
1.1.3 Native production: Favored while forced	100
1.1.4 Financial dictatorship recuperating revenue	104
1.1.5 The stars align on Angola’s agriculture	105
1.1.6 Foreign assistance and outsourcing administration	108
1.1.7 Cash crops and the transformative power of the coffee bean	112
1.2 Mutations of rural marginalization	117
1.2.1 Trends in continuity: Governance	119
1.2.2 Trends in continuity: Economic	121
1.2.3 Trends in continuity: Social	124
1.2.4 ‘Socialist’ organizing: Cooperatives and associations	126
1.2.5 Social organizing: NGOS, CSOs, and religious institutions	129
1.3 Rebuilding the Periphery	136
1.3.1 Selective emulation of colonial inheritance	136
1.3.2 ‘Socialist’ ideals meet capitalist realities	138
1.3.3 Rural power struggles: tradition meets modernity	141
1.3.4 Customary rights and conflicts of interest	148
1.3.5 Leveraging rural interests	152
<i>Chapter 2 – Power, agency & resource distribution: a theoretical review</i>	155

2.1 Power and agency: the unique socio-economic geography of Angola.....	156
2.1.1 Establishing authority: monopoly of violence.....	159
2.1.2 From State to human security.....	165
2.1.3 The consolidation of political power.....	169
2.1.4 People power: The Quest for agency.....	173
2.1.5 Rede Terra and resource mobilization.....	177
2.2 Authoritarian transitions, rent capture, and resource distribution	180
2.2.1 Neoclassical economics confront neo-Malthusians.....	182
2.2.2 Ecological marginalization driven by market forces and domestic politics, not population growth.....	185
2.2.3 Engineering resource scarcity.....	187
2.2.4 Political transitions & electoral fights.....	190
2.2.5 Reacting to resource scarcity: a sliding scale.....	191
2.3 Setting the scene for rural political economy.....	193
2.3.1 An Evolution of Development Paradigms... ..	194
2.3.2 ... informing Angola's rural political economy	196
2.3.3 Power, ideology and discourse.....	197
2.3.4 The state of agricultural employment.....	199
2.3.5 The rural-urban divide: in statistics.....	202
2.3.6 Searching for solutions.....	204
Part II – Development discord and the (re)organization of the countryside	206
<i>Chapter 3 Institutionalizing rural spaces and agriculture production.....</i>	208
3.1 Agostinho Neto's administration and colonial inheritance	208
3.1.1 Overcoming absence.....	210
3.1.2 Feeding a hungry nation	211
3.1.3 Rebuilding foundations: Infrastructure, distribution and logistics	212
3.1.4 The State takeover of the rural economy.....	215
3.1.5 'Marxism-Leninism' and the idolization of the peasantry	220
3.1.6 Sowing seeds of mistrust	229
3.2 José Eduardo dos Santos' administration amid civil war	233
3.2.1 The MPLA's reluctance to recognize private interests in rural Angola	235
3.2.2 'Protecting the revolution': Consolidating state power over the rural economy	237
3.2.3 Public-private (dis)incentives: Acquiescing to economic realities	240
3.2.4 A peripheral model emerges: Domination through delegation.....	244
3.3 José Eduardo dos Santos administration post civil war	248
3.3.1 Decision time: diversify or double down	249
3.3.2 Going it alone: Emerging partnerships present new opportunities.....	252
3.3.3 Investing selectively.....	259
3.3.4 The many Ministries of Agriculture	265
3.3.5 The overbearing weight of the State	274
3.4 UNITA's peripheral shadow.....	276
3.4.1 Shape-shifting 'States'	277

3.4.2 Deepening the urban-rural social divide.....	279
3.4.3 Systemic sabotage and the weaponization of agriculture	280
3.4.4 Securing food security.....	282
3.4.5 The role of agriculture in DDR	283
3.4.6 A mixed lasting legacy	285
Chapter 4 Internationalization of the countryside & the shifting power balance	287
4.1 Exacerbating and alleviating civil conflict through foreign forces	288
4.1.1 The deep-seated roots of nationalist agendas.....	290
4.1.2 Shifting alliances amid the ‘Scramble for Angola’	291
4.1.3 Private security and mercenaries	294
4.2 Leveraging future experimental spaces of compromise	297
4.2.1 Reluctance to changing ‘norms’	298
4.2.2 Collaborative pushes for peace	302
4.2.3 The IMF and a push for transparency	304
4.2.4 The European Commission and the World Bank: aiding and abetting through social supports	309
4.3 Civil society finding its footing	314
4.3.1 An assist from abroad: Pioneering self-organizing initiatives.....	314
4.3.2 ‘Mass organisations’	318
4.3.3 Mass Media	320
4.3.4 Establishing the legal-rational framework	324
4.3.5 Institutional instability.....	327
4.3.6 ...creating difficult data collection	328
4.4 Between abandon and substitution: a people in limbo	346
4.4.1 New ‘participatory’ spaces	349
4.4.2 Finding a seat at the table	351
4.4.3 Coalescing civil society: the (relative) power of networks	362
4.4.4 The emergence of ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs	367
4.4.5 Setting the scene for conflictual spaces	371
Chapter 5 Colliding interests	373
5.1 Land conflicts amid rising rural tensions	373
5.1.1 The scramble for land	378
5.1.2 The need for reform: a typology of land conflicts.....	380
5.1.3 Huíla takes the lead	385
5.1.4 Building a rural land network	387
5.1.5 Colliding interests, conflicting missions	395
5.2 Rede Terra: The emergence of Angola’s first land network.....	404
5.2.1 Forming a ‘grassroots elite’ network ‘bottom-up’	405
5.2.2 Bringing the campaign to the people	407
5.2.3 Following in the footsteps of Mozambique	414
5.2.4 Victories and setbacks: Structural and strategic introspection in Angola	420
5.3 Land Law legacy	423

5.3.1 Participation or propaganda?	424
5.3.2 What rural representation?	427
5.3.3 Rede Terra's uncertain path forward	429
5.3.4 Rural dependency on urban interlocutors	434
5.3.5 Solidifying the foundations of rural agency	436
5.3.6 Fragile improvements	443
Part III – Controlling the countryside: Dominance through strategic abandon	445
Chapter 6 Rural domination through structural resource scarcity	447
6.1 NGOs get squeezed	448
6.1.1 Weaponizing legal-rational authority	449
6.1.2 Limiting the scope of foreign intervention	452
6.1.3 Stunting development through limiting spaces	458
6.2 Cutting off pathways to independent rural resource accumulation	461
6.2.1 Cooperative capture and undermining UNACA	462
6.2.2 Land conflicts destabilize the cooperative movement.....	466
6.2.3 Disincentivizing the development of rural markets	468
6.2.4 Deferred priorities	469
6.3 Rent controls & centralized development	477
6.3.1 Betting big on State farms: Chinese assistance.....	478
6.3.2 Institutional implementation	481
6.3.3 Systemic fragmentation	484
6.3.4 Mismanagement laid bare in Cunene.....	492
6.3.5 Elite access and public private partnerships	496
6.3.6 Diverting endogenous development: Padre Pio in Tchiyepepe	501
6.3.7 Dos Santos' legacy arrives to its term.....	511
Chapter 7 João Lourenço: agent of change?.....	514
7.1 Taking stock of the Dos Santos era	516
7.1.1 Evolving development indicators	517
7.1.2 Stagnating agricultural indicators.....	522
7.1.3 Security, stability and a presidential transition.....	525
7.2 João Lourenço takes the reins	533
7.2.1 Structural restraints of the presidential transition	535
7.2.2 Ruptures & Continuities: Personnel	537
7.2.3 Ruptures & Continuities: Institutions	542
7.2.4 Anti-corruption and evolving acceptability.....	547
7.2.5 Calculated risk reengaging a reinvigorated civil society	549
7.3 Ideological fractures: between resiliency and efficiency	553
7.3.1 Cementing resource deprivation	567
7.3.2 International influencers make inroads: World Bank.....	574
7.3.3 International influencers make inroads: IMF and China	578
7.4.4 A roadmap for future research.....	587
Conclusion	590

<i>Sources</i>	<i>606</i>
<i>Appendix table</i>	<i>687</i>
<i>Index</i>	<i>729</i>

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Acronyms

Acronym/ Symbol	In English	<i>Em português</i>
\$	US dollar	<i>dólar americano</i>
%	percent	<i>percentagem</i>
§	section	<i>secção</i>
#/°	number	<i>número</i>
AAA	Agricultural Adjustment Act	
AAD	Angolan Action for Development	<i>Ação Angolana para o Desenvolvimento</i>
AALM	Angola Free From Mines Association	<i>Associação Angola Livre de Minas</i>
ABIODES	Association for Sustainable Development	<i>Associação para Desenvolvimento Sustentável</i>
ACA	Angolan Civic Association	<i>Associação Cívica de Angola</i>
ACC	Association Building Communities	<i>Associação Construindo Comunidades</i>
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights	<i>Comissão Africana dos Direitos Humanos e dos Povos</i>
ACORD	Association for Cooperative Operations Research and Development	<i>Agência de Cooperação e Pesquisa para o Desenvolvimento</i>
ADPP	Humana People to People	<i>Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo</i>
ADRA	Action for Rural and Environmental Development	<i>Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente</i>
AEA	Angolan Evangelical Alliance	<i>Aliança Evangélica Angolana</i>
AfDB	African Development Bank	<i>Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento</i>
AG	Agriculture	<i>Agricultura</i>
AI	Amnesty International	<i>Amnistia Internacional</i>
AIA	Industrial Association of Angola	<i>Associação Industrial de Angola</i>
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	<i>Síndrome da Imunodeficiência Humana Adquirida</i>
AJPD	Association for Justice, Peace and Democracy	<i>Associação Justiça, Paz e Democracia</i>
ALSSA	Association of Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola	<i>Associação Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola</i>
AMEH	Association of Businesswomen in Huíla	<i>Associação das Mulheres Empresárias e de Negócio da Huíla</i>
AMRU	Rural Women's Union	<i>Associação Moçambicana para o Desenvolvimento da Mulher Rural</i>

ANASO	Angolan network of AIDS Service Organizations	<i>Rede Angolana de Organizações de Serviços de Sida</i>
ANGOP	Angola Press News Agency	<i>Agência Angola Press</i>
APDCH	Alliance for the Promotion and Development of Hoji Ya Henda	<i>Aliança para a Promoção do Desenvolvimento da Comuna do Hoji-Ya-Henda</i>
APN	Norwegian People's Aid	<i>Ajuda Popular de Noruega</i>
AAVIL	Avicultural Association of Luanda	<i>Associação dos Avicultores de Luanda</i>
BAF	British Angola Forum	<i>British Angola Fórum</i>
BDA	Development Bank of Angola	<i>Banco de Desenvolvimento de Angola</i>
BP	British Petroleum	
C&H	Cuanza Sul and Huíla Provinces	<i>Províncias de Cuanza Sul e Huíla</i>
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme	<i>Programa Compreensivo para o Desenvolvimento Agrícola Africano</i>
CACS	Councils for Civic Engagement	<i>Concelhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social</i>
CADA	Angolan Agriculture Company	<i>Companhia Angolana de Agricultura</i>
CADCO	Commission on Support and Dynamism of Cooperatives	<i>Comissão de Apoio e Dinamização de Cooperativas</i>
CAMCE	China CAMC Engineering, Ltd	
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy	<i>Política Agrícola Comum</i>
CBO	Community Based Organization	<i>Organização de base comunitária</i>
CCDH	Human Rights Coordination Council	<i>Conselho de Coordenação dos Direitos Humanos</i>
CCGSA	Cattle Breeders Cooperative of Southern Angola	<i>Cooperativa dos Criadores de Gado do Sul de Angola</i>
CCG	Center for Common Ground	
CCPE	Core Country Programme Evaluation	<i>Avaliação do programa do país</i>
CDA	Agricultural Development Centers	<i>Centros de Desenvolvimento Agrícola</i>
CDD	Community Driven Development	<i>Desenvolvimento Conduzido pela Comunidade</i>
CDPA	Centre for the Development of Angolan Partnerships	<i>Centro Para O Desenvolvimento e Parcerias de Angola</i>
CEA	Centre for African Studies	<i>Centro de Estudos Africanos</i>
CEAST	Catholic Episcopal Conference in Angola and São Tomé	<i>Conferência Episcopal de Angola e São Tomé</i>
CED	Executive Commission for Demining	<i>Comissão Executiva de Desminagem</i>

CEIC	Center of Studies and Scientific Research	<i>Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica</i>
CEIEC	China National Electronics Import & Export Corporation	
CEP	Centre for Population Studies	<i>Centro de Estudos de População</i>
CGN	Chiange Gambos Network	
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency	<i>Agência Central de Inteligência</i>
CICA	Council of Christian Churches of Angola	<i>Conselho de Igrejas Cristãs em Angola</i>
CID	Center of Information and Documentation	<i>Centro de Informação e Documentação</i>
CLUSA	Cooperative League of the United States of America	<i>Liga das Cooperativas dos Estados Unidos</i>
CMAC	Municipal Commission for Cooperative Support	<i>Comissão Municipal de Apoio à Cooperativização</i>
CMACS	Municipal Councils for Civic Engagement	<i>Concelho Municipal de Auscultação e Concertação Social</i>
CMEC	China Machinery Engineering Corporation	
CMI	Christian Michelsen Institute	<i>Instituto Christian Michelsen</i>
CMI-CEIC	Christian Michelsen Institute-Center of Studies and Scientific Investigation	<i>Christian Michelsen Instituto-Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica</i>
CNA	National Counseling Center	<i>Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento</i>
CNAC	National Commission for Cooperative Support	<i>Comissão Nacional de Apoio à Cooperativização</i>
CNE	National Electoral Commission	<i>Comissão Nacional Eleitoral</i>
CNHIDAH	Intersectoral National Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance	<i>Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária</i>
CNRTL	National Center on Textual and Lexical Resources	
CONGA	Committee of Non Governmental Organizations in Angola	<i>Comité das Organizações Não-Governamentais em Angola</i>
CPAC	Provincial Commission for Cooperative Support	<i>Comissão Provincial de Apoio à Cooperativização</i>
COIEPA	Inter-Ecclesial Committee for Peace in Angola	<i>Comité Inter-Eclesial a Paz em Angola</i>
CPACS	Provincial Councils for Civic Engagement	<i>Concelho Provincial de Auscultação e Concertação Social</i>
CSO	Civil Society Organization	<i>Organização da sociedade civil</i>
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	<i>Responsabilidade Social Corporativa</i>
COTONANG	Angolan General Cotton Company	<i>Companhia Geral dos Algodões de Angola</i>

DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration	<i>Desmobilização, desarmamento e reintegração</i>
DINAMA	National Distribution Company for Agricultural Materials	<i>Distribuidora Nacional de Materiais Agrícolas</i>
Dinaprope	National Distributor of Livestock	<i>Distribuição Nacional de Produtos Pecuário</i>
DNACA	National Director for Agricultural Cooperatives and Support of the Peasantry	<i>Direção Nacional de Cooperativização Agrícola e Apoio aos Camponeses Individuais</i>
DNAPS	National Directorate for Social Assistance and Promotion	<i>Direção Nacional de Assistência e Promoção Social</i>
DNDR	National Direction of Rural Development	<i>Direção Nacional de Desenvolvimento Rural</i>
DNOP	National Direction of the Organization of Production	<i>Direção Nacional de Organização da Produção</i>
DPRA	Democratic People's Republic of Angola	<i>República democrática popular de Angola</i>
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	<i>República Democrática do Congo</i>
DW	Development Workshop	
e.g.	for example	<i>por exemplo</i>
EC	European Commission	<i>Comissão Europeia</i>
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office	
ed.	edition	<i>edição</i>
EDA	Agricultural Development Station	<i>Estação de Desenvolvimento Agrário</i>
EDEL	Luanda Electricity Distribution Company	<i>Empresa Distribuidora da Energia de Luanda</i>
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative	<i>Iniciativa de Transparência das Indústrias</i>
ELISAL	Luanda Public Cleaning and Sanitation Company	<i>Empresa Lixadora e Saneadora de Luanda</i>
EMPA	Public Product Supply Company	<i>Empresa Pública de Abastecimento</i>
Enama	National Enterprise for Agricultural Mechanization	<i>Empresa Nacional de Mecanização Agrícola</i>
ENCODIPA	National Distribution Company for Agriculture	<i>Empresa Nacional de Comercialização e Distribuição de Produtos Agrícolas</i>
ENSAN	National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security	<i>Estratégia Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional</i>
EPAL	Public Water Company of Luanda	<i>Empresa Privadora de Águas aos Luandenses</i>
EO	Executive Outcome	
EPUNGU	Maize producers association	<i>Grémio Dos Comerciantes E Produtores De Milho De Angola</i>

ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	<i>Explosivos remanescentes de guerra</i>
ESSD	Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development	<i>Desenvolvimento Ambiental e Social Sustentáveis</i>
EU	European Union	<i>União Europeia</i>
EXT	External Affairs Department	<i>Departamento Assuntos Externos</i>
FAA	Angolan Armed Forces	<i>Forças Armadas Angolanas</i>
FADA	Agriculture Development Fund	<i>Fundo de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Agrário</i>
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	<i>Organização das Nações Unidas</i>
FAS	Social Support Fund	<i>Fundo de Apoio Social</i>
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service	<i>Serviço de Vigilância de média estrangeira</i>
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	<i>Investimento Direto Estrangeiro</i>
FESA	Eduardo dos Santos Foundation	<i>Fundação Eduardo dos Santos</i>
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning System Network	
FNLA	National Liberation Front of Angola	<i>Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola</i>
FONGA	Forum of National NGOs	<i>Foro de ONGs de Angola</i>
FRESCANGOL	Firm for the Conservation and Trading of Perishable Products	<i>Empresa Distribuidora de Produtos Perecíveis de Angola</i>
FSDEA	Sovereign Wealth Fund of Angola	<i>Fundo Soberano de Angola</i>
GAR	Support Group on Return and Resettlement	<i>Grupo de Apoio ao Regresso e Reassentamento</i>
GARP	Angolan Reflection Group for Peace	<i>Grupo Angolano de Reflexão para a Paz</i>
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade	<i>Acordo Geral sobre Tarifas e Comércio</i>
GCII	Office of Institutional Communication and Press	<i>Gabinete de Comunicação Institucional e Imprensa</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	<i>Produto Nacional Bruto</i>
GEFI	Management and Business Participation Company	<i>Sociedade de Gestão e Participações Financeiras</i>
GEPE	Cabinet for Studies, Planning and Statistics	<i>Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatística</i>
GLIF	Feminine leadership group	<i>Grupo de liderança feminina</i>
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism	<i>Organismo Geneticamente Modificado</i>
GNI	Gross National Income	<i>Rendimento Nacional Bruto</i>
GoA	Government of Angola	<i>Governo de Angola</i>
GONGO	Government-led Non-governmental Organization	<i>Organizações não governamentais dirigidas pelo governo</i>

GRN	Angola's Reconstruction Office	<i>Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional</i>
GSA	Cabinet of Food Security	<i>Gabinete de Segurança Alimentar</i>
HCG	Humanitarian Coordination Group	<i>Grupo de Coordenação Humanitária</i>
HDI	Human Development Index	<i>Índice de Desenvolvimento Humano</i>
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	<i>Vírus da Imunodeficiência Humana</i>
HRW	Human Rights Watch	
i.e.	<i>Id est</i> (Latin), in other words	
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	<i>Banco Internacional para Reconstrução e Desenvolvimento</i>
ICIJ	International Consortium of Independent Journalists	
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and States Sovereignty	<i>Comissão Internacional sobre Intervenção e Soberania Estatal</i>
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	<i>Comitê Internacional da Cruz Vermelha</i>
Ibid	<i>Ibīdem</i> (Latin), "in the same place"	
IDA	Institute of Agrarian Development	<i>Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário</i>
IDIA	Institute of Industrial Development of Angola	<i>Instituto de Desenvolvimento Industrial de Angola</i>
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	<i>Deslocados internos</i>
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	<i>Fundo Internacional de Desenvolvimento Agrícola</i>
IFC	International Finance Corporation	<i>Corporação Financeira Internacional</i>
IFE	Business Development Institute	<i>Instituto de Fomento Empresarial</i>
IFI	International Financial Institution	<i>Instituição Financeira Internacional</i>
IGAPE	Institute of Asset Management and State Holdings	<i>Instituto de Gestão de Activos do Estado</i>
ILO	International Labour Organization	<i>Organização Internacional do Trabalho</i>
INAPEM	National Institute for Support to Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises	<i>Instituto Nacional de Apoio às Micro, Pequenas e Médias Empresas</i>
INCER	National Institute of Cereals	<i>Instituto Nacional de Cereais</i>
INE	National Institute of Statistics	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i>

INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization	<i>Organização não governamental internacional</i>
IPROCAC	Institute for Community Aid Promotion and Coordination	<i>Instituto de Promoção e Coordenação da Ajuda às Comunidades</i>
IOM	International Organization for Migration	<i>Organização Internacional para as Migrações</i>
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme	<i>Programa de Desenvolvimento Rural Integrado</i>
IRSEM	Institute of Ex-Soldier Social Reintegration	<i>O Instituto de Reintegração Social dos Ex-Militares</i>
ISEP	Institute for Public Sector Enterprises	<i>Instituto para o Sector Empresarial Público</i>
JBJ	Journalist Brigade	<i>Jovens da Brigada de Jornalistas</i>
JMPLA	Youth of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola	<i>Juventude do Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</i>
KEPA	Centre of Cooperation Services for Development	<i>Centro de Serviços de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento</i>
km	kilometer	<i>quilómetro</i>
KPGM	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler	
LAM	Africas in the World	<i>As Áfricas no Mundo</i>
LPI	Logistics Performance Indicator	<i>Índice de Desempenho Logístico</i>
Ltd	Limited	<i>Limitado</i>
LUPP	Luanda Urban Poverty Programme	<i>Programa de Luta Contra a Pobreza Urbana</i>
MAPA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply	<i>Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento</i>
MAT	Ministry of Territorial Administration	<i>Ministério da Administração Territorial</i>
MASFAMU	Ministry of Social Action, Family, and Women Promotion	<i>Ministério de Ação Social, Família, e Promoção da Mulher</i>
MDA	Ministry of Agrarian Development	<i>Ministério do desenvolvimento agrário</i>
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	<i>Desenvolvimento para o Milénio</i>
MDS	Ministry of Social Development	<i>Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate</i>
MDSA	Ministry of Social and Agrarian Development	<i>Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Agrário</i>
Mecanagro	National Agricultural Machinery Company	<i>Empresa Nacional de Mecanização Agrícola</i>
MIAA	Angola Board of Agricultural Surveys	<i>Missão de Inquéritos Agrícolas de Angola</i>

MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	<i>Ministério da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural</i>
MINADERP	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries	<i>Ministério de Agricultura, Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas</i>
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture	<i>Ministério da Agricultura</i>
MINAGRIF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	<i>Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas</i>
MINARS	Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration	<i>Ministério de Assistência e Reinserção Social</i>
MINCO	Ministry of Internal Commerce	<i>Ministério de Comércio Interno</i>
MINFAMU	Ministry of Family Affairs and for the Promotion of Women	<i>Ministério da Família de Promoção da Mulher</i>
MINPLAN	Ministry of Planning	<i>Ministério do Planeamento</i>
MMCA	Cuban Military Mission in Angola	<i>Missão Militar Cubana em Angola</i>
MNE	National Spontaneous Movement	<i>Movimento Nacional Espontâneo</i>
MONUA	United Nations Observer Mission in Angola	<i>Missão de Observação das Nações Unidas em Angola</i>
MOSAP	Market Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project	<i>Project de Agricultura Familiar Orientado para o Mercado</i>
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola	<i>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</i>
MPLA-PT	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola – Workers' Party	<i>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola – Partido do Trabalho</i>
MS	Danish Association of International Cooperation	
MST	Landless Workers' Movement	<i>Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra</i>
N/A	Not Available	<i>Não Disponível</i>
NAC	New Agricultural Countries	
NAR	Net Attendance Rate	<i>Taxa da frequência escolar</i>
NCC	National Counselling Centre	<i>Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento</i>
NDP	Nation Development Plan	<i>Plano de Desenvolvimento Nacional</i>
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	<i>Nova Parceria para o Desenvolvimento da África</i>
NET	Núcleo for Studies in Land and Development	<i>Núcleo de Estudos da Terra</i>
NGO	Non-governmental organization	<i>Organização não governamental</i>
n.p.	not published	<i>não publicado</i>

NOVIB	Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation	<i>Organização dos Países Baixos em prol da Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento Internacional</i>
NRC	National Restructuring Commission	<i>Comissão Nacional de Reestruturação</i>
NRSA	New Network of Angola Supermarkets	<i>Nova Rede de Supermercados de Angola</i>
NSA	Non State Actor	<i>Ator Não Estatal</i>
OAA	Angolan Bar Association	<i>Ordem dos advogados angolanos</i>
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	<i>Escritório para a Coordenação de Assuntos Humanitários</i>
OCPLP	The Cooperativist Organization of Portuguese-Speaking Countries	<i>Organização Cooperativista dos Países de Língua Portuguesa</i>
OKUTIUKA-APAV	Okutiuka-Action for Life	<i>Okutiuka-Ação para a Vida</i>
OMA	Angolan Women's Association	<i>Organização da Mulher Angolana</i>
OMR	Rural Observatory	<i>Observatório do Meio Rural</i>
ONG	Non-governmental organization	<i>Organização não governamental</i>
OPCS	Operations Policy and Country Services	<i>Política de Operações e Serviços aos Países</i>
OPSA	Political and Social Observatory of Angola	<i>Observatório Político e Social de Angola</i>
ORAM	Rural Association for Mutual Support	<i>Associação Rural de Ajuda Mútua</i>
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa	<i>Iniciativa Sociedade Aberta para a África Austral</i>
p.	page	<i>página</i>
PAANE	Program to Support Non-State Actors	<i>Programa de Apoio aos Atores Não Estatais</i>
PALOP	Portuguese-speaking African countries	<i>Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa</i>
PAPAGRO	Agricultural and Livestock Products Purchasing Programme	<i>Programa de Adquisição de Produtos Agropecuários</i>
PCP	Angola Peacebuilding Programme	<i>Programa de Construção da Paz</i>
PDM	Municipal Development Plans	<i>Planos de Desenvolvimento Municipal</i>
PE	Public Enterprise	<i>Empresa pública</i>
PEDR	Rural Extension Development Program	<i>Programa de Extensão e Desenvolvimento Rural</i>
PER	Rural Extension Programme	<i>Programa de Extensão Rural</i>
PESC	Public Enterprise Security Company	<i>Empresa pública de segurança</i>

PGDR	General Program of Demobilization and Reintegration	<i>Programa Geral de Desmobilização e Reintegração</i>
PIDLCP	Integrated Local Development and Poverty Alleviation Program	<i>Programa de Desenvolvimento Local e Combate à Pobreza</i>
PMICDP	Integrated Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Program	<i>Programa Integrado de Desenvolvimento Rural e Combate à Pobreza</i>
PND	National Development Plan	<i>Plano Nacional de Desenvolvimento</i>
PNUD	United Nations Development Program	<i>Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento</i>
PPP	Public Private Partnership	<i>Parceria público-privada</i>
PPP	Purchasing power parity	<i>Paridade do poder de compra</i>
PRESILD	Program of Restructuring of the System of Logistics and Distribution of Essential Products to the Population	<i>O Programa de Reestruturação do Sistema de Logística e de Distribuição de Produtos Essenciais à População</i>
Pro-Agro Angola	Agricultural Development and Finance Program	<i>Programa de Desenvolvimento Agrícola e Financeiro</i>
PROMAICA	Promotion of Angolan Women of the Catholic Church	<i>Associação de Promoção de Mulher Angolana da Igreja Católica</i>
PRODESI	Program to Support Production, Diversification of Exports, and Import Substitution	<i>Programa de Apoio à Produção Nacional, Diversificação das Exportações e Substituição de Importações</i>
PROFIR	Rural Industry Development Program	<i>Programa de Fomento à Pequena Indústria Rural</i>
PRONAF	National Program to Strengthen Family Farming	<i>Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar</i>
PROVAP	Program for the Recovery of Small-scale Rural Production	<i>Programa de Valorização da Pequena Produção Rural</i>
PWYP	Publish What You Pay	<i>Publique o que Você Paga</i>
R&D	Research and Development	<i>Pesquisa & desenvolvimento</i>
REDSAN-PALOP	Civil Society Regional Network for Food Security and Nutrition in the PALOP	<i>Rede Regional da Sociedade Civil para a Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional nos PALO</i>
ROI	Return on Investment	<i>Retorno do Investimento</i>
ROSA	Network of Organizations for Food Security	<i>Rede de Organizações para a Soberania Alimentar</i>
RSA	Republic of South Africa	<i>República da África do Sul</i>
SADC	Southern African Development Community	<i>Comunidade de Desenvolvimento da África</i>

SADCP	Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project in Cuanza Sul and Huila Provinces	<i>Projeto de Desenvolvimento e Comercialização de Agricultores Familiares nas Províncias de Cuanza Sul e Huila</i>
SADF	South African Defence Force	<i>Força de Defesa da África do Sul</i>
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons	<i>Armas Pequenas e Ligeiras</i>
SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar	<i>Simpósio das Conferências Episcopais de África e Madagáscar</i>
SEF	Program of Economic and Financial Restructuring	<i>Saneamento Econômico e Financeiro</i>
SIDA	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome [AIDS]	<i>Síndrome da Imunodeficiência Humana Adquirida</i>
SINFO	Intelligence Community of Angola	<i>O Serviço de Informação</i>
SINPROF	National Teachers Union	<i>Sindicato Nacional de Professores</i>
SISE	State Intelligence and Security Service	<i>O Serviço de Inteligência e de Segurança do Estado</i>
SNV	Netherland Development Organization	<i>Organização Holandesa de Cooperação</i>
SOE	State-owned enterprise	<i>Empresa pública</i>
Sodmat	Matala Development Enterprise	<i>Sociedade de Desenvolvimento da Matala</i>
SOPIR	Development of Irrigated Perimeters in Angola	<i>Sociedade de Desenvolvimento dos Perímetros Irrigados</i>
SNH	Nyanyeka-Humbi Solidarity Association	<i>Associação Solidariedade Nyanyeka-Humbi</i>
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa	<i>África subsaariana</i>
STTEP	Specialised Tasks, Training, Equipment and Protection International	
SWAPO	South Africa People's Organization	<i>Organização do Povo do Sudoeste Africano</i>
TCU	Transitional Coordination Unit	<i>Unidade de Coordenação para a Transição</i>
TEXTANG	Angola Fabric Company	<i>Empresa de Tecidos de Angola</i>
UCAH	Humanitarian Assistance Co-ordination Unit	<i>Unidade de Coordenação Assistência Humanitária</i>
UCAN	Catholic University of Angola	<i>Universidade Católica de Angola</i>
UGC	General Union of Cooperatives	<i>União Geral das Cooperativas</i>
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	<i>Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento</i>
UGEAN	General Union of Students from Black Africa under	<i>União Geral dos Estudantes da África Negra sob Dominação Colonial Portuguesa</i>

	Portuguese Colonial Domination	
UJA	Union of Angolan Journalists	<i>União dos Jornalistas Angolanos</i>
UK	United Kingdom	<i>Reino Unido</i>
UN	United Nations	<i>Nações Unidas</i>
UNAC	National Peasant Union	<i>União Nacional de Camponeses</i>
UNACA	The Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola	<i>Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola</i>
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission	<i>Missão de Verificação das Nações Unidas em Angola</i>
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	<i>Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento</i>
UNEA	National Union of Angolan Students	<i>União Nacional dos Estudantes Angolanos</i>
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	<i>Alto Comissariado das Nações Unidas para os Refugiados</i>
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund	<i>Fundo das Nações Unidas para a Infância</i>
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola	<i>União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola</i>
UNOA	United Nations Office in Angola	<i>Escritório das Nações Unidas em Angola</i>
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	<i>Escritório das Nações Unidas para a Coordenação de Assuntos Humanitários</i>
UNTA	National Union of Angolan Workers	<i>União Nacional dos Trabalhadores</i>
UPR	Universal Periodic Review	<i>Revisão Periódica Universal</i>
US/USA	United States (of America)	<i>Estados Unidos</i>
USAID	United States Agency for International Development	<i>Agência dos Estados Unidos para o Desenvolvimento Internacional</i>
UTCAH	Technical Unit on Coordinating Humanitarian Aid	<i>Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias</i>
VOA	Voice of America	<i>Voz de América</i>
VOGARN	Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel	<i>A Voz da Resistência do Galo Negro</i>
WB	World Bank	<i>Banco Mundial</i>
WFP	World Food Programme	<i>Programa Alimentar Mundial</i>
WHO	World Health Organization	<i>Organização Mundial da Saúde</i>
WL	World Learning	
WTO	World Trade Organization	<i>Organização mundial do comércio</i>

Illustrations

Box 1 - The difference between a CSO and an NGO.....	47
Box 2 - Defining rural land and its occupants	62
Box 3 - Impediments to civil society growth.....	363
Box 4 - Defining Nascent Networks.....	364
Box 5 - Typology of land conflicts	381
Box 6 - Main activities of the <i>Rede Terra</i>	407
Box 7 - <i>Campanha Terra's</i> effects of strengthening civil society	419
Box 8 - Amassing rural agency in the Gambos.....	442
Box 9 - African countries enacting anti-NGO policies or legislation (2004-May 2019).....	456
Map 1 - Administrative geography of Angola.....	61
Map 2 - Ranching zones in Gambos <i>município</i> , Huíla province.....	64
Map 3 - Colonial agricultural zones, production areas and sites of industrial farms.....	99
Map 4 - Lobito-Benuela Railway (1954)	111
Map 5 - Map of minefields (2019)	148
Map 6 - Estimated population density (2000)	163
Map 7 - Ethnic distribution in Angola alongside UNITA territorial control.....	296
Image 1 - Gambwe traditional living quarters (<i>Ehumbo</i>).....	65
Image 2 - Overview of the provincial capital Lubango, Huíla province.....	67
Image 3 - <i>Cattle berder in the comuna of Huíla</i>	71
Image 4 - Communal agricultural lands, <i>comuna</i> of Huíla.....	71
Image 5 - Original statute of UNACA [1980].....	224
Image 6 - 1977 seminar on cooperative agriculture in times of socialist revolution in Bulgaria	230
Image 7 - Cover of <i>Infonga Jornal</i> (1999).....	317
Image 8 - Communal agricultural lands, <i>comuna</i> of Huíla I.....	394
Image 9 - Communal agricultural lands, <i>comuna</i> of Huíla II.....	394
Image 10 - <i>Rede Terra</i> activist guide “Our Land Rights”.....	408
Image 11 - Quantum Global industrial farms in its management portfolio	486
Image 12 - Inaugural plaque for the Transhumance Project	505
Image 13 - Rural communities blocking road access to protect its water source	507
Image 14 - 2017 election flyer	527
Image 15 - Political party flags prior to elections in downtown Lubango.....	529
Image 16 - OMUNGA electoral campaign literature (I)	530
Image 17 - OMUNGA electoral campaign literature (II)	532
Tableau 1 - Colonial social strata of Angola.....	97
Tableau 2 - Culmination of colonial labor force.....	107
Tableau 3 - Key foreign companies in agricultural commercialization	110
Tableau 4 - Cotton exports (1860-1926, 1961-2018)	113
Tableau 5 - Coffee exports and commercial value (1950-1970).....	116
Tableau 6 - Parliamentary election results for 1992 and 2017, by province.....	120
Tableau 7 - Planned evolution of PROFIR investments.....	147
Tableau 8 - An overview of the rural-urban divide in living standards.....	203
Tableau 9 - Other notable rankings.....	203

Tableau 10 - Principle public companies involved in rural economy.....	217
Tableau 11 - Rural labor composition (1973)	221
Tableau 12 - Evolution of rural population as percentage of total (1950-2020).....	222
Tableau 13 - Evolution in production of select crops for domestic consumption	225
Tableau 14 - Farmer Typology and Practices.....	226
Tableau 15 - Situation of rural cooperative organization per province in 1977.....	227
Tableau 16 - Status of agricultural enterprises (1984)	238
Tableau 17 - Key Institutions Governing Rural Spaces	239
Tableau 18 - Losses of State-owned enterprises in agricultural sector (in kwanzas, '000) .	242
Tableau 19 - Evolution of the Ministry of Agriculture.....	267
Tableau 20 - Evolution of Ministers of Agriculture.....	271
Tableau 21 - NSA & government 'collaboration' (late 1980s-2018).....	353
Tableau 22 - Evolution in the creation of civil society networks (Late 1980s-2010)	365
Tableau 23 - Examples of 'grassroots elite' NGOs.....	368
Tableau 24 - Timeline of the incubation of <i>Rede Terra</i>	403
Tableau 25 - List of forming members of <i>Rede Terra</i>	406
Tableau 26 - Comparative Timeline on Land Laws & Campaigns (1979-2004).....	417
Tableau 27 - Huíla: A succession of land conflicts	440
Tableau 28 - Laws governing NGOs	451
Tableau 29 - Agricultural irrigation projects led by SOPIR	472
Tableau 30 - Chinese built agro-industrial State farms	483
Tableau 31 - Companies taking over Gesterra's ownership, managed by Quantum Global	487
Tableau 32 - Timeline of different entities managing Chinese-built State farms.....	489
Tableau 33 - Evolution of main development indicators (2000-2018)	519
Tableau 34 - Select indicators of the evolution and state of agricultural sector.....	523
Tableau 35 - Secretary of State for Agriculture and Livestock.....	541
Tableau 36 - Current estimates of population with little to no direct connection to wartime (2020)	551
Tableau 37 - 2017-2018 budgeting for principal agricultural programs	573
Tableau 38 - Privatizing the agro-industrial farms built on Chinese loans	581
Tableau 39 - List of public companies linked to the agricultural sector set for privatization	584
Figure 1 - Education and health sector spending of total budget (1996-2020, as %)	234
Figure 2 - Role of agricultural sector in total GDP & budget allocation	255
Figure 3 - Total budget for Ministry of Agriculture (2001-2018) (US\$ in millions)	256
Figure 4 - National budget allocated & spent by the Ministry of Agriculture.....	257
Figure 5 - Total number of registered NNGOs, INGOs, religious groups and foundations	330
Figure 6 - Trend lines of total registered NNGOs & INGOs (2000-2017)	334
Figure 7 - Total number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015)	335
Figure 8 - Total number of INGOs & NNGOS registered per province (2006-2015), accumulative perspective.....	336
Figure 9 - Number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015) excluding Luanda.....	337
Figure 10 - Number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015) excluding Luanda, accumulative perspective.....	338
Figure 11 - Number of INGOs registered per province (2006-2015).....	339

Figure 12 - Number of INGOs registered per province (2006-2015), excluding Luanda	339
Figure 13 - Number of NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015)	340
Figure 14 - Number of NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015), excluding Luanda	341
Figure 15 - Combined number of INGO and NNGO activities (2006-2015)	342
Figure 16 - Total Number of INGO activities (2006-2012)	343
Figure 17 - Total Number of NNGO activities (2006-2012)	344
Figure 18 - Fertilizer (nitrogen) use	555
Figure 19 - Pesticide use	555
Figure 20 - Percent of credit allocated to agricultural sector	556
Figure 21 - Banana harvest (total area)	557
Figure 22 - Banana production	557
Figure 23 - Banana yield	557
Figure 24 - Dry bean harvest (total area)	558
Figure 25 - Dry bean production	558
Figure 26 - Dry bean yield	559
Figure 27 - Cassava harvest (total area)	559
Figure 28 - Cassava production	559
Figure 29 - Cassava yield	560
Figure 30 - Coffee harvest (total area)	561
Figure 31 - Coffee production	561
Figure 32 - Coffee yield	561
Figure 33 - Maize harvest (total area)	562
Figure 34 - Maize production	562
Figure 35 - Maize yield	563
Figure 36 - Rice harvest (total area)	564
Figure 37 - Rice production	564
Figure 38 - Rice yield	564
Figure 39 - Millet yield	565
Figure 40 - Sorghum yield	565
Figure 41 - Seed cotton yield	565
Figure 42 - Soybeans yield	565
Figure 43 - Sugar cane yield	566

Introduction – Walking gingerly through the hall of mirrors

Poring over photocopies of my American passport, travel visa from France and required invitation letter sprawled across the cluttered desk, the official sitting across from me asked why I wanted their data, so I began to recite the speech I had been perfecting at that point. Shortly thereafter, the official casually cut me off mid-sentence. “*Estás a mentir*” (You’re lying). A flood of thoughts swirled through my mind as the walls in the small corner office suddenly seemed to close in a little tighter. My place in the hot seat was magnified by the simmering afternoon sun, the firmly shut windows, the disconnected air conditioning unit, and the official, with sweat beading on his own brow, intently staring me down. “*Estás a mentir*” he repeated. Maintaining my composure, a slight shake of my head disregarded the claims and my speech continued unabated.

A month in to my fieldwork in Luanda I had found myself sitting in a small side office within the *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola), a legacy institution harkening back to the ‘Marxist-Leninist’ era and its centrally planned state, requesting official data on the institution’s history of organizing Angola’s vast peasantry into peasant associations and cooperatives. Being told you are lying about your true motivations while sitting in a small office building in Luanda was perceived, rightly so I believe, as an intimidation tactic. My hosts insinuated that I was there for ulterior motives. Incredulous that an American living in France and studying rural Angola could have learned Portuguese out of personal interest in a public university, they instead probed whether it had not been through a program of the American government. In the official’s defense, my presence was likely out of the ordinary. Nevertheless, the hostile positioning, stonewalling and paranoia of my presence and the subject matter were all made very clear.

Eventually leaving empty-handed, the official assured me they would look into my case to see what they could do and a return date was set for the next week. As my feet once again hit the dusty streets of *Rua Major Kanhangulo*, recollecting my thoughts after such an experience I chuckled to myself “*Bem-vindo a Angola*” (welcome to Angola) as I made my way

back to my room through the labyrinth of looming towers of staid concrete rising above the skyline of Luanda's bay, the ultimate symbols of its oil-driven economic prosperity. Though seen through the perspective of my study, this impressive urban explosion was in fact built upon the foundation previously set by Angola's agricultural prowess. During the colonial days of the 19th century, "Luanda was one of the most developed cities outside Europe, with many active trading companies exporting palm and peanut oil, wax, timber, ivory, cotton, coffee, cocoa, and many other products".¹⁰ The growth of the agricultural sector driving the infrastructure boom across the urban landscape would later influence the mindset of Angola's leaders as they took the reins of their country and sought to drive their own future destiny back to the colonial heights guided by colonial production models. I had come to Angola to enquire about how modern rural development policies were integrating (or not) the country's vast peasantry and how rural Angolans have been able to socially organize in defense of their interests. I was quick to discover that information from officials on this topic would be as obscure as finding traces of Luanda's agricultural origins behind its peeling façades of modernity.

This particular episode with UNACA was revealing on a number of fronts that would intertwine throughout the production of this research project. The omnipresent authoritarian ambiance in Angola would impede many attempts to collect data and engage in formal and informal discussions on topics deemed sensitive, including access to the peasantry itself. The seemingly well-organized Kafkaesque bureaucratic stonewalling and systematic lack of technical support would reveal itself as an intentional political strategy of subterfuge throughout the countryside designed to conceal weaknesses, evade accountability, and inject instability into concerted attempts at researching rurality. Finally, the paranoia would emerge both from the government as well as the engaged civil society actors with assumptions of ulterior motives a constant concern.

The culmination of these actions led to depriving me of important access points and data collection that could have brought a qualitative and quantitative improvement to the analysis of this study. However, this strategy falls in line with the overall theoretical thread of structural resource scarcity engineered in the countryside to impose its authority through

¹⁰ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country Diagnostic. Creating Assets for the Poor*, The World Bank Group, Washington D.C., Dec. 2018, 1. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/337691552357946557/pdf/angola-scd-03072019-636877656084587895.pdf>.

rent controls in territory its presence is otherwise weak and generally ineffective. Furthermore, rather than happenstance, these actions adhere to the strategy of the “politics of disorder” as proposed by Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz,¹¹ defined as:

A generalised system of patrimonialism and an acute degree of apparent disorder, as evidenced by a high degree of governmental and administrative inefficiency, a lack of institutionalization, a general disregard of formal political and economic sectors, and a universal resort to personal(ized) and vertical solutions to societal problems.

While this political agenda was identified at the turn of the century with Angola mired in war, this study demonstrates that many of these specific characteristics remain engrained in the political system designed by the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos post-civil war. Beyond demonstrating the enduring value of this perspective, the following chapters will further argue that the “disorder as a political instrument” has been weaponized by the Angolan regime in its approach to rural governance summarized here as ‘strategic abandon’. This “politics of disorder” is enacted by an elite political culture molded by an historical dependence on oil for survival that then translated into their quest for political dominance of the countryside through a strategy of establishing a stranglehold over the mechanisms of resource distribution destined for the development of the agricultural sector.

SEARCHING FOR THE SWEET SPOT

The tension felt in the office of UNACA, in interviews and interactions throughout my fieldwork, is also present throughout this study, starting intentionally from its title itself through the seemingly opposing forces of ‘domination’ through ‘abandon’. Domination implies total control, while abandon totally relinquishes it. The verb itself ‘to abandon’ finds its roots in the Old French word *abandonner*, which itself came from the term “(*mettre*) *a bandun*”, signifying “to hand over” or “put in someone’s control”.¹² The verb in English came to mean “to give up (something) absolutely, relinquish control”.¹³ According to the *Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales* (CNRTL, National Center on Textual and Lexical Resources) the French word dates back to at least the mid 12th century. When relating to a

¹¹ Patrick Chabal, & Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Melton: James Currey Publishers, 1999), xix.

¹² Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abandon>.

¹³ Online Etymology Dictionary. See: <https://www.etymonline.com/word/abandon>.

‘thing’ and not a ‘person’, it is defined as “the action of renouncing the possession of an asset”.¹⁴ An important caveat must be made, henceforward. The evocation of the notion of ‘abandon’ in the title and throughout the text should be understood in its figurative, semantic form as a metaphor, not in its literal definitional meaning. Employing the use of ‘abandon’ as a metaphorical semantic figure imposes “distinctive patterns on meaning” and must therefore be placed in the context of its use.¹⁵ If taken in its literal meaning, the Angolan government’s complete abandonment of the peasantry would imply relinquishing control of its peripheral spaces where these populations reside. This would ultimately facilitate the natural emergence of other Statist structures, traditional or modern, to fill the void. Such an absurd action is clearly not in the interest of the Angolan government, especially considering the long years of warfare required to finally acquire full territorial integrity. Instead, as with other modern states, it has a clear ideological mission to dominate, in the literal sense, its sovereign territory in order to extend its interests and authority with the goal of maintaining complete control.

The terminology of ‘domination’ is understood here as a form of authoritarianism, rather than totalitarianism. The domination seeks to maximize its political and economic control over these areas, but it does not seek total social and cultural control. When the question of political power emerges within the social structures of the traditional leaders, the *sobas*, then the domination ideology is activated. Yet in relation to the important traditional cultures, customs and practices, everyday livelihoods are left mostly unimpeded. However, because of structural weaknesses in the state’s capacity to project and maintain its authority caused by historical, social, and economic realities, Angolan authorities have gone about this domination of peripheral spaces differently than others. This study hypothesizes that the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA, Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola)-led government has sought to achieve its rural territorial domination through the engagement of an illiberal state-building strategy by reducing certain resource flows, a “politics of penury” as proposed by René Lemarchand (1980),¹⁶ in order to weaken specific rural economic actors, categorized here as the peasantry, that exist within the peripheries of a weak state presence. Patterns of resource allocation and deprivation therefore provide the

¹⁴ Centre National de Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales (CNRTL). In French, “Action de renoncer à la possession d’un bien”. <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/abandon>.

¹⁵ Hugh Bredin, “The Literal and the Figurative”, *Philosophy*, 67, no. 259, (1992): 70.

¹⁶ René Lemarchand, “The Politics of Penury in Rural Zaire: The View from Bandundu”, in *Zaire: The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, ed. Guy Gran (New York: Praeger, 1980), 237-259.

central analytical indicator to observe the development model imposed on these rural spaces. Resource flows designed to leave the peasantry weakened is an intentional design in order to not “alter the distribution of political power in a way that adversely affects groups initially in control of the political system”.¹⁷ James Robinson equates this “undersupply of public goods” with the strategy of a predatory state,¹⁸ but this research project broadens the scope of resources that are targeted by a predatory elite as they flow into the peripheries. Seen through a Marxian political economy perspective, the emphasis is put on a state-centric ‘structural scarcity’ political ecology approach where the reference to resources is understood here as encompassing all types of mobilizable resources.¹⁹ As will be shown in chapter five for example, the arrival of various Non-State Actors to the countryside brought in not just physical resources for farming such as fertilizers, tools, seeds and credit mechanisms, but also new mentalities such as methods of self-organizing, law- and rights-based knowledge, and the promotion of democratic practices. We argue that the current elitist class perceives both the accumulation and the combination of these resources as their greatest threats to dominating the peripheries and their actions are designed to extend and strengthen their hold on power.

That is not to say that the government does not direct resources to these areas, but these limited public resources have been mobilized to selectively modernize segments of the agricultural sector built upon a series of State-Owned Enterprises and major industrial farms owned and managed by the government itself alongside a practice of patronage distributing resources to a consolidating elitist group of a new rural bourgeoisie developing a secondary level of agricultural production through commercial farms and ranches. These strategic investments are designed as the core of the medium- and long-term regenerative tool of the MPLA to implant and expand their definitive influence in the rural economy. Through the implicit support to this new emerging bourgeoisie in the form of commercial farms and ranches, they are allowed to effectively participate in appropriating communal lands in their desires for territorial expansion in exchange for party loyalty and adhering to the modernization effort. These dynamics ultimately allow the government to strengthen its control over the economic and social sectors across the countryside as a strategy of

¹⁷ James Robinson, “When is a State Predatory?”, CESifo Working Paper, no. 178, Center for Economic Studies and ifo Institute (CESifo), Munich, 1999, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁹ Colin Kahl, *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2006.

compensation for its structural weakness. Such as private companies helped organize and control the countryside during the Portuguese colonial occupation, this strategy has been continued through independence with the state taking the mantle as private investment mostly dried up. The declared desires for economic diversification towards the agricultural sector and the required territorial expansion to achieve the goals of an economic model based on selective modernization piqued the overall interest in this study given the reality that strategically positioned, unoccupied, productive land in Angola is an extremely rare resource. This recipe appeared to call for social conflict, which was the initial inspiration for this study.

Initially, it began looking into the potential presence of a budding social movement in rural Angola, powered by simmering conflicts linked to land dispossession. A major study done by the country's most prominent Non Governmental Organization (NGO) specialized in rural development, *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente* (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development), played a central role. The study, intitled "*Pesquisa sobre diferendos e conflitos de terras e as formas da sua resolução*, (Study on land disputes and conflicts and the forms of their resolution) was written by Guilherme Santos and Inácio Zacarias led by ADRA, financed by *Ajuda Popular da Noruega* (APN, Norwegian People's Aid), and published in March 2010.²⁰ The analysis stressed the imminent mobilization of rural actors organized in defense of their lands due to the increasing pressure of 'outsiders' encroaching on traditional lands. The paragraph in question reads:

The conflicts between the communities and external agents are not only increasing, but are also intensifying, becoming ever more complex, increasing in scale and scope by the actors involved and territory affected. The number of cases is increasing every day, in a way that evidence is becoming very visible that one day an organized revolt could occur. The dimension of conflict should be considered as an emergency given the proportions it's taking on. Openness, dialogue, research, information gathering are all recommended.²¹

This notion of "visible", "organized revolts" initially led me to interrogate the questions of rural social organizing in Angola around the questions of land, yet my fieldwork found a much more subdued situation on the ground. In retrospect, the aforementioned report needs to be put into the perspective in which it was created. It was financed by APN,

²⁰ Guilherme Santos & Inácio Zacarias, *Pesquisa sobre os Diferendos e Conflitos de Terras e as Formas da sua Resolução*, Luanda, ADRA, March 2010.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 13. Personal translation.

a potential donor for ADRA's further activities and a source of income for its authors. The paragraph in question literally spells out at least some of the motivation for describing the situation in such alarmist terms as the last sentence calls for the need for more studies, purportedly done by similar organizations such as ADRA that specialize in such questions. Seen through this viewpoint, the paragraph can be seen a call for more donor assistance to further its own projects. But ADRA was not alone in this looming prognostic.

Jennifer Clover, in her research on the impacts of the latest Land Law n° 9 of 9 November 2004, also identified land conflicts as a major potential threat.²² Oxfam/Novib, a partnership of major international NGOs (INGOs) supporting activities in the countryside also mentioned the very likely possibility of increasing rural conflicts due to the growing interest in Angolan agriculture by well-connected generals and officials, as well as third party business interests.²³ The Catholic Church, one of the most respected institutions in the country, had previously warned that if a renewal of violence were to occur in the countryside, the abuse of land rights would be its source.²⁴ Adding to these rising alarm bells was the formation of the *Rede Terra* (Land Network) campaign, which represented an unprecedented case study at the dawn of the 21st century (2001-2004) during the transition to a form of authoritarian democracy that became a network of NGOs engaged directly with the government in public debate on legislation for the first time in the country's short history around the issues of land rights. The culmination of these events made it appear that important social transformations were indeed underway in the countryside, while the relative lack of studies available on the subject presented the occasion to produce original research and investigate the matter further.

Throughout my fieldwork, however, various interviews with actors directly knowledgeable of the current environment on the possibilities for imminent social conflict and rural mobilization uniformly denied the alarmist rhetoric in the ADRA report. One key indicator that could tip the scales to induce structural change is an organized and active civil

²² Jeanette Clover, *Framing issues of environmental security in Angola and Mozambique – The nexus of land, conflicts and sustainable livelihoods in post-conflict situations*, PhD dissertation, Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand (2007), 6; Jenny Clover, "The role of land as a site and source of conflict in Angola", in *The Struggle Over Land in Africa: conflicts, politics and change*, eds. Ward Anseeuw & Chris Alden (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010), 151.

²³ Core Country Programme Evaluation (CCPE), *Angola: Relatório Final*, 1, no. 3, Fortaleza, Oxfam Novib, Sept. 2008a, 199.

²⁴ Alex Vines, Nicholas Shaxson & Lisa Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3: Civil Society, Chatham House, London, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, April 2005b, 28.

society, but that would depend on the questions of “groupness” with grievances able to cut across social classes²⁵ and “opportunity perspective” wherein the cost-benefit analysis makes the risk of political backlash palatable.²⁶ My fieldwork confirmed that these conditions have yet to be met. Building a research project on a non-existent social dynamic was a non-starter, so my reorientation flipped the perspective to investigate the reasons why there was such little rural social mobilization against threatened socio-economic interests despite the simmering tensions. Nevertheless, the interviews and research I conducted while in Angola remained pertinent and revealing to my new line of inquiry as the challenges to social organizing and the questions of resource distribution were a common thread throughout the conversations. The experiences all described how resource mobilization was systematically blocked or undermined by party officials or sympathizers. The dynamics around the push for modernizing the agricultural sector emerged as the terrain where these different pressure points are all playing out. Understanding the motivations behind this particular rural political economy became central to the study.

DEFINING THE TERMS

Investigating the intricate web between policies, both official and unofficial, aimed at transforming the countryside and the affected communities’ ability to respond leads us to an interrogation of the political agency amassed by certain rural actors. The complex nature of understanding the agency and influence of the peasantry in an authoritarian state necessarily requires engaging a vast array of disciplines, including history, economics, political science, as well as the social sciences of anthropology and sociology. This pluridisciplinary study is therefore oriented towards a better understanding of the socio-economic dynamics currently underway in the Angolan countryside and in what capacity the nascent civil society has been able (or not) to influence the government’s aforementioned strategy of rural development. It attempts to understand both how the ruling MPLA party, through the government apparatus, has extended its “monopoly of violence”²⁷ into the periphery to impose its rural development agenda unopposed as well as to what extent the affected populations are able to exercise their agency through self-organizing to defend their interests.

²⁵ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 25-27.

²⁶ Val Percival & Thomas Homer-Dixon, “Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of South Africa”, *Journal of Peace Research*, 35, no. 3, Special Issue on Environmental Conflict, (1998): 280

²⁷ Max Weber, “Politik als Beruf”, *Gesammelte Politische Schriften*, (1921): 396-450.

The definition of political agency taken up here will be described as “the capacity to take part in the struggle to define the modalities of life in common”.²⁸ This basic definition clearly sets the benchmark as only requiring the “capacity to take part”, not requiring an ability to affect any discernible impact, despite concerted attempts. The reference to defining the “modalities of life” provides a broad base to potentially wield agency, while highlighting the growing divide between modernity versus tradition in Angola’s countryside. This goes beyond the minimal activities of voting for example, which is the standard bearer of political agency but could be perceived as a simple exercise in window-dressing under certain authoritarian regimes. Developing and engaging agency under an authoritarian government is only possible when a discernible civil society presence has been formed to mobilize it.

We will adopt the theoretical definition of ‘civil society’ as defined by Michael Bratton “as a sphere of social interaction between the household and the state which is manifest in norms of community cooperation, structures of voluntary association, and networks of public communication”.²⁹ This definition sets the basis of civil society growth at the household level, emanating from this central space both horizontally across social groups and vertically through established structures of power and authority. The emphasis on voluntary association is oftentimes difficult to discern in the Angolan context as political parties have a history of actively forming and recruiting popular ‘mass organizations’ that are neither ‘spontaneous’, nor voluntary in the pure sense of intrinsic will for civic engagement rather than being born out of pressure from self-interested political actors. While these ‘mass organizations’ are nearly all urban or peri-urban based, in rural Angola a similar coerced practice of ‘voluntary association’ will be demonstrated through the formation of peasant associations and cooperatives adhering to *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola), which is itself a ‘mass organization’ but operates under the firm tutelage of the government. Finally, the definition emphasizes the “networks of public communication” which will be a central nexus in the strengthening of Angola’s civil society as demonstrated in the accumulating experiences of public and private

²⁸ Bice Manguashca & Raffaele Marchetti, *Contemporary Political Agency: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 166.

²⁹ Michael Bratton, “Civil Society and Political Transition in Africa”, *IDR Reports*, Boston, Institute for Development Research 11, no. 6, 1994, 2.

collaborations among the emergence of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and their respective organs of communication.

The mobilization of these social actors therefore takes on a broad definition of “noninstitutional collective actions” that are aimed at producing or resisting social change spurred on by a “minimum of organization”.³⁰ In regard to our analysis, the social mobilization is centered around popular protections of land use and possession against encroaching outside forces and involves a wide range of civil and institutional actors to achieve these aims. When discussing civil society and its myriad forms of modern organization, this study will use a number of terminologies given the vast array of actors that were employed to speed up the transitional period at the turn of the 21st century from war to humanitarian assistance, development, and the defense of basic human rights. Among the most prominent of these organizational forms studied here are the two aforementioned above. An important distinction will be made between NGOs and CSOs as described below.

Box 1 - The difference between a CSO and an NGO

According to the World Bank³¹, CSOs “refer to the wide array of *nongovernmental* and *not-for-profit* organizations that have a presence in public life and express the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations”. This definition clearly refers to the sphere “outside the family, the state and the market”. CSOs therefore can include “trade unions, community-based organizations, social movements, faith-based institutions, charitable organizations, universities, foundations, professional associations and others”. In contrast, an NGO “refers more narrowly to professional, intermediary and nonprofit organizations that advocate and/or provide services in the areas of economic and social development, human rights, welfare, and emergency relief.”

³⁰ Craig J. Jenkins, “Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, no. 11, Aug. (1983): 529.

³¹ Italics original. World Bank, *Consultations with Civil Society, A Sourcebook*, Working document, The World Bank Group, Washington D.C., Feb. 2007, 1-2. https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/Civil%20Society/cso_documents/ConsultationsSourcebook_Feb2007.pdf.

As approaches and analyses of civil society have expanded across the African continent, so too has the terminology used. By happenchance, this change in terminology corresponds to the precise period where much of this study's analysis lies. Following the terminology of NGOs and CSOs, we will also occasionally employ the usage of the term Non-State Actors (NSAs). The NSA concept mostly replaced that of 'civil society' in the mid-2000s and has mainly been adopted by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). The concept encompasses a wide variety of actors "including traditional CSOs, churches, trade unions, and the private sector".³² In this case, the concept of CSO has also come to include NGOs. Given the frequent citation of the EU and the UN, these terms will be interchanged throughout in order to better clarify the actors under discussion.

Finally, based on the weak resource base of rural populations, this study emphasizes the importance of networks among these Non-State Actors when interacting with rural communities. These networks can have different structures and geographical footprints, with different typologies of objectives such as communities of practice, knowledge-sharing, specific sectoral interventions, advocacy or service delivery, but they all share the commonality of being either formal or informal structures that connect actors sharing either a common set of values or a common interest on a specific issue.³³ Following the formation of non-governmental networks and their eventual collaboration with government structures will factor prominently in the analysis as Angolan civil society attempts to establish its footprint in the growing participatory spaces in the political arena. These participatory spaces are defined as the interface between the state and society in the context of a fractured social sphere where distrust reigns and clientelism can often corrupt political participation. Within this interface, intermediary spaces emerge to exchange and negotiate on limited and controlled terms, but which become more durable and institutionalized between specific actors over time.³⁴ The study follows the arrival of these different actors, their exchanges and

³² Nuno Vidal, "International development strategies for the XXIst century and post-modern patrimonialism in Africa – Angola and Mozambique", *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 61, no. 1, (2018): 2, 6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329201800115>.

³³ Emily Perkin & Julius Court, "Networks and Policy Processes in International Development: a literature review", Working Paper no. 252, London, Overseas Development Institute, 2005, 2. <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/160.pdf>.

³⁴ Andrea Cornwall & Vera Schattan Coelho, "Introduction: New Democratic Spaces? The Politics and Dynamics of Institutionalised Participation", in *Spaces for Change? The Politics of Citizen Participation in New Democratic Arenas*, eds. Andrea Cornwall & Vera Schattan Coelho, (London: Zed Books, 2007), 1.

interactions, and eventually the establishment and exploitation of emerging participatory spaces.

IDENTIFYING KEY ACTORS

The principal actors analyzed in this study are two-fold: firstly, the MPLA and its party-state apparatus is by far the most dominating figure in the study, while the rural populations engaged in agricultural or pastoralist activities are the most affected by rural development policies as they embody the local actors most directly invested in maintaining their customary lands and improving their livelihoods through the transformation of the limited means and resources at their disposal. Given the emphasis on the evolution of the urban-rural relationship post-independence and particularly post-civil war, the MPLA-led government will be a dominant force in the overall analysis, meaning that the role of the two other major political parties post-independence, UNITA³⁵ of Jonas Savimbi and the FNLA³⁶ of Holden Roberto, will not be studied in detail, although some aspects of their legacy will enter into the analysis.

Beyond this duopoly of principal actors comes a third set playing the intermediary role linking the rural populations to the state institutions. These intermediaries are divided into two groups: (1) the resource-poor local and provincial officials tasked with enacting government policy and (2) the budding network of national and international NGOs, CSOs, and international development agencies that assist both the government and the rural civil society in enacting programs aimed at rural development. Among the national NGOs, further categories arise between the average NGOs with modest activity and those with a privileged connection to an empowered and recognized outside entity (United Nations, African Union, national governments, etc.) as a source of support and legitimacy. This novel group of NGOs will be designated as ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs in order to emphasize the ‘bottom-up’ power structure of these organizations and to differentiate them from the normally understood ‘top-down’ elitism present in Angola. Such organizations will feature

³⁵ As Justin Pearce notes, while UNITA became the major opposing force to MPLA national domination, upon independence it was actually the weakest of the three major parties in terms of military manpower as well as a weaker social and geographical bastion at the onset of the civil war. See Justin Pearce “L’UNITA à la recherche de « son peuple »”, *Politique Africaine*, 2, no. 110, (2008): 47-64.

³⁶ National Liberation Front of Angola (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*), based in the northern regions of Angola and made up mostly of the Bakongo people.

prominently in the analysis of different case studies measuring the agency of rural and urban civil actors alike.

The rural nature of this study will likewise follow a specific series of institutions that are tasked with formulating, organizing, and implementing policies and programs throughout the countryside. Many institutions and organs will be covered throughout this study, but three in particular will feature prominently. Firstly, the oftentimes ambiguous role of the Ministry of Agriculture in its various forms will play a central role while following the economic policies directed towards the ultimately futile attempts at modernizing the agricultural sector. Likewise, UNACA's role in rural social organizing and its efforts at assisting peasant associations and cooperatives is analyzed in different sections throughout. Finally, the *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical Unit on Coordinating Humanitarian Aid) also features prominently as its mandate evolved from coordinating NGOs active in humanitarian assistance during the civil war and the transition to peacetime to become a tool of coercive control over the NGO and the CSO sectors.

MAINTAINING MARGINAL MONOPOLIES

The research project aims to reveal the dynamics governing the rural populations by pulling on three key threads: the historic authoritarian 'socialist' developmental discourse of the MPLA-led government towards the country's rural farmers lauding for the return of the agricultural sector from its colonial heights, thereby implicitly acknowledging the dire importance of those working in the sector; the institutional implementation and subsequent results of these policies; and how the arrival and organization of Non-State Actors (NSAs) in the countryside has affected the power balance and influence of the government in its peripheral state-building agenda by breaking its monopoly hold on the power of resource distribution.

The study attempts to dispel the discourse that finds fault in the MPLA-designed rural development approach as a well-meaning government simply incapable of overcoming the serious structural deficiencies of the rural economy inherited post-war; that the MPLA intended to allow for widespread, independent socio-economic development to the countryside, but they were just unable to make it work or insufficient resources hinder their attempts. Instead, the research hopes to demonstrate that alongside the public declarations

of innate desires to lift up the peasantry ran a countervailing policy aimed at structurally undermining this same section of the population in order to maintain its political domination and undercut the emergence of potential political rivals. These dual strategies are a direct inheritance of the “Marxist-Leninist” policies of a national economy based on central planning and a population held under wraps, born from its learned experience under an authoritarian colonial regime mindset hesitant to empower independent actors outside of the direct web of party influence.

A principal objective of this research project is therefore to reveal the intricacies of the unequal balance of power between the MPLA and the rural peasant populations, with a specific focus during the critical time period spurred by the 1991 Bicesse Accords as internal and external pressures pushed a centralized and authoritarian regime into liberalizing its economy and embracing, hesitantly, a retreat of the state in its economic model. These economic transformations would have profound social effects as emerging political and military elites began to search for ways to carve out their private spaces of wealth accumulation: “This reorientation, which began rather tentatively at the party’s second congress in December 1985, appears to have reflected not only unease at the poor performance of Angola’s planning system, but also emergent class interests”.³⁷ This liberalization had a minimal effect on the rural economy, but it put the development of the country’s land-based natural resources back onto the political agenda. More specifically, it reflected a growing interest in land as an investment vehicle among Angola’s elite network of patronage. While the distribution and extension of land destined for this network has yet to be directly connected to a new form of electoral populism as described by Catherine Boone³⁸, this study holds that concerns for political dominance have become a central source to the strategy of the MPLA’s Luanda-based elite positioning themselves to dominate the areas where they are the weakest, with land use and its distribution a key method employed in this pursuit.

The originality of the research project is thus studying the duality between the socio-economic policies of the government oriented towards its peripheral populations and the

³⁷ Tony Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 12.

³⁸ Catherine Boone, “Electoral Populism Where Property Rights Are Weak: Land Politics in Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa”, *Comparative Politics*, 41, no. 2 (2009): 183-201.

organization of these populations in response to the policies enacted, with a consistent focus on the effects of the engineered dichotomy between resource distribution and deprivation. The government's insistence on modernizing rural spaces and the tenuous integration of the peasantry into these plans also features prominently. The study's objective is to show how the balance of power between the government and the peasantry was formed in the countryside, influenced by a strong authoritarian ideology of imposed modernization, and how the push for modernization has transformed this complex relationship since independence. Given how the oil sector dominates the political economy of the country, attempts are also made to better understand the links between oil wealth and the agricultural sector, notably in how to explain the connection to the underperformance of the country's agricultural sector when compared to its regional neighbors that lack the natural resource base and the wealth it has produced to finance its development. Studying this complex relationship will require a pluridisciplinary approach and therefore the literature analysis will reference a broad array of political scientists, economists, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and religious leaders.

A PORTRAIT IN PROGRESS: THE NEED FOR THE RESEARCH

Agriculture has long been identified as a major, even pivotal, factor in achieving broad-based development and alleviating poverty. The importance of the sector to rural area studies is directly linked to how many people in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are dependent on it. In 2015, the rural population of the region amounted to 602 million “with nearly 380 million additional rural residents being forecasted by 2050. By 2050, the estimated SSA rural population is projected to be 980 million – a 63% increase – reaching one third of the world's rural residents”.³⁹ In Angola, the capital Luanda justifiably attracts the majority of researchers due to its compact nature, relatively easy access and central influence across the country as its *de facto* political, financial and cultural capital, while rural Angola has been comparatively overlooked, despite still containing 9,635,037 people, making up 37.4% of the national population, according to the country's first official census, conducted in 2014 and published

³⁹ Sara Mercandalli & Bruno Losch (eds), *Rural Africa in motion. Dynamics and drivers of migration South of the Sahara*, Rome, FAO/CIRAD, 2017, 20. <http://www.fao.org/3/I7951EN/i7951en.pdf>.

in March 2016.⁴⁰ While the rural proportion of the population has been consistently decreasing in percentage terms alongside the phenomenon of rural flight and as a result of internally displaced peoples (IDP) from the war, in absolute terms it continues to grow.

Except, rather than centralizing resources into building up the productive peasantry, the current model channels the bulk of its resources around, rather than to, the average rural farmer. This form of a coercive and extractive predatory state effectively engineers a strategy of resource deprivation, thereby broadly cutting the peasantry out of the value chain of modernization and ensuring independent wealth is not accumulated in quantities capable of challenging the state apparatus as currently formed. This elitist resource distribution is a feature, not a bug, of the MPLA's rural economy, ultimately serving both a strategy of short-term political insulation as well as medium-term regeneration. We therefore look to understand the (minimized) role of the worker in this rural development policy and analyze the impulses driving the MPLA to build such an exclusionary development model. Even President Dos Santos admitted in an end of the year speech on 18 December 2015 that the political economy guiding his and his party's vision had failed at any true sense of moving the economy out of its chronic dependence on oil exports: "We spoke a lot about diversifying the economy, but we did very little, even so it's better to start later than never start".⁴¹ This revealing statement, coming from the head of the state whose authoritarian administration has single-handedly guided government policy since 1979, will serve as a clear evidentiary signpost in this study to prove that the periphery state-building agenda of the MPLA has failed to provide a functional economic foundation for the 37% of the population living in the countryside, 58.3% of which are poor and dependent on subsistence agriculture for survival.⁴² In fact, the rural development model relies upon exterior financial resources and institutions such as the FAO and the World Bank through the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and various NGOs to assist the small and medium sized farming operations, leaving the vast majority of the country's farmers reliant upon external actors to develop, when that option is available at all. Using the national database on

⁴⁰ Angola, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Resultados definitivos do recenseamento geral da população e da habitação de Angola 2014*, Luanda, 2016, 31.

⁴¹ Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica (CEIC), "Relatório económico de Angola 2015", Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2015, 193.

⁴² International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation (CSPE)*, National Workshop, Concept Note, Luanda, 22 May 2018, 1. <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/40296310/Lisandro+CSPE+Speech.pdf/ef7d95cf-10c0-49cf-b404-f05145a61b67>.

registered NGOs, we will also see to what extent the benefits and resources from these organizations are spread unequally throughout the territory.

While urban/rural divides are inevitable in any state, regardless of its stage of development, key indicators will demonstrate that other countries have been able to surpass Angola in key areas of both social development and agricultural production without the rich, reliable natural resource base that the Angolan elite have come to wholly depend upon, thereby evoking the questions of the so-called ‘resource curse’. Introduced in the late 1980s, the theory of the ‘resource curse’ suggests that “natural resource abundance (or at least an abundance of particular types of natural resources) increases the likelihood that countries will experience negative economic, political and social outcomes including poor economic performance, low levels of democracy, and civil war”.⁴³ David Sogge puts the resource curse theory into historical perspective asking whose curse it is, given that Angola’s human and natural resource riches have always been pursued by outside actors first shaping its political economy through the pursuit of slaves, followed by the onshore profit from agrarian commodities, and finally its mineral wealth extracted offshore.⁴⁴ By interrogating the case as “whose curse”, Sogge implies that while many suffer from the domination of oil and diamond commodities dictating the structure of the national economy, other actors, both exogenous and endogenous, are rewarded royally. The lack of strong institutions allows the elites to continue to profit off of the system as currently structured.

On a similar note, this study benefits from achieving its final analysis at a major turning point in world history, as global warming and the quest for renewable energy mean that oil-dependent nations are facing existential crises in finding new revenue streams to fill government coffers, finance political agendas, and assure social stability. While representing a secondary analysis to the principal objectives of this research project, this study also provides important insight into a major African state’s attempt to diversify its economy away from oil dependence and provides a systematic analysis for policymakers to identify the strengths and weaknesses and potential opportunities in the agricultural sector. This systemic analysis could be a major contribution to African Studies and could be useful for comparative perspectives with other oil-dependent nations formulating their own respective

⁴³ Andrew Rosser, “The Political Economy of the Resource Curse: A Literature Survey”, Institute of Development Studies, Working Paper no. 268, Brighton, University of Sussex, 2006, 7.

⁴⁴ David Sogge, “Angola: Como Maldição?”, *Revista Tempo do Mundo*, 3, no. 2, July (2017): 251.

diversification agendas. Since the new president was elected in 2017, João Lourenço and his MPLA party (Movement for the Liberation of Angola) have found themselves at a crucial crossroads in history as they look to continue the reconstruction of Angola's future. Faced with a history of civil unrest, the future rests on implementing a reform agenda that sets itself up for future growth while breaking from comfortable past habits. With the accelerating effects of climate change and the overall shift away from dirty fossil fuels, continuing a severe dependence on the oil sector is a very risky bet. Beyond tying future growth to global commodity prices, Angola's proven oil reserves were estimated in 2016 to be at 9.52 billion barrels, which would run out in 2032 at the current pace. Natural gas reserves were estimated however at 308.1 billion cubic meters.⁴⁵ While not a central concern for this study, this secondary perspective should not be overlooked as the effects of global warming appear to worsen each year, causing major disruptions to agricultural production, alongside the prospects of a return to the oil market growth that powered Angola's partial reconstruction.

The topics of economic diversification and especially land use are however central to the issues facing the current policy decisions of Angola's elite, notably in the delicate balance between respecting customary lands and promoting private investment in these same lands, while claiming to be the agents of change that the rural populations have been waiting for. The study will balance this analysis of decisions on the political economy with an equally important view of how the people living in the countryside are affected by and organized around these policies. The bottom-up perspective will be included throughout the analysis, in large part by following the rise of NGOs and CSOs with actions focused on the countryside. Accompanying the social reverberations of this systemic change on the local level represents a key area of study for understanding how the MPLA plans on integrating the peripheral territory *and its residents* into their vision of national consolidation, as outlined in part by Ricardo Soares de Oliveira and Susan Taponier's 2013 work "*O governo está aqui*": *Post-war statemaking in the Angolan periphery*.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ International Finance Corporation (IFC), *Creating Markets in Angola: Opportunities for Development Through the Private Sector*, The World Bank Group, Washington D.C., 2019, 111. <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/454d71e2-c965-4951-83b1-ae469d9f1e67/201905-CPSD-Angola-English-v2.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=m-PVp8R>.

⁴⁶ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira & Susan Taponier, "O governo está aqui": Post-war state-making in the Angolan periphery," *Politique africaine*, no. 130, (2013): 165-187.

On a more personal note, studying the systemic deployment of the rent-seeking, predatory nature of the regime in its post-war push into the peripheries has provoked the conceptualization of a similar but distinct political behavior, here designated as ‘Diversionary Politics’. This conceptual tool remains under construction, but has facilitated the overall understanding of the system of resource flows that characterizes this study. Typically, the concept of ‘diversion’ comes from International Relations and designates a regime that creates a self-made distraction in order to achieve a separate goal, often to distract from potentially politically damaging information. The ‘diversion’ is therefore to divert attention to a secondary action in order to cover up or disguise another. In this research, the terminology of ‘diversion’ is repackaged not as to pertaining to attention, public or otherwise, but rather the political choice of directing (diverting) the systemic flow of the myriad resources available to a government. My rough definition of “Diversionary Politics” is therefore: “A regime exercising the power of a state that, for means of strengthening and/or maintaining its hold on power, conceives policy and programs to strategically divert resources, public and private, around certain social groups that are perceived to pose potential political threats to its interests in order to weaken their capacity to develop.” This concept is a furtherance of the practice of clientelism but attempts to give a wider picture of its effects on different social strata by focusing instead on those *not* receiving resources, rather than the privileged few, *i.e.* viewed from the ‘bottom-up’ rather than ‘top-down’.

The concept of Diversionary Politics allows to see to what extent each social group is individually promoted/oppressed by a regime. Furthermore, the term of a ‘rentier state’ gives a broad brushstroke of the elitist winners and losers of a given economic model, but one of its weaknesses as a concept is that it largely treats the ‘losers’ as a homogenous whole while focusing on explaining the elitist characteristics. ‘Diversionary Politics’ looks at similar rentier models and practices, but with the important distinction of being able to analyze civil society through its more heterogeneous reality by focusing on specific social groups (in this case, the peasantry) to the extent they can be categorized. While the theoretical construction of this concept has been personally helpful in conceptualizing my resource deprivation argument, I was rightly advised to test my current hypothesis on already existing theoretical models and concepts, so as to not divert my attention. The concept could therefore be pursued in further research projects as it closely follows the actions exposed in this study, but needs to be put to the test in other contexts.

STATISTICAL VOIDS: RURAL ANGOLA'S GUESSING GAME

What kind of role does the government envision for the over nine million rural Angolans? This question is made extremely difficult to respond to given the government's lack of attention regarding the understanding of Angola's rurality. Government data are notoriously unreliable, both due to a weak administrative apparatus lacking the technical and organizational capacity to gather specific data points, but also due to a legacy political party, the MPLA, which upholds its central legitimacy point as the torch bearers of the flame of independence and the guarantors of peace through victory in the civil war, rather than a reputation as a competent, capable governing apparatus. Sustained reliable statistics are few and far between, and often come from international organizations such as the World Bank or the FAO, though their reliance on official statistics makes them also susceptible to producing poor data sets.⁴⁷ While we have already established that the official governmental statistics are often methodologically unsound, Fernando Pacheco points out that the FAO's stats "lack credibility resulting from the verification through empirical evidence of numerous incongruences in their information".⁴⁸ The fact that the FAO is largely reliant on the government's statistics in formulating its own is likely a principal source of its own weakness in data collection, leading ultimately to a dearth of reliable datasets linked to the rural economy.

Analyzing the rural economy, "in particular its production, is made difficult by the incomprehensible and growing limitations by official organisms, but also by the sloppiness and weak production of information, whether it be in quantity of quality".⁴⁹ The International Labour Organization (ILO) demonstrates the gravity of this lack of data in its negative effects on job creation and sustainability:

The access of women and men to productive employment and decent work is one of the most important challenges of sustainable development today. Measuring and monitoring decent work requires the production of timely and reliable statistics that can support analysis and

⁴⁷ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2011*. Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2012, 77.

⁴⁸ Fernando Pacheco, Maria Leonor da Silva Carvalho, Pedro Damião Henriques, "Contribuição para o debate da sustentabilidade da agricultura angolana", *Economia, Sociologia, Ambiente e Desenvolvimento Rural - Actas do 2º Encontro Luso-Angolano na Universidade Metodista de Angola*, Luanda, Évora, University of Évora, 2013, 314. <http://hdl.handle.net/10174/9386>.

⁴⁹ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2016*, Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2016, 88.

inform decision-making at national as well as sub-national levels, including both rural and urban areas.⁵⁰

To give some examples of these statistical incongruencies, the results of the census of 2014 found that there are 5,550,762 family units, of which 2,570,003 (46.3%) are involved in agricultural practices. But this number also includes units that live in urban and peri-urban areas and are also involved in agriculture. Only a specific agricultural census would be able to definitively determine the number of agricultural practitioners in the country, as well as allowing to characterize their production practices. While supporting the development of rural smallholders in the rebuilding phase, the INGO partnership of Oxfam/Novib's program evaluators found that "reliable and consistent data don't exist on rural 'entrepreneurs', who mainly live in informality and are 'not registered and don't pay taxes'".⁵¹ According to the *Ministério da Agricultura* (MINAGRI, Ministry of Agriculture) in 2012 there were about 2.6 million families practicing agriculture – a number that has increased since 2010 (1.9 million) and 2011 (2.1 million). In 2013, the *Relatório* of MINAGRI again mentions 2.1 million, while the *Relatório da Campanha Agrícola 2012-2013*, from the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute of Agrarian Development), indicated that were 2.2 million identified families.⁵² It seems very unlikely that 400,000 farmers would abandon their production within in a single year (2012-2013).

Adding to the contradictions, the World Bank published the latest analysis in 2019 identifying 4 million smallholder farmers, being assisted by 700 government agronomists/technicians.⁵³ The same report explicitly notes that "[a]gricultural policy development is severely constrained by limited availability of data about the characteristics and performance by producers".⁵⁴ Without a reliable description of rural producers, different studies identify different actors, between family units, smallholder farmers, and rural entrepreneurs, but the comprehensive canvass of this diversity remains opaque. Beyond the vague macro statistics, there are no definitive data from the *Ministério da Agricultura* on the number of commercial farmers. In 2008, it was assumed the country had "a few dozen

⁵⁰ International Labour Organisation (ILO), "Rural-urban labour statistics", 20th International Conference on Labour Statisticians, Room document three, Geneva, 10-19 Oct. 2018, 5. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_636038.pdf.

⁵¹ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 126.

⁵² CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2015, 88.

⁵³ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 63.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

‘intermediary’ rural entrepreneurs (mainly public officials with privileged access to factors of production and official financing), and a ‘few dozen’ rural businessmen in the normal sense (nationals and foreigners)”.⁵⁵ These data are not credible given that the calculation is not explained, and because the increase does not appear to correspond with a series of indicators, such as the area cultivated, the consumption of inputs, employment and production amounts, among others.⁵⁶

In fact, a report supported by the FAO back in 2005 confirmed that “[n]o agricultural census has been held for 35 years...As a result, current sector estimates are usually of limited reliability and effective policy making is seriously hampered”.⁵⁷ A decade later, the *Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica* (CEIC, Center of Studies and Scientific Research) of the Catholic University of Angola pointed out that “the development of the [agricultural] sector and its related programs and agricultural projects can’t be planned with a minimum of quality without having first identified and characterized the array of agricultural producers in Angola”.⁵⁸ The latest official statistics are also based on estimations, admittedly extrapolated from the 2014 census, which assumes a total of 8,826 small, medium and large-sized companies.⁵⁹ The lack of comprehensive information on Angola’s rural economy has been a constant source of critiques by development organizations, including the World Bank and the FAO. The comprehensive New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) assessment of 2005, created in partnership with the FAO, the EU, and USAID, was one of the most wide-ranging early assessments of the rural economy in which it noted:

The government has recognized its limited capacity to produce accurate data and is receiving technical assistance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to (a) establish a programme of annual monitoring of poverty and poverty policy measures and indicators; (b) build capacity to monitor statistical trends based upon time series analysis; and (c) provide data

⁵⁵ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 126.

⁵⁶ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 89.

⁵⁷ New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), “Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume I of VI National Medium Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)”, TCP/ANG/2908 (I), Dec. 2005, 13. <http://www.fao.org/3/ac583e/ac583e00.pdf>.

⁵⁸ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 87.

⁵⁹ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MINAGRIF), Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatísticas, *Relatório de resultados da campanha agrícola 2018/2019*, Luanda, July 2019, 5. https://assets.website-files.com/5a8e71e3c7881c000130ff13/5ef9a5fa04117d2577e30184_RELATORIO_DA_CAMPANHA%20AGRICOLA%202018-2019.pdf.

for external analysis and studies to build capacity for analysis of economic and social statistics which are instrumental to design and implement sound economic policy management.⁶⁰

It is unclear what became of this World Bank and IMF technical assistance, but fifteen years later comprehensive datasets remain scattershot. Major institutions have since repeatedly pointed out the need for the implantation of a comprehensive statistical collection program, though they have not used their technical, financial and organizational capacity to push for the systematic compilation of such data. The continued presence and program implementation of organizations such as the FAO and the World Bank always bear the asterisk of intervening in areas where their understanding of the local and systemic issues are hampered by an absence of knowledge whereas they could have pushed harder to provide the means for an obviously needed course correction.

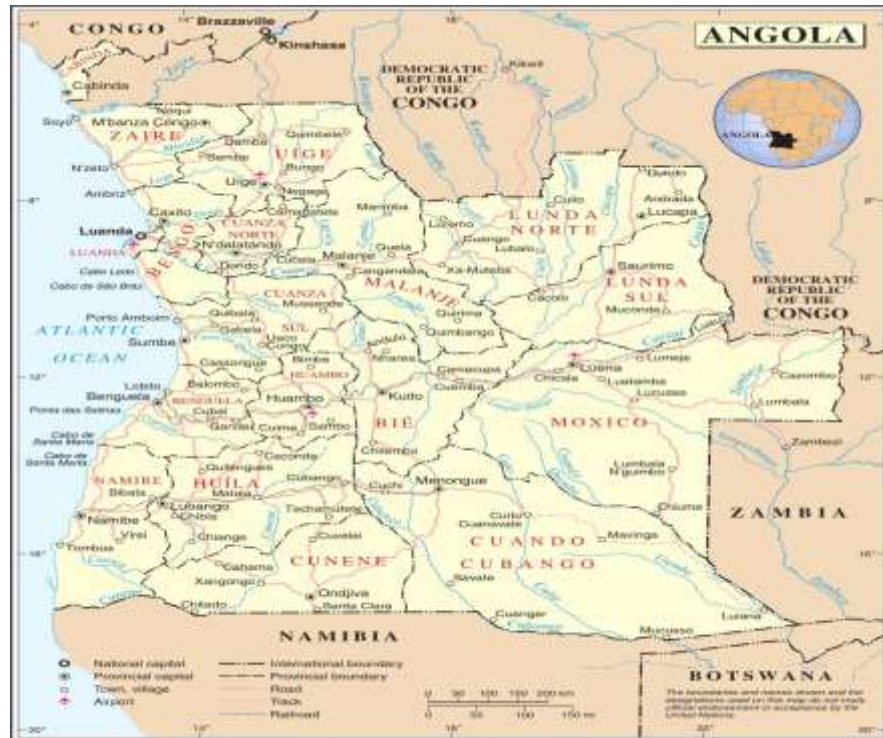
LIMITING THE SCOPE

Given the broad ambitions laid out above and taking into consideration the severe lack of scientific data sets allowing for a comprehensive picture, this study first needed to reduce the scope of analysis to better focus on its principal objectives. These will be organized by three levels of reduction: (1) thematic, with land as the central fulcrum due to its function in agricultural production, traditional uses and social reproduction; (2) historical, focusing on how colonial practices inform modern-day realities; and (3) territorial, progressing the scope from a national perspective down to local activities in Huíla province guiding the overall narrative eventually down to the *município* of the Gambos. The hypothesis therefore aims at explaining the underdevelopment of the agricultural sector nationally through a multi-scale territorial approach, thereby revealing how these dynamics are playing out at different territorial levels. At the heart of the rural economy and the foundation of rural society, land issues are also at the heart of this study as they form the delicate nexus between the social, economic, and cultural connection to communal lands. Nevertheless, this reduction in scope magnifies its own intricate web of land uses, practices and production models. Globally, its management and exploitation comprise a vast articulation of commerce that provides the primary resources needed to sustain life both economically and socially.

⁶⁰ NEPAD, “Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume I of VI”, 6.

Nationally, entire economies are organized around its exploitation. Locally, the importance of its productive capacity is equaled by its traditional, cultural, financial, and social roles.

Map 1 - Administrative geography of Angola



Source: Wikipedia Commons. File: Un-angola.png. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Un-angola.png>.

Geographically, this study focuses on rural areas and therefore rural populations and their relation to the government apparatus in its varied attempts to modernize the agricultural sector. An important piece of the puzzle in understanding Angola's unique urban/rural power balance is the complex state-building process between the Luanda-based MPLA-led government and its peripheries as the ongoing, organic process has only begun to solidify since the turn of the century. In proverbial terms, the cement is still wet. Throughout this study, the evocation of the 'peripheries' refers to the territory classified as 'rural'. In most cases, peri-urban areas could also be considered 'peripheral', though this particularity is not included in our present analysis. Furthermore, the vast geographic expanse of Angola (over two times the size of France), coupled with its rich tapestry of ethnic groups and customs,⁶¹

⁶¹ For a detailed account of the question of ethnicity, see: Inge Amundsen & Cesaltina Abreu, "Civil Society in Angola: Inroads, Space and Accountability", *CMI Report*, no. 14, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2006; Michel Cahen, *Ethnicité politique. Pour une lecture réaliste de l'identité*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994); Jill R. Dias, "Uma Questão de Identidade: Respostas Intelectuais às Transformações Econômicas no Seio da Elite Crioula da Angola

makes a full state-society analysis far beyond the scope of this study. The following definitional precepts of territorial division are sourced directly from most recent Land Law n° 4 of 2004. The process itself of this law's creation will inform a central case study in our analysis.

Box 2 - Defining rural land and its occupants

Urban land is the area classified as such or an area delimited by urban agglomeration (i.e., infrastructure zones) and destined for urban development. Urban land is comprised of urban lots, which are lots that are already developed, those that are under construction, and those lots that can be urbanized, i.e., are within an urban plan. (See articles 1, 19 and 21 of Land Law n° 9 of 2004)

Rural land is outside the delimitation of an area of urban agglomeration and designated for the purposes of agriculture, animal husbandry, forest, and mining activities. Rural lands include land used for rural residences and customary rural activities (See articles 19, 22 of Land Law n° 9 of 2004)

Rural communities/rural community lands are comprised of neighboring families that have collective rights of possession, administration, use, and fulfillment of the means of community production. Rural communities occupy rural community land, using it in a useful and effective manner for purposes of habitation, activities, and other customary ends, and in accordance with principles of self-governance. Rural community lands are utilized by rural communities according to their customs of land use and can extend to those lands used for itinerant agriculture, cattle passageways, and lands used to access water and travel to urban centers (See articles 1 and 23 of Land Law n° 9 of 2004).⁶²

Further limiting the scope historically, we will be covering the last decades of the colonial project from the mid 1960s to give historical perspective informing the contemporary period. The 1960s are a significant starting point given that major changes in the social and economic colonial policies were enacted at this time, intended to allow for broader endogenous development to reduce the financial strains Portugal's colonies were exacting on its own ability to develop, as well as to respond to social instability arising between both the colonized and the colonizers reclaiming more freedoms. We will then cover the project of (re)building the countryside from independence until today. By following the different actors engaged in these issues, this episode will serve as an analytical tool to aid

Portuguesa entre 1870 e 1930", *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos*, no. 1, (1984): 61-94; Christine Messiant, "Angola, les voies de l'ethnisation et de la décomposition. I - De la guerre à la paix (1975-1991) : Le conflit armé, les interventions internationales et le peuple angolais", *Lusotopie*, (1994): 155-210; Christine Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial, histoire et société. Les prémisses du mouvement nationaliste*, (Bâle: P. Schlettwein Publishing), 2006. The people of Angola speak over 40 local languages throughout the territory, though there is limited official data on the indigenous peoples. See: IFC, *Creating Markets*, 52.

⁶² United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "Strengthening Land Tenure and Property Rights in Angola. Land Law and Policy: Overview of Legal Framework", Washington D.C., 31 May 2007, 14. https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/USAID_Land_Tenure_Angola_Gender_and_ODG_Profile_and_Planning_Tool.pdf.

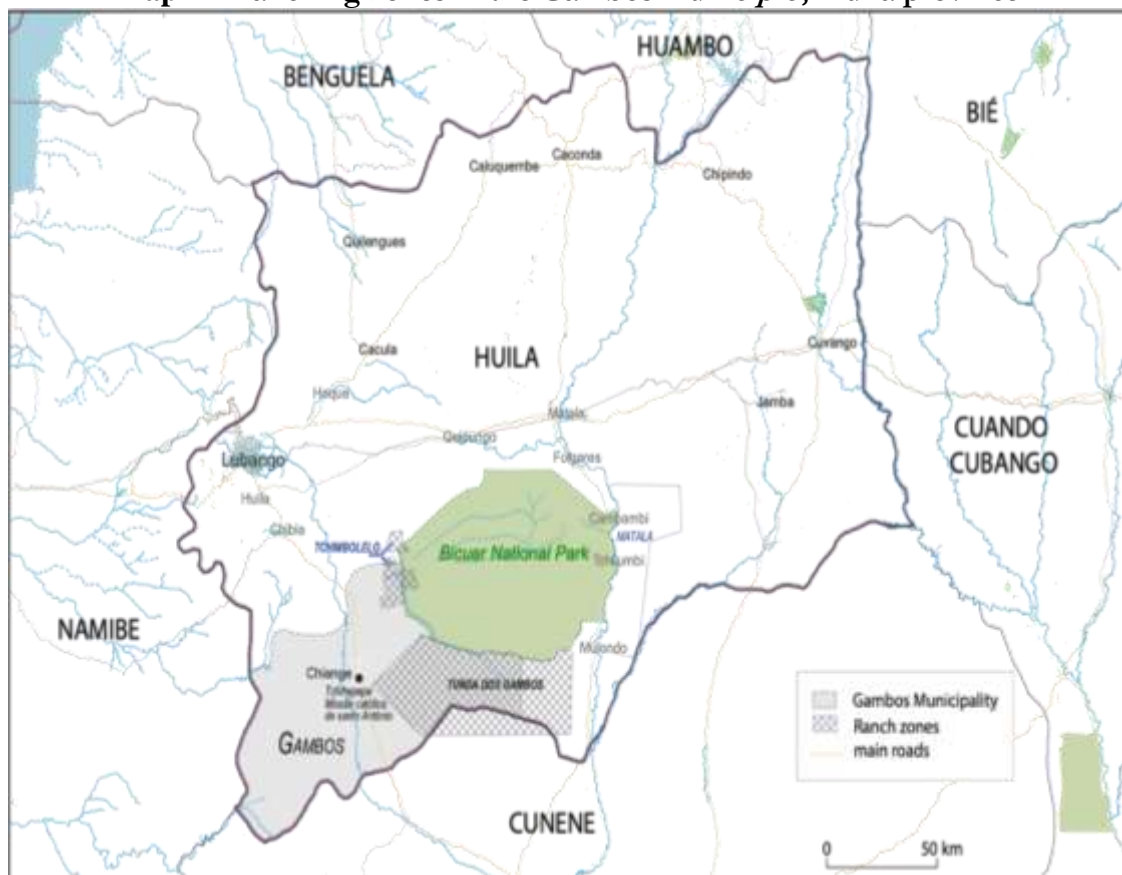
in understanding the MPLA's relationship with the rural populations at both a macro- and micro-scale. This analysis has the significant advantage of having fifteen years of contemporary history to witness the reverberating effects this encounter has had on Angolan politics and society, as well as remaining a highly pertinent topic as it embodies a central issue on the policy agenda of the relatively new administration of President João Lourenço and the continuing quest for economic diversification.

ENGAGING THE GAMBOS

The study incorporates a progressive, multi-scale approach both territorially, administratively and socially. It will include an empirical analytical scope in discussing the visions of the grandiose reconstruction project engineered by President José Eduardo dos Santos and his close circle of advisors. The meso analysis will focus on Huíla province given its status as having the country's largest rural population, its historical connection to a combination of agricultural and cattle herding practices, as well as a history of social mobilization. Beyond a purely provincial focus, however, the study will then include a micro analysis examining one *município* in particular, the Gambos, and its historical trajectory into becoming an ideal case study on the emergence of rural agency in Angola. The Gambos was chosen for its historic role as an early case study of two key NGOs *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente* (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development) and *Agência de Cooperação e Pesquisa para o Desenvolvimento* (ACORD, Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development) working on rural development issues since 1993. The persistent engagement of Non-State Actors in this area led to the emergence of the country's first informal land network *O Consórcio de terras de Huíla* (Huíla Land Network) which later expanded into the national *Rede Terra* land network.⁶³

⁶³ This historical period is described in §5.1.4 Building a rural land network.

Map 2 - Ranching zones in the Gambos *município*, Huíla province⁶⁴

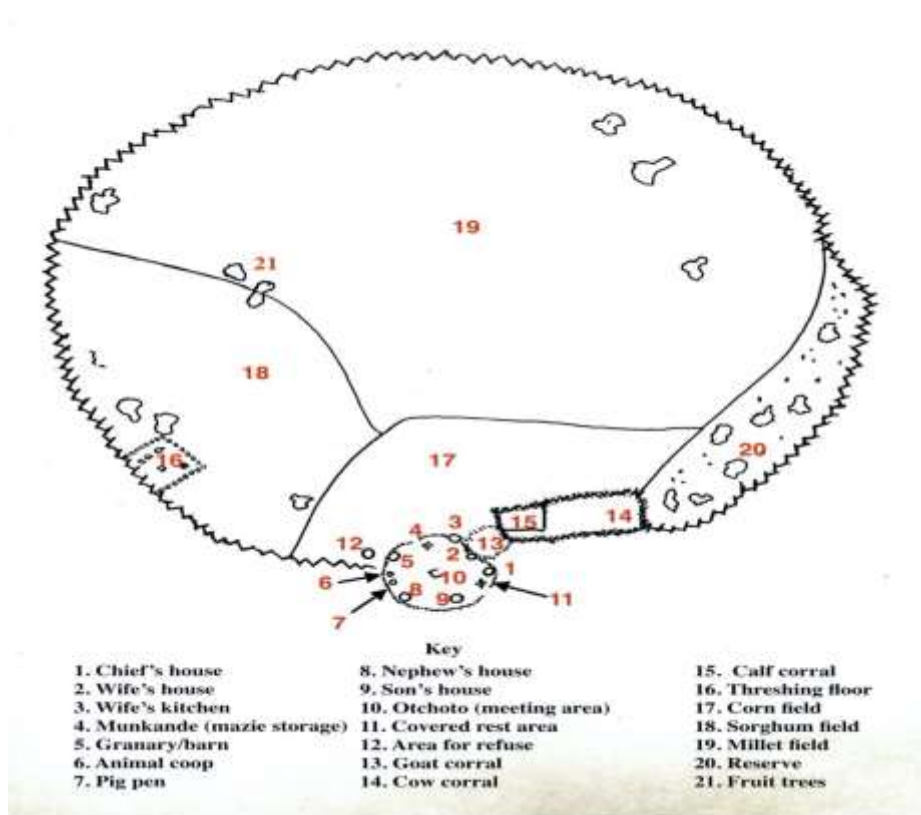


The *município* of the Gambos is situated 152 kilometers south of Lubango, Huíla's provincial capital. It extends across 8,150 km² and is divided into two *comunas*: (1) Chiange, including the villages of Tchuku, Kafela, Take, Panguelo, Pocolo and Tapu, and (2) Chibemba, including the villages of Caíla, Rio d'Areia, Viriambundo, Dongue and Chimbolelo with the town of Chiange as its administrative center. The modern origins of the municipality are linked to its positions along the colonial era Moçâmedes Rail Line (connecting the port of Namibe to the municipality and town of Menongue in Cuando Cubando province), initially built to transport iron ore. The Gambos is surrounded by the Northern *municípios* of Chibia and Quipungo, Matala to the East, Virei to the West (province

⁶⁴ Amnesty International, "The End of Cattle's Paradise. How Land Diversion for Ranches Eroded Food Security in The Gambos, Angola", Amnesty International Ltd., London, 2019. <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR1210202019ENGLISH.pdf>; Angola, Ministério do Ambiente, *Plano de Gestão 2020-2029 Parque Nacional do Bievar*, Feb. 2020. https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/AGO/Bievar_Management_Plan_Final1%20PT.pdf.

of Namibe) and the Southern *municípios* of Oncócuá and Chama (province of Cunene). Three main ethnicities reside in these areas: the dominant Gambwe of the ethno-linguistic Nyaneka-Humbi group,⁶⁵ alongside the much smaller Hakahona (3.5% total) in the Southeast area and the Dimba (2%) in the South, both hailing from the ethno-linguistic Herero group.⁶⁶ These groups live communally in multi-generational grouped huts (*ehumbos*) that make up the social and economic organization reinforcing solidarity networks and inter-ethnic alliances.

Image 1 - Gambwe traditional living quarters (*Ehumbo*)⁶⁷



Beyond the social connection within the larger family unit (*ombunga*), the communities are further socially connected through clans (*eanda*), each named for an animal or plant, that find their common historical origin in a symbolic or mystical power. While the clan structure has little bearing on overall community life, it establishes an important inter-clan link of solidarity (*olupikai*) among the peoples.⁶⁸ The idea that endogenous solidarity practices among the

⁶⁵ The study does not provide a specific percentage for the Gambwe peoples.

⁶⁶ Júlio Morais & José Correia, *Estudo das Comunidades Agro-Pastoris dos Gambos*, Lubango, ACORD/ADRA, 1993, 19-20.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

peasantry could contribute to creating participatory spaces of independence from dominant political powers harkens back to Goran Hyden's analysis of an "uncaptured peasantry" in Tanzania (1980).⁶⁹ In the case of the Gambos *comuna*, this practice of social solidarity extends to various activities, particularly in the economic practices of farming and cattle herding. To the extent that the people of the Gambos are "uncaptured", their capacity of successful social mobilization against elite interests comprises one of the case studies analyzed further on.

In a 1991 study on social and economic practices in the provinces of Huíla, Huambo and Malanje, the people of Huíla province were found to engage in activities of solidarity (*entreatajuda*) on a broader scale than those of Huambo and Malanje. In Huíla, half of the respondents claimed to practice cooperation in productive activities, while those questioned in Huambo and Malanje did not register.⁷⁰ Overall, only 22.2% of Huíla respondents claimed no participation in "*entreatajuda*" activities, while in Huambo no one practiced such activities and in Malanje the only solidarity registered among associations was regarding funerals (25%).⁷¹ These statistics should be understood in the context of the study itself in which its authors explicitly state that their research was conducted during war time which significantly undermined the overall methodology and thoroughness of the data. Cuanza Sul and Uíge were eliminated entirely from the study due to social instabilities.⁷² Finally, the larger link bringing the Gambwe people together as a whole is their historical pre-colonial roots to a Kingdom under a central sovereign hereditary power, with a King of the Gambos still in existence today, albeit in much diminished stature. While horizontal social practices are not the norms in rural Angola, the accumulation of all of these inter-generational and inter-clan links of solidarity and historical mystical connections among the Gambos populations have created an important cultural synergy that must be taken into account when considering its accumulated agency vested in these specific communities.

Topographically, the tropical dry climate borders on the geographic transition into the Namibe desert. At an elevation of 1,200 meters, daily temperatures rests around 21-22°C (72°F) with around 400-600 mm of rain annually.⁷³ There are no major surface watercourses

⁶⁹ Goran Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: underdevelopment and an uncaptured peasantry*, (London: Heineman, 1980).

⁷⁰ Júlio Morais & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico das Associações de Camponeses em Angola*, Luanda, ADRA, 1991, 66.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁷³ Guilherme Santos & Inácio Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 76.

in the area, though the Caculuar River crosses the municipality from North to South. Around one hundred riverbeds temporarily fill during the rainy season, making water systems difficult to function. Rather, occasional waterholes are found throughout the area, ideal for cattle grazing when the rains follow regular annual patterns.⁷⁴ The precious resource of water plays an increasingly vital role in the local economy between growing commercial farms and ranches competing against the interests of traditional family farms and regional cattle herders.

HUÍLA'S SOCIAL SYNERGIES

The reason that Huíla province became the incubator and predecessor for the *Rede Terra* movement⁷⁵ came through a unique combination of the “colonialism, socialism, war and liberalization” (CSWL) historical processes as described by Aharon de Grassi & Jesse Ovadia (2017).⁷⁶ Huíla province has long held a strategically important place within Angola, going back to the colonial days.

Image 2 - Overview of the provincial capital Lubango, Huíla province



Source: Personal photo, Aug. 2017.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁵ This statement refers specifically to the rural side of *Rede Terra*, as Luanda was the clear incubator of the likewise strong urban focus of the network, notably animated by the work of the INGO Development Workshop.

⁷⁶ Aharon De Grassi & Jesse Salah Ovadia, “Trajectories of large-scale land acquisition dynamics in Angola: Diversity, histories, and implications for the political economy of development in Africa”, *Land Use Policy* 67, (2017): 115-125.

Its capital, Lubango, known as Sá da Bandeira during colonial times, was as of 2016 the center of the second most populous province in the country behind that of Luanda with 2,654,836 inhabitants,⁷⁷ with the country's largest provincial rural population of 1,680,383, making up 55% of its total and the highest amount of rural “*habitações institucionais/colectivas*”, understood here as villages, with 3,155.⁷⁸ This makes up the vast majority of the province's total identified rural ‘*aldeias*’ (villages)/urbanized ‘*bairros*’ (neighborhoods) counted in 2015 at 3,429.⁷⁹ The only other provinces with over one million rural residents at the time of the 2014 census were Cuanza Sul (1,158,829) and Huambo (1,056,352).⁸⁰ The populous capital links the province to the triangle of power between the Benguela/Lobito corridor and the capital Luanda.

Its climatic conditions vary considerably between the North and the South, fed by the Cunene and Cubango river which crisscrosses nearly two-thirds of the area. The favorable climate overall has made the province an important zone for agriculture and animal husbandry, with the northern region characterized as semi-tropical throughout most of the province, with consistent humidity and dryness. In the southern portion, the semi-tropical characteristics transition to a semi-arid, dry climate where sedentary agriculture is difficult to manage sustainably and cattle raising practices reign instead. The provincial territory contains abundant valuable natural resources “including iron, gold, diamonds, mica, manganese, black granite and mineral water”.⁸¹ The expanding granite mines are of particular interest to current and future commercial interests and, therefore, rural land conflicts, as well as pressing questions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in the country. Though beyond the scope of this study, the granite mining sector's impacts on rural socio-economic development is another area rich for future research. The entire province is over 1,000 meters

⁷⁷ Angola, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Anuário de Estatísticas Sociais: Dados de 2011-2016*, Luanda, 2018, 25. https://www.ine.gov.ao/images/Populacao_Sociedade/ANUARIO_ESTATISTICA_SOCIAIS_2011_2016.pdf.

⁷⁸ Angola, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Resultados definitivos do recenseamento geral da população e da habitação de Angola 2014*, Luanda, 2016, 90, 92.

⁷⁹ According to the 2014 census, the other provinces with the highest number of rural villages/urbanized neighborhoods behind Huíla is Huambo (3,207), Bié (2,996), Uíge (2,682), Cuanza Sul (2,527), Malanje (2,432), Benguela (2,133). No other provinces registered more than 2,000. See: Angola, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Angola, 40 Anos de Estatística 1975-2015*, Luanda, 2015, 26. https://www.ine.gov.ao/?option=com_fileman&view=file&routed=1&name=ANGOLA%2040%20ANOS.pdf&folder=publicacao%2FEconomia%20e%20Financas&container=fileman-files.

⁸⁰ Angola, *Resultados definitivos*, 90.

⁸¹ Amnesty International, “The End of Cattle's Paradise”, 17.

above sea level except for the northern municipality of Quilengues, making for hot days and cool nights.

Demographically, Huíla's population is made up of a vast variety of ethnicities and has an average age of 20 years old (0-14 years old making up 50% and 65+ years old constituting only 3%) with only 40% possessing a certified birth certificate and 51% being literate.⁸² Throughout the province, of the 514,412 total family units registered in the 2014 census, 349,407 (67%) practice some form of agricultural activity. In rural Huíla, 302,653 family units practice agriculture out of a total of 351,678 (86%).⁸³ The census data on this statistic is based on "*agregados familiares*" (family units) which is defined as "a person or group of people, with or without familial relations, that normally live under the same roof and share expenses on food and/or other vital expenses".⁸⁴ This confirms the engrained agricultural character of Huíla province, and by extension the enormous importance of land issues to its residents. The hopes are that through this case study focusing on Huíla province and the Gambos *município*, future comparative analyses will be able to be made with other provinces.

The main source of social conflict comes from the variety of economic practices prevalent in the province, dating back to the colonial times. The colonial heritage of land issues turns on the decision upon independence to adopt the Portuguese land register, consolidating a colonial land regime that was built upon a discriminatory system,⁸⁵ which led to the undermining of traditional land use.⁸⁶ Foreign commercial farmers took advantage of the racial discrimination "by frequently alienating Angolans from their land, such as in the Gambos of southern Angola".⁸⁷ One of the major activities that separates Huíla province from others is the predominance of cattle raising. It is the principal economic practice in the majority of municipalities throughout the province.⁸⁸ This is a widespread socio-economic practice, allowing the rural populations to live off of the resources provided, with the little surplus production being sold informally in local markets. It is therefore traditionally based on motives of subsistence, rather than commercial. Likewise, the relatively high prevalence

⁸² *Ibidem*.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 173

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁸⁵ See §1.1.1 for a review of the colonial social strata of Angola.

⁸⁶ See §1.1.3 for a review of how the Portuguese agricultural production undermined and marginalized native land use and practices.

⁸⁷ Jenny Clover, "The role of land as a site and source of conflict in Angola", in *The Struggle Over Land in Africa: conflicts, politics and change* (eds), Ward Anseeuw & Chris Alden, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010), 151.

⁸⁸ Personal interview, Simione Chiculo, director of ADRA's Huíla/Cunene branch, 21 Aug. 2017.

of this practice is also a main source of the land conflicts occurring in the region, given the vast expanses of pasture and water sources needed to maintain cow and goat herds alongside the installation of industrialized farms and ranches set up during the transition from the ‘socialist’ to the liberal economic model to take advantage of the advantageous climatic conditions.

Nevertheless, commercial farmers and cattle ranchers feature prominently in the province’s political economy. In 2008 and 2009, when economic production began to ramp back up nationwide, Huíla ranked fifth among all provinces⁸⁹ in hectares cultivated by family peasant farmers (443,222), while it was found to be by far the most active province by increasing commercial production (60,000), with Cuanza Sul and Huambo coming in second at 40,000.⁹⁰ Furthermore, Huíla province has registered the highest amount of forest cover loss as a percentage (nearly 30%) between 2002-2012,⁹¹ which would be a likely outcome of the expansive commercial and peasant agricultural production, cattle ranching and grazing activities, as well as the destructive practice of charcoal production by rural communities feeding the growing peri-urban and urban demand. These statistics place Huíla as one of the most active agricultural provinces in the country, and the high attractivity of commercial exploitation creates the potential for land conflicts among the province’s largest rural population countrywide.

⁸⁹ Only behind Huambo (603,042), Cuanza Sul (590,828), Bié (562,017), and Benguela (459,014).

⁹⁰ CEIC, *Relatório Económico Anual de Angola 2009*, Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2010, 128.

⁹¹ The second most affected province is Huambo, experiencing approximately 22% forest cover loss during the same period. None of the other provinces experienced more than approximately 7%. World Bank, “Environment and Renewable Natural Resources in Angola – Opportunities to Diversify the National Economy, Generate Income for local communities, enhance environmental management capacity and build resilience to climate change”, Washington D.C., 27 March 2019a, 17. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/864671554294508064/pdf/Opportunities-to-Diversify-the-National-Economy-Generate-Income-for-Local-Communities-Enhance-Environmental-Management-Capacity-and-Build-Resilience-to-Climate-Change.pdf>.

Image 3 - Cattle herder in the *comuna* of Huíla



Source: Huíla *comuna*, personal photo, Aug. 2017.

Image 4 - Communal agricultural lands, *comuna* of Huíla



Source: Huíla *comuna*, personal photo, Aug. 2017. The farmer had built a rudimentary canal system from a nearby creek to water the crops, but to spread the water onto the surface he was using a ceramic dinner plate, demonstrating the rudimentary practices and the lack of even the most rudimentary tools used by the average Angolan peasant farmer.

Huíla province was spared the brunt of the civil war, and the stability this afforded the capital Lubango allowed its transformation into a logistical hub of regional operations for humanitarian and development actors looking to establish programs on the ground and offering a secondary option from Luanda. The people of Huíla province have also been marked by the deep isolation and perceived neglect from the capital and its creole elites,

going back to colonial times. This perception represents another key aspect to explaining the perseverance and independent spirit of the communities in the province. Marking a measure of continuity since the colonial period, except for the rural areas exhibiting the most productive potential, authorities have long abandoned rural communities in favor of the growing cities and coastal development, creating a deep sense of abandonment and neglect by the local populations.⁹² However, rather than being an ethnic-based conflict, it is largely the vast regional disparities that underlie this animus.⁹³ As a telling indicator of the feeling of deep neglect, for the communities living in the Gambos discussed previously and further analyzed below, it is estimated that only 3% of newborns are registered with a legal birth certificate given that health services are poor and the administrative costs too high.⁹⁴ All these factors have combined to create a unique combination of the necessary social conditions culminating in the capacity of organizing social pushback against an authoritarian power used to wielding it at will.

Beyond this cultured spirit of independence, the province is also known for its academic heritage hosting the University Mandume Ya Ndemufayo, established as a delegation of the colonial education system in 1963 before becoming a fully recognized university in 1974. The academic heritage has fomented a critical spirit emanating from Lubango, opening up wider channels of communication and debate not so readily available in other parts of the country. In the region of southern Huíla, for instance, “independent and even national radio has been a vehicle for opposition parties and other non-governmental bodies to express critical opinions. In other provinces, however, space is far more restricted”.⁹⁵ The unique combination of economic activities (both sedentary and nomadic) going to back to pre-colonial times, the province’s relative stability throughout the decades of war, the arrival and intervention of a key group of organizations (NGOs and the FAO) working on rural development issues, as well as the presence of a resilient local population accompanied by a steadfast group of Angolan activists, all led to Huíla’s pivotal role in guiding the rural land debate and inserting rural agency into the larger political system.

⁹² Gerard Verbeek, “The Go-Between Church: The church’s response to social/political issues facing Africa/Angola Today”, 1994, 4.

⁹³ Jenny Clover, “The role of land”, 160.

⁹⁴ Associação Construindo Comunidades (ACC), *Relatório sobre: O direito e o exercício de cidadania nas comunidades agropastoris nos municípios da Chibila e dos Gambos/Província da Huíla*, Lubango, Feb. 2012, 4.

⁹⁵ Vines, *et al.* “Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3”, 24.

The broader question remains as to why Huíla province specifically became the incubator of the *Rede Terra* movement, and why other provinces did not produce comparable sustained activity inserting themselves to national prominence. Alas, this study's narrow focus on Huíla did not allow for a larger comparison of rural provincial activism in time and space. A wider research program investigating a larger sample of the country would bring much more clarity to the issue and could better pinpoint where rural agency has been relatively consolidated throughout the country. In our opinion, which will be further developed in the study, Huíla province led the way because its relative social stability during the civil war allowed national and international NGOs to begin community development work as early as the mid-1990s, establishing a durable connection with the local populations and allowing the larger activist community to rally around a concrete cause that affected the province as a whole. These activities began to accumulate and expand beyond the Gambos municipality to the capital Lubango and eventually beyond. When word came down that the government was considering revisiting the country's land law, some of the organizations best placed to influence the debate had gained much of their prior experience from their Gambos projects, effectively laying the groundwork for taking these experiences to the capital and the national stage. Ultimately, the timeline of these local and national events positioned Huíla as the ideal candidate to become the forebearer of *Rede Terra*.

METHODS AND MEASURES

Angola's long modern history of nearly constant war (1961-2002) has created vast vacuums of knowledge about the country, as production of reliable studies and statistics has been severely hampered by the duality of a lack of access in the field amid the chaos of internal strife and the closed nature of an authoritarian regime which has never itself demonstrated its technical capacity to amass reliable data and indicators across the agricultural sector. The return to stability has allowed researchers to start filling in holes left by this void, despite the structural difficulties. Understanding and managing urban and peri-urban trends is one of the most pressing challenges facing Angola's leadership, though better understanding rural dynamics could prove a boon to Urban Studies as well by painting a clearer picture of the many push and pull factors affecting rural flight from the countryside, including questions of "high unemployment, low agricultural productivity and production

and non-commercialization agriculture”.⁹⁶ The human masses flowing towards urban centers represent a potent organic symbol of the MPLA’s continued inability to provide a viable socio-economic base for rural communities. Therefore, a comprehensive look at the rural economic actors engaging in agriculture and cattle breeding in the quest of socio-economic development in the countryside, as well as the evolution of agency and influence of these actors, could represent an important piece of the puzzle in understanding the socio-political dynamics transforming rural Angola. The complex links between traditional authorities and the modernization of the state apparatus will form an important reflection in trying to understand the balance of power and the formal and informal rules governing land access and use throughout the countryside.

In its attempt to contribute to filling in some of these knowledge gaps, this research project follows a methodological approach based on semi-directed interviews⁹⁷ with key actors on the frontlines of the urban/rural divide during the dissertation’s fieldwork between July and September 2017 in Luanda, Lubango, and the Gambos. Primary documents were procured in the respective libraries of the Canadian NGO Development Workshop, the national NGO *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente* (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development)’s Luanda and Huíla/Cunene offices, the National Archives of Luanda, and the government agency *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical Unit on Coordinating Humanitarian Aid), which by that time had been converted to the *Instituto de Promoção e Coordenação da Ajuda às Comunidades* (IPROCRAC, Institute for Community Aid Promotion and Coordination). The actors and locations were primarily chosen for their role in the origins of the *Rede Terra* initiative. A concerted effort was made to compile an extensive bibliographic collection of ‘grey literature’ studies and reports sourced from Non-State Actors, as well as official government data describing the location and activities of NGOs and CSOs across the country. The constitution of the bibliography below proceeded in the same manner as the overall analysis itself, moving from macro literature describing the national context to more micro studies and reports focused on Huíla province and eventually the Gambos *município*.

⁹⁶ IFAD, *Republic of Angola Country Strategic Opportunities Program 2019-2024*. Rome, Dec. 2018a, 28. <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/125/docs/EB-2018-125-R-26-Rev-1.pdf>.

⁹⁷ See the sources section for the list of interviewees.

As this research project is firmly categorized in African Studies, an important analytical perspective to point out is its reduced analysis around the question of ethnicity. While ethnicities embody the key to historical, social, and cultural constructions, especially in rural communities that have not been as transformed by influences of the post-independence modern state, my fieldwork, interviews and literature reviewed have overwhelmingly shown that the importance of the questions on ethnicity exists on a drastically vertical sliding scale from local to national. Nationally, ethnicity has played a pivotal role in the early formation of political parties with the broad ethnic-party associations distributed between the Ovimbundu, the largest ethnic group, with UNITA, the Creoles and the Kimbundu, the second largest, with the MPLA, and the Bakongo, the third largest, with the FNLA. Beyond these generalizations, however, ethnicity only composes one of the key components of the distinct social trajectories of the different parties. Rather than being monolithic, each party is composed of a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. As the discussion on the MPLA's influence over the rural populations follows, these complexities must also be taken into account.

Throughout this study, rather than a close reading of specific ethnic cleavages, local observers dissuaded me from entering this aspect too heavily into my overall analysis. Instead, we have chosen to focus specifically on the socio-economic factors affecting the peasantry, while taking into account the historical, social, ethnic, linguistic and political factors that all play their part in the overall situation. The question of ethnicity is too narrow to understand the broader social tensions playing out across the countryside, while our approach allows for a wider angle on understanding rural dynamics across the countryside, as opposed to focusing narrowly on the unique subtleties of specific groups. Studying the regional disparities between rural, traditional cultures and the modernist, Creole-dominated Luanda elite proved to be a more fruitful approach to the ethnic issue, even if the MPLA had established a nationalist discourse keen on unifying a divided people.

Methodically, the regional social disparities represent a constant variable guiding the system of resource deprivation, but the study focuses more on how these deprivation mechanisms are created and enacted rather than exploring the ethnological motivations behind the actions. With these nuances understood, Paula Cristina Roque postulates that during periods of political transition, the political elite "fear that the ethnic groups that form a majority could take away power from the Kimbundu and Luanda Creole-dominated

MPLA”, while also pointing out that the Creole/Kimbundu dominant MPLA occupies all government posts of real importance.⁹⁸ The MPLA’s domination of the administrative state is nearly universal with party loyalists nominated to their positions from Luanda to far-away *municípios* (the most local government presence). This socially-motivated fear of ethnicities outside of the current ethnic elite structure gaining in prominence to contest MPLA domination is in fact a key motivating factor underlying the hypothesis of politically-engineered structural scarcity.

In the reproduction of Angola’s social structure post-independence, the country’s largely Creole, coastal-based elite looked to extend its power and patronage networks in a country that remained predominantly agrarian. Maintaining its power in the peripheries would therefore require “control of the peasantry and markets, and the appropriation of surplus through extra-economic command over access to land resources. Balancing the contradictions of accumulation and control continues to constrain capitalist development in the countryside”.⁹⁹ Through its neo-colonial mindset, the MPLA overlooks traditional practices with its intentions on modernizing the peripheries for the benefit of a privileged few, thereby solidifying its party power networks not only throughout the administrative apparatus, but throughout the rural economy as well.

SOME TECHNICAL NOTES

In order to improve clarity throughout the text, some technical notes need to be briefly addressed. Whenever citations are used, quotation marks are employed when referencing specific text promoted by authors being referenced in the text. Otherwise, single quotes are used to designate terms referenced personally. Some minor technical issues were encountered in the production of the graphs located sporadically throughout the study. The program chosen to use was Numbers by Apple, but the software was originally installed with the French language as its default. As the study has been written in English, this created

⁹⁸ Paula Cristina Roques, *Reform or unravel? Prospects for Angola’s transition*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report, (8), May 2017, 9-10. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/sar8.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Bruce J. Berman, “Ethnicity, patronage and the African state: the politics of uncivil nationalism”, *African affairs*, no. 97, (1998): 336.

punctuation errors in the graphs as I was forced to enter the statistics into the program using commas (,) instead of periods (.).

In order to avoid confusion through the use of the English language in this study, some specific words have been preserved in their original Portuguese form. Specifically, with respect to the terminology related to territorial structures, we will follow the lead of Aslak Orre by preserving the use of the original terms *comuna* and *município*. The English terms “communes” and “municipalities” are nearly identical in morphology, so the preservation of the Portuguese terms should not provoke confusion. The issue of using the English terms could however cause misunderstandings. In English, the terms in question are common in Europe and elsewhere, but they connote structures run by locally elected officials.¹⁰⁰ In Angola, no local officials are elected democratically, though the first local elections were to be held in the current year of 2020 though the situation remains uncertain as of writing given health concerns provoked by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Angola, the *município* administrators are instead appointed by the provincial government, whose governor, the top executive, is itself appointed by the President. Throughout this study, all translations from foreign languages to English were done by myself.

A final note on terminology must be mentioned in reference to the various territorial spellings found throughout the text. The Angolan government has still yet to provide an official list of territorial toponymy (the etymological study of place-names), even though the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MAT) announced the preparation of such a study harmonizing the names of localities throughout the country in February 2014.¹⁰¹ As a result, the spelling of provinces and municipalities often vary between the Portuguese and a variation of Bantu spellings, for example the province of ‘Kwanza’ Norte could be written as ‘Kuanza’ or ‘Cuanza’. When citing other authors, the territorial spellings may vary. Otherwise, we have chosen to follow the spellings contained in the national census¹⁰² conducted in 2014 and published in March 2016, as it remains one of the most current and territorially comprehensive studies to date.

¹⁰⁰ Aslak Orre, “Fantoques e Cavalos de Tróia, Instrumentalização das autoridades tradicionais em Angola e Moçambique”, *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, (2009): 16. <http://journals.openedition.org/cea/190>.

¹⁰¹ Angop, “Place names bill announced”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 26 Feb. 2014. https://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/politica/2014/1/9/Place-names-bill-announced,8aceda81-9000-4877-a5bf-36e843d9ec64.html.

¹⁰² Angola, *Resultados definitivos*, 2016.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES: A NOVICE IN A NEW WORLD

This study encountered a number of obstacles during its production. One of the biggest difficulties confronted during the fieldwork was my lack of initial contacts in the country. With a much-appreciated assist from Chloé Buire and her husband Maneto, I was able to set up a place to stay in Luanda for the first few weeks. As my launching pad, the contact list was updated daily as more people were encountered. I had originally prepared an Excel document with the names of the people I planned on contacting, but was advised that encounters in Angola did not necessarily work out in such an organized fashion. While some interviews were set up through this method, many of the most fruitful experiences were set up through word-of-mouth or random contacts that knew another person who could help. I came to understand that the circle of researchers, NGO workers, religious figures, politicians, and local activists is relatively small and once a few key contacts are established, access to high profile people can be made available with relative ease. Furthermore, my complete lack of understanding of the semi-formal public transportation system driven by the *candongueiros* took me precious time to figure out. Without local contacts with a vehicle able to drive me around, much of my research in Luanda was therefore powered old-school style walking the streets. Luckily my strategic starting position of Mutamba placed me within distance of my most pressing destinations.

Yet as I began to amass documents and discuss with NGO and MPLA officials, it became increasingly apparent that it would be necessary to take in all of the information with a grain of salt. On numerous occasions, the interviewees exaggerated their work, promoted misleading data, or obfuscated on facts. I am convinced that some of this misleading information was caused by the fact that I am an unknown ‘outsider’ to Angolans and there was quite a bit of skepticism as to what my actual goals were while I was conducting the research. I felt a general air of animosity from most officials when they found out I was American, as I imagine the role of the United States financially backing UNITA was still fresh in their minds.¹⁰³ Finally, having spent nearly ten years without seriously practicing, my

¹⁰³ The general ambiance of distrust was certainly not confined to my own case as attested to in Paulo Jorge Quteque Inglês’ dissertation completed a year before I was doing my fieldwork in 2017. He describes similar

Portuguese skills presented another challenge.¹⁰⁴ It took me a couple weeks to get me back up to speed with my speaking and listening comprehension. Being a native speaker or having experience living in a Portuguese-speaking country before my fieldwork would have facilitated my integration into Angolan daily life. Regardless, I was able to overcome any linguistic difficulties and I do not believe this issue significantly affected my ability to collect the necessary data and documents.

Besides these limitations, the timing of my fieldwork also turned out to be a double-edged sword. I was able to conduct my fieldwork relatively early on in the summer of my second PhD research year, so it was an ideal time to go and test my original hypothesis of a nascent organization of rural civil society actors amid a general ambiance of simmering frustration between local MPLA officials and the rural populations. Given my work schedule ending in June and beginning again in September, my window was quite tight as to when I could leave and would be obligated to return. The three and a half months available just happened to correspond to the impending August legislative elections wherein José Eduardo dos Santos was not on the ballot and the country was thus preparing for its first transition of power, likely between presidents but not parties, in nearly 38 years. Before departure I had been preparing myself to find strategic ways to enter into political conversations with the locals or government officials, but to my surprise, the population was abuzz with political commentary given the politically charged climate. Not only were they generally open to critiquing the MPLA, but those with a critical stance (a majority that I encountered personally) showed themselves to be very informed about the problems facing the country with most of their complaints originating with the MPLA. This allowed me a extraordinary opportunity to familiarize myself quickly with the realities on the ground and a unique window into the minds of average Angolans and their relationship with the government. Speaking with a wide array of people coming from all walks of life and each willing to express themselves rather overtly on political issues was a major catalyst in informing the reorientation to the approach of my study.

While many Angolans were ready and willing to discuss political matters with me, professionals were much more hesitant. Whether party members, representatives or religious

methodological issues and problems of access. See: Paulo Jorge Quiteque Inglês, *Reconfiguração social em Angola: ordem local e quotidiano pós-conflito*, PhD dissertation, Lisbon, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, 2016, 43-46.

¹⁰⁴ Besides a few sporadic classes in Bordeaux, I had not seriously studied and practiced the language since my two years of Portuguese classes at Kansas University, graduating in 2009.

figures, the distrust and hesitancy to engage in issues of rural land conflicts and governance demonstrated that we were clearly dealing with a taboo topic. Even *Rádio Ecclesia*, despite being known for its editorial independence, stood me up twice for an interview that had been approved by the director of the radio himself, Mauricio Camuto, while all sitting together in his office. I showed up twice, after needing to ‘reschedule’ once, to have the interviewee mysteriously not show up both times. Whether it was the potentially sensitive topic of land conflicts to be discussed, the presence of an unknown ‘Western’ researcher asking complicated questions or the context of the impending presidential elections, it was clear that the interviewee intentionally avoided me after initially confirming he would be willing to be interviewed.

A visit to the *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical unit on coordinating humanitarian aid) was my first experience interacting directly with government officials. UTCAH was part of the Ministry of Assistance and Social Reinsertion (MINARS). It was in charge of administering the paperwork for NGOs working in the country, as well as assisting in the documentation process for foreign workers to enter, travel within, and leave the territory. It was originally created to coordinate the humanitarian aid during the civil war and its mission was modified in 2002 to strengthen oversight of the growing NGO sector. It was there that I had my first concrete experiences of the difficulties of conducting research in Angola, particularly with government officials hesitant and distrustful of Western researchers and institutions. Upon contact with government institutions, officials were much more interested in asking for my passport and enquiring how it was that I received my visa than actually discussing my reasons for being there.

At UTCAH, I had come to ask for the government data on established NGOs within the country. I was hoping to receive the data of how many NGOs (both national and international) had been officially registered per year since 2002 when the legislation setting up the process was passed.¹⁰⁵ I was hoping to get a clear picture on the evolution of the numbers of NGOs being set up in each province in order to get an idea about the organizational capacity and activity of the civil society and the international actors attempting to provide aid and assistance. The first secretary was unsure how to help me, so she passed me off to one of the officials. After explaining my reason for being there, I was told they

¹⁰⁵ Law 14 of 11 May 1991 and decree n° 84 of 31 Dec. 2002.

could not do anything without an official letter addressed to UTCAH asking for the specific data. Days later I brought the request letter and was granted access to an office inside where I encountered the same official. To my surprise, instead of the documents that I had requested, the official laid out a photocopy of my passport, my visa papers, and the required invitation letter prepared by Manuel José Alves da Rocha, director of the *Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica* (CEIC, Center of Studies and Scientific Research) at the Catholic University of Angola (UCAN). I had only given him my name in the previous encounter.

The rest of the meeting I was peppered with various questions about who I was, where I came from, how I entered Angola, and when my visa was going to expire. I had to show him my real passport and visa that I was carrying with me and answer all of his questions. After about tense twenty minutes of questioning, the official appeared to accept my answers. He took the letter and told me that he would review the document with the management and I could come back in two more weeks to find out their decision. Two weeks later I returned and the official provided me with multiple years (2007, 2010, 2012) of UTCAH's NGO publications, but informed me that he could not provide those before 2007 because a fire in the building had destroyed all of the previous records.

My difficult experience with UTCAH was a good preparation for what was to happen at UNACA. The experience previously described was only one episode of a prolonged series. There, I ended up making six different return trips, each based on technicalities that prevented them from being able to act on the information I was looking for. UNACA presents itself as a pseudo 'mass organization' closely linked to the government involved in organizing the country's rural economic actors. Focused on forming and providing assistance to peasant associations and cooperatives, I was hoping to receive specific data on how many cooperatives and associations had been officially recognized per year and per province since its establishment in 1990. With this information, I could have an idea of the evolutionary perspective on how many people were adhering to these participative structures throughout the last decade of the civil war and into peacetime. The data itself is compiled by UNACA, which has a self-interest to inflate the numbers. Also, just because farmers have set up a cooperative does not mean that there is any actual production going on nor are the total numbers indicative of how many organizations are actually legalized. The data therefore would have been analyzed with caveats, but it could have nonetheless given an idea of which years were particularly robust in getting people to form associations and cooperatives as well

as where this activity is taking place throughout the country's provinces. By speaking in the hypothetical, it is clear that the data was unable to be obtained.

I arrived to the UNACA office in Luanda expecting the process to be difficult and left myself a little more than three weeks of time before I was to travel to Huíla province for the second part of my fieldwork. After that, I was planning on only having a short week back in Luanda before flying out, so I was hoping to get all of the paperwork done before leaving for Lubango. I had already written a letter explaining what I was seeking and brought with me all of the paperwork that had been discussed at UTCAH including my passport, visa, and a copy of the letter of invitation. I was first welcomed in by an office worker and told to sit down at a desk until the secretary could arrive. He seemed very cordial, listened to my explication and made a copy of my documents. He informed me however that the letter was very good, but that he could not accept it coming directly from me. The letter would have to be rewritten and sent by a formal institution. I wrote to my point person at the Catholic University of Angola, Margarita Teixeira, who changed my letter to have it come from the University and not myself.¹⁰⁶ I returned with the modified document in hand and was told that it would be reviewed and discussed in the weekly meeting and I could return the next week for the response.

I came back the next week and was told to sit for about 30 minutes with no further information. I subsequently endured the tense interview as described previously, an exercise which revealed key insights to the enduring obscurities of the countryside. I came back the next week and was told again to sit down. After about 15 minutes I was asked to follow the secretary without knowing where we were headed. This time we covered the entire labyrinth of the building until arriving at another office door where I was told again to wait. I was then led into another office and told to take a seat. Unbeknownst to me, I was sitting in the office of the president of UNACA, Albano da Silva Lussati. The office was big with giant walls of dark wood, accompanied by an enormous desk, the Angolan flag, and a giant Soviet-style picture of José Eduardo dos Santos staring down at me from behind the desk as I waited. Albano da Silva Lussati came in and again asked me to explain my purpose for being there but was much more receptive to the idea than the others. He then went into a long political history of UNACA, starting with its origins in the Agostinho Neto transition government,

¹⁰⁶ See the letters requesting access to data in the Appendix #1-4.

highlighting all of the work they do in assisting workers throughout the country. I explained that I would be interested in visiting some cooperatives and associations to see how they work and talk to the workers. He told me that his team would write me a letter from UNACA that I could take with me to Lubango and with it, I could visit any cooperative without any bureaucratic problems. I had not even thought to ask for such a letter, so I was surprised it was spontaneously evoked. I thanked him for his help in my project and informed him that I would have to pick up the letter before the following Friday when I was to leave for Lubango. I also reminded him that I was also interested in UNACA's historical data per province. He said there should be no problem, that they will discuss it in their weekly meeting, and I should come back before the flight to pick up the letter.

I returned the day before the flight to find out the letter was 'still being written' and that I could come back a few days later knowing full well I would be leaving Luanda shortly thereafter. Overall, the UNACA experience was a masterful bureaucratic performance of running out the clock. After my fieldwork in Huíla province, I returned one last time before leaving Angola to see if the letter existed to include it in the Appendix and if I could get any of the requested data. The secretary seemed surprised to see me and asked me again to take a seat. A few minutes later I was led all the way to the back again and had a sit-down conversation with the president once again. He asked me how the experience went and seemed surprised that the letter never got to me. He then led me to the room where all of the UNACA paperwork is administered and explained the process. Finally, he lamented that the letter was not produced on time but assured me that next time I come to Angola he would personally drive me to various cooperatives around Luanda to see how much work they are doing. I still plan on taking him up on his offer.

My biggest regret while conducting my fieldwork was my lack of access preventing me from interviewing the peasant workers themselves. Upon reflection, the different structural impediments further reinforce my theory of structural resource deprivation towards the peasantry. Not only does a reliable baseline of statistics not exist, but UNACA stonewalling me from visiting any official cooperatives and interviewing their workers furthered this deprivation model. In the Gambos, *Padre* Pio Wacussanga did not want to cause any potential problems with the local peasantry around the Gambos area for fear of reprisals due to the impending presidential elections so a visit could not be arranged. I would

have preferred to interact more with the farmers and NGOs working alongside them. When I was able to interview these people, many did not want to go on record discussing the matters for fear of reprisals from government officials. One inherent weakness of this study is therefore the institutionalized actor bias that weighs on its analysis for lack of access to the principal actors in this study.

The overall climate in the countryside was one of subsistence and stagnation. When I visited Father Pio Wacussanga in August 2017 shortly before the elections, he informed me that the land conflicts had calmed down over the last few months preceding the elections. Given that the political class in Angola had been preparing for the first official transition of presidential powers since 1979, it is possible that the conflictual positions taken in the years preceding the elections were ordered to halt until the transition had taken hold and political stability had once again returned. Overall, the combination of the political environment, the distrust of Western researchers, bureaucratic stonewalling, the difficulty of transportation and logistics studying rural issues, and the high expenses of doing research in Angola all came together to create a very difficult research environment. While I did my best to work around and through these various issues, the results and analysis of the following study will undoubtedly be hued by this reality.

Given the sum of the difficulties encountered, a second return to Angola would have been a great opportunity to complete the information that I had been searching for and answer questions raised since. While I was able to take advantage of the resources available to me, I recognize that more time would have been extremely helpful to fill in more of the gaps in the research project. I am not sure if more time would have allowed me to recover the data I was looking for with UNACA and UTCAH, but I certainly would have been able to organize more important interviews. I was preparing for a second short mission in late February/early March 2020 for approximately one month of fieldwork in Luanda, but right at that moment Europe and then the world was overtaken by the Covid-19 virus originating in Wuhan, China and setting off a health pandemic. My research funding sources were subsequently shut down and shortly afterwards the first cases of the virus were identified in Angola.

A second trip would have benefited from a less tense political climate that made access more difficult than at other times. The fieldwork would have been focused on

recording more first-hand testimony about the personal experience of members of farmers' associations and cooperatives in receiving assistance, the difficulties and successes of more NGO workers, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Family and Promotion of Women to better understand the respective roles of these institutions in implementing 'rural development'. Visiting the newly built state-owned farms would also be extremely helpful to personally witness how these farms are faring and what kind of state they are currently in. That task is obviously easier said than done, as the state farms are spread across the country and means of transportation are both costly and limited. In the end, a lack of financial resources and my professional obligations reduced my possibilities to return to Angola. As the years went by, I had to make the choice to go ahead with what I had collected and begin the redaction process. I hope to be able to return soon to present the fruits of my research, notably with DW and ADRA who assisted me, as well as continue to study this very complex issue.

Besides the fieldwork conducted in 2017, this research project has been self-financed since the beginning and therefore has constantly competed for time with full-time teaching positions at the Université Bordeaux Montaigne, Université Paris XIII-Villetaneuse, Université Paris III Sorbonne-Nouvelle and my current employer, the Université Catholique de l'Ouest. The fieldwork was however financed through a scholarship with the French Institute of South Africa (IFAS). Beyond these professional obligations, one last obstacle that has occupied precious time for focus and concentration must be mentioned. This research program began in August 2015. One short year later, my country narrowly elected Donald J. Trump to the presidency of the United States. The four years since of the complete breakdown of political norms, fomenting social divisions, rabid partisanship, corrupting public institutions, and extreme incompetence handling the COVID-19 crisis have all weighed heavily on my mind. Besides worrying about the health of friends and family throughout the final months of this project, the rapid destabilization of American democracy and degradation of its once vaunted institutions due to one president's thirst for power, demands for personal loyalty, and the total collapse of the Republican party in complicit support of each transgression have however provided an excellent perspective to view the evolution of Angola's own political system that manipulated its own much weaker institutions to serve the personal desires of an elite few.

THE ANALYTICAL PROCEEDINGS

The paper is divided into three parts. The first lays the foundation of how rural Angola's colonial heritage informs how rural marginalization has mutated through different trends in continuity between the colonial and modern eras. The second part dives into the details of the peripheral reconstruction period, analyzing the different actors in the terrain and how converging economic interests brought them all together around the legislation of the country's latest land law. The last section looks at the how the government reacted to this confluence of national and international influences within the countryside and follows the different strategies employed to reestablish its position of political dominance. The historic presidential transfer in 2017 then analyzes what changes are in store for the future of Angola's rural economy and its populations.

Chapter one is organized as a literature review on rural Angola and the agricultural sector with an emphasis on the period post-1960. It traces the postponed push of the Portuguese into the countryside and the establishment of the extraverted economy organized around natural resource extraction. The colonial-era infrastructure set up for this exportation machine would later influence endogenous Angolan authorities as they sought to replicate it. A particular point is made in describing the role of foreign companies and capital in developing the agricultural sector and the different roles these companies took on within the overall colonial administration. This practice would be continued after independence with the Western offshore oil companies keeping Angola's economic machine running since. The chapter further demonstrates the various degrees of continuity between the colonial-era and independence in the social and economic governance spheres. Finally, the chapter summarizes the post-war period through a reading of the diversification of social and institutional actors that would later play key roles in rebuilding the periphery.

Chapter two focuses on the theoretical threads unifying the motivations behind the government's attempts to achieve domination and control of peripheral spaces where it is weakest through structurally-engineered resource scarcity among the peasantry. The research is firmly rooted in rural area studies, meaning that the common geographic, economic, and social structural attributes characterizing such spaces provide the *de facto* framework to the study. The theoretical considerations of the neo-Malthusian school and neoclassical

economics explore the questions of limited land carrying capacity, resource use for survival and social reproduction, and the role of scientific progress in producing situations of resource abundance. These theories do not however take into account politically-engineered resource scarcity. Rural resource deprivation follows the political ecology model proposed by Colin Kahl wherein a weak, authoritarian state attempts to maintain control over the means of economic production and capital accumulation. Seen through the perspective of a Marxian political economy opposing the political and military elites against the rural masses, we follow the flows of Non-State Actors as they provide their own resources in the form of support and assistance to these populations and how these actions have the potential to transform into cases of endogenous resistance and political struggle. The effectiveness of countering state exploitation relies on the cohesiveness of the concepts of ‘groupness’ which measures how likely specific themes can cut across social, ethno-cultural and religious lines, as well as ‘opportunity perspective’ which weighs a cost-benefit analysis of political struggle.

Chapter three introduces the second part of the study tracking the divergent rural development strategies of the government coupled with the different strategies and approaches proposed or preferred by the various Non-State Actors active in the countryside. In particular, this chapter focuses on how the respective administrations of Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos approached the rebuilding effort of the colonial inheritance left in the peripheries. Divided into four sections, it first follows the ideological roots of the ‘Marxist-Leninist’-inspired centralized planning of the agricultural sector, projecting the new state directly into the rural economy where it would remain anchored for decades. The second part covers the takeover of José Eduardo dos Santos amid the civil war and the reluctance to liberalize the economy in order to supposedly ‘protect the revolution’. The third section focuses on the post-war reconstruction boom and the attempted institutionalization of state authority throughout the territory. A small fourth section describes the role of UNITA during the civil war in undermining the national agricultural sector by weaponizing agriculture and food security. It then looks at the role of agriculture in the demobilization and reintegration process before questioning the lasting legacy of this war on the MPLA’s approach to rebuilding a countryside that supported UNITA’s actions in wartime and continues to provide political support to the party.

Following the historical trajectory of Angolan independence and the conflictual relationship between the two major influential political parties (UNITA & MPLA) and the

rural populations, the gradual insertion of international actors will play the prominent role in chapter four explaining the eventual power dynamics that have been under construction since peacetime. Rural foreign influence has come in many forms in the internationalization of the countryside, from mercenaries and soldiers during the civil war, the involvement of international aid and development agencies such as the Red Cross¹⁰⁷, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)¹⁰⁸ and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)¹⁰⁹, to a massive influx of INGOs attempting to blunt the effects of the grinding civil war and aid in the rebuilding process. The engagement of major international institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the European Commission will be detailed to explore the different strategies and programs put in place through attempts to influence the government toward better practices of transparency and social policies. Alongside this engagement, civil society began its own reconstruction through social organizing in different forms at the local level. The appearance and rapid growth of the NGO and CSO sector details this activity as they forged new networks and partnerships that would begin breaking down the wall between the people and the government. The chapter ends by describing the growth of new ‘participatory’ spaces where engaged civil society actors mobilize their new tools to obtain a seat at the table to collaborate with a reluctant government.

With the formation of civil society networks alongside the arrival of development actors and the awakening of an engaged section of civil society, government officials began feeling more pressure as different groups began to position themselves for the reconstruction period. The issue of land, as the foundational asset to build wealth upon, became a central focus across the country as the government announced its intention to update the land law to better align with market economy forces. Chapter five follows this transition toward rising rural tensions amidst a new scramble for land pitting an emerging new bourgeoisie against

¹⁰⁷ The Angolan Red Cross was created in March 1978 and later officially recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross in October 1986. See: <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/where-we-work/africa/angola-red-cross/> (accessed 22 August 2019).

¹⁰⁸ The FAO is an agency of the United Nations system. It has been a constant presence in Angola’s rural development strategies since its arrival in 1982. Its initial contributions were humanitarian and emergency assistance providing seeds, fertilizers and tools to prevent the collapse of the farming sector. See FAO, *Angola Country Programming Framework 2013-2017*. Luanda, 2012, 9. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bp627e.pdf>.

¹⁰⁹ IFAD is an international financial institution and agency of the United Nations. Its first project was “Malanje Smallholder Sector Rehabilitation Project” approved on 5 December 1989. IFAD has organized seven projects supporting rural populations, with an eighth project, its most ambitious in both scope and size, pending. See: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/project/id/1100000451/country/Angola> (accessed 10 July 2019).

rural communities who found themselves essentially abandoned by the government but assisted by endogenous and exogenous development actors. The post-war presence of these organizations will be a major focus on the relationship between the MPLA and the rural populations, with a case study analyzing the historic formation of the *Rede Terra* movement and its culmination in the first official encounter of civil society actors allowed to participate in the formulation of public policy, eventually becoming the Land Law n° 9 of 9 November 2004 that replaced the defunct 21-C/92 Land Law. Following the historical origins of this network back to Huíla province, it then covers its nation-wide civic mobilization campaign inspired in part by Mozambique's similar experience before finally questioning what kind of legacy the experience left behind.

Chapter six begins the third section of the overall study, which focuses on the myriad strategies the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos employed to achieve his goals of controlling the countryside via a political strategy of dominance through strategic resource deprivation. Divided into three parts, it begins by demonstrating the influence outside development actors had on rural civil society and the government's actions as a whole. It shows that shortly after the end of the civil war and the stabilization of the national economy through the oil sector, the MPLA eventually saw these organizations as a threat to their power dominance in the countryside and took steps to co-opt and counteract this influence by weaponizing its legal-rational authority. These measures had the effects of dissuading competent actors from engaging in much needed rural socio-economic rehabilitation projects, while the government failed in turn to fill the void that it itself both provoked and sustained. The second part then details how the government actively courted the formation of peasant associations and cooperatives in order to better supervise the principal rural economic agents, while undercutting the organization *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola) tasked with developing them alongside disincentivizing the development of rural entrepreneurship through the continued presence of state-owned companies throughout the value chain of agricultural production. Finally, the third section focuses on concrete case studies that demonstrate the strategy of rural rent control and State-led development. The macro analysis will focus on a series of state-owned agro-industrial farms built by the Chinese and financed by oil-backed loans, while the micro example will focus on struggles between the Huíla provincial government and Padre Pio Wakussanga's

rural development plans in his Catholic mission of Santo António dos Gambos. The latter example will highlight one of the best cases of developed agency among rural communities in Angola and how it has been nurtured through time.

The final chapter seven has a dual focus. First, it takes stock of the legacy of the José Eduardo dos Santos regime and its ability to bring social and economic development to the countryside. Analyzing data from the turn of the century until today, it looks at the evolving development indicators and the degree to which modernization of the agricultural sector has been achieved. It then looks at how the relationship between the government and its people evolved until the parliamentary elections in 2017 through a first-hand perspective of the election campaign itself. The second and third section then focus on the takeover of the new president João Lourenço. It begins with a focus on the structural restraints that limit his ability to enact a reform agenda, while also following a series of the ruptures and continuities with the past administration regarding personnel, institutions, and political economy policies. Lourenço's administration has to confront calculated risks as it faces a reinvigorated civil society demanding improvements in governance while mired in economic stagnation. The final section looks at what changes have been enacted regarding the rural economy, notably the renewed engagement with the World Bank and the IMF pushing for a broad privatization agenda of state-owned assets across the economy. Securing these new partnerships puts others at risk, notably that of China and the oil-for-loans financing mechanism. The new administration has taken deep, structural changes in its position towards the rural economy, but little of these announced programs will translate to direct change for Angola's vast peasantry. Their overall dynamics of resource deprivation remain intact.

Part I – Cementing the foundation of rural Angola

One of the most important objectives of this study is to further expose the motivations, hidden and perceptible, of the MPLA and their engagement with the rural populations through their projects of peripheral state- and, to a lesser extent, attempted nation-building, as well as further understanding the local reception of this approach. Since independence, what vision did the MPLA proclaim for the countryside and how has that vision evolved since? Inversely, how has the MPLA been received by the rural populations as it expanded its reach throughout the territory? Which traces of the colonial legacy continue to mold this relationship today? How has their relationship with the rural populations evolved through the end of the civil war and the establishment of peacetime? What remnants of the civil war still play a role today, particularly among UNITA supporters? When the country's elite discusses developing the rural economy, how do they perceive the countryside? What links do the elites have with the interior? What development mechanisms are they putting into place? In what ways is the MPLA present in rural communities and where do these interactions mostly occur? These are some of the principal questions that will guide the first part of this study.

Chapter 1 - Governing a countryside in construction, a literature review

Understanding the mutations of Angola's population as its disparate, fractured regions coalesced around the fight for independence, endured throughout the civil war, and has emerged and transformed since peace time, is pivotal to this study's analysis of the rural populations' agency vis-à-vis the MPLA's omnipresence. A major realization in preparing for my fieldwork and upon my return was the relative lack of information available on post-independence rural Angola compared to studies on urban Angola, principally due to a lack of access stemming from the civil war and the country's enduring authoritarian character. While this study attempts to fill in the gaps of as many of these questions as possible, this poor academic and technical understanding must be acknowledged as a central impediment to this study. The research contained in this project aims therefore to be a contribution to understanding the socio-political dynamics prevailing over life in rural Angola. This chapter thus reviews some of the most influential authors and their works that molded this research and greatly assisted in answering some of these fundamental questions, integrating the works that were particularly illuminative and influential in revealing rural Angola. This endeavor is not designed as a comprehensive review of every scholar or academic that has worked on rural Angola, and such an exercise exposes the project to criticism as it undoubtedly overlooks certain authors or works.

1.1 Colonial traces and their transformations in rural Angola

With those caveats put in place, we will take an overall look at how these works describe the MPLA's extension of state power throughout the national territory following the influential footsteps of the Portuguese and how this led to messianic state-building plans to integrate an ill-understood and historically marginalized periphery into its national vision. In order to understand how the MPLA engages with its periphery today, it is first vitally important to review the two major historical events that have colored its views: the (neo-

colonial) inheritance of the Portuguese colonization (1576¹¹⁰-1975) swiftly adopted by the revolutionary MPLA and the civil war's (1975-2002) resulting power balance leaving an all-powerful MPLA-led government nearly unopposed to impose its vision on the country. Concerning the former, identifying the colonial patterns and their modern-day mutations are essential to understanding the formation of modern Angola society given the Portuguese's centuries long presence in the territory.

1.1.1 THE POSTPONED PUSH INTO THE INTERIOR

Despite their arrival in the 1500s, the Portuguese took another 400 years to finally push into the eastern regions and colonize the entire territory delimited by the Berlin Conference of 1885. In his work *Les Guerres grises. Résistances et révoltes en Angola (1845-1941)*¹¹¹, the French historian René Pélissier describes the bloody campaigns of territorial takeover, followed by regional revolts provoked by this colonial occupation leading up to the explosion of violence that eventually became the war of independence detailed in his second tome *La Colonie du Minotaure. Nationalisme et révoltes en Angola (1926-1961)*.¹¹² Only in the twentieth century did the deep territorial push into the interior finally occur, after the arbitrary borders were finalized in negotiations in the decades following 1885: "Before 1890 the Portuguese controlled less than 10 per cent of the area of Angola and scarcely 1 per cent of Mozambique. In the remaining part of these colonies, Portuguese control was confined to the trade routes".¹¹³ The following decades were marked by violent struggle as the Portuguese gathered resources for a campaign of occupation to secure its colonial borders against its European rivals. At least 90 military campaigns were fought by and against the Portuguese between 1890 and 1922 to gain territorial supremacy.¹¹⁴ The accumulation of these violent encounters "created strong tensions of empire and provoked widespread passive resistance and outright

¹¹⁰ Explorer Diogo Cão first discovered modern-day Angola in 1483, but Luanda's first permanent settlement was in 1576. See: Jeffrey Paige, *Agrarian Revolution* (New York: Simon & Schuster, April 1978), 211.

¹¹¹ René Pélissier, *Les Guerres grises. Résistances et révoltes en Angola (1845-1941)* (Montamets (France): Éd. Pélissier, 1977).

¹¹² René Pélissier, *La colonie du Minotaure. Nationalismes et révoltes en Angola (1926-1961)* (Montamets (France): Éd. Pélissier, 1978).

¹¹³ Henk L. Wesseling, *The European Colonial Empires: 1815-1919* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 189.

¹¹⁴ Susan Broadhead, *Historical Dictionary of Angola* (Metuchen-London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992), 19.

rebellions on the part of indigenous communities that were to last well into the 1930s”.¹¹⁵ While the precise dates are disputed, the final territorial occupation would not occur until the mid-1920s¹¹⁶ or 1930s.¹¹⁷

The areas that would later be chosen by Angola’s elite for rebuilding the agricultural sector were directly influenced by the Portuguese’s ability to both conquer and transform territorial enclaves, given that “colonial states presided over only partial and fragmented transitions towards capitalist forms of labour, property and production [...] that were spread very unevenly over the landscape”.¹¹⁸ This territorial expansion slowly opened up important resource rich areas where major commercialized farms would later build up the agricultural export sector. For cotton production, hundreds of thousands of hectares were distributed to European farmers as a direct consequence of the destabilizing market effects of the American civil war (1861-1864).¹¹⁹ The colonization of the Malanje plateau led to the establishment of mostly small or medium-sized farms around 300-500 acres, while the oldest estates could encompass up to 5,000.¹²⁰ These farms were built in areas of high production potential, thereby almost inevitably clashing with large numbers of native populations already settled on or using the land for subsistence cultivation.¹²¹ As the European settlements expanded, so too did the social disruption to the African populations.

Not only were they being displaced in the countryside, but the arrival of the European settlers also “implied the removal of the small African bourgeoisie from their public functions and the most attractive jobs, as well as the creation of obstacles to the social promotion of the Africans”.¹²² Colonizers thus occupied the positions of social advancement in both the urban and rural areas, an intentional pursuit to cement the political control of the settlers over the native population. In the peripheries, the settlers’ takeover of advantageous

¹¹⁵ Philip Havik, “Colonial Administration, Public Accounts and Fiscal Extraction: Policies and Revenues in Portuguese Africa (1900-1960)”, *African Economic History*, 41, (2013): 174.

¹¹⁶ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 168.

¹¹⁷ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 211.

¹¹⁸ Bruce J Berman, “Ethnicity, patronage and the African state: the politics of uncivil nationalism”, *African affairs*, no. 97, (1998): 314.

¹¹⁹ Anne Pitcher, “Sowing the Seeds of Failure: Early Portuguese Cotton Cultivation in Angola and Mozambique, 1820-1926”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 17, no. 1, (1991). <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057079108708266>.

¹²⁰ Irene S. Van Dongen, “Coffee Trade, Coffee Regions, and Coffee Ports in Angola”, *Economic Geography*, 37, no. 4, (1961): 328.

¹²¹ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 233.

¹²² Cláudia Castelo “‘Novos Brasis’ em África: desenvolvimento e colonialismo português tardio”, *Vária História*, 30, no. 53, (2014): 512.

productive areas and their dominance over the rural market mechanisms suppressed the emergence of a native bourgeoisie capable of contesting the political and economic system through non-violent means.¹²³ Regardless whether the expansion of the settlers into new areas produced physical violent conflict or not, the disrupting effects were profound. In his review of Pélissier's *Les Guerres grises*, Jean-Luc Vellut notes the example of the 1917 uprising in Seles-Amboim (Cuanza Sul province) which led to an extermination campaign by the Portuguese, clearing the way for European farmers to cultivate the coffee industry.¹²⁴ This cycle of violence was fueled by the extractivist economic structure built by the Portuguese, laying the foundation of the economic "extraversion"¹²⁵ still operational today.

Given that the historical focus lies at the nexus of the abrupt political takeover of the MPLA and its subsequent transformation of authoritarian governance, the study looks to the early 1960s to better understand the socio-political environment during the handover of power and the state of the rural economy at the time of independence. A confluence of events led Portugal to experience unique pressures in the late 1950s and early 1960s that produced rapid institutional changes across its empire, leading to historic repercussions on the viability of its overseas projects. Domestically, the colonies were putting financial pressures on a country with an underdeveloped economy unable to cope. At this period, Christine Messiant summarizes the conditions of the colonial power as such:

In 1960, [Portugal] remains a relatively under developed country and dependent on foreign investment: agriculture, which only produces a quarter of the national wealth, employs about half of the active population; heavy industry is barely beginning and a third of the industrial workforce is employed in textiles: over 40% of the population over seven is illiterate; unemployment and emigration are extremely high; income per habitant is the lowest in Europe and salaries are miserable.¹²⁶

¹²³ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4.

¹²⁴ Jean-Luc Vellut, Pélissier (René), *Les Guerres grises. Résistance et révoltes en Angola (1845-1941)*, 630 p. in *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, Antiquité – Oudheid, tome 58, fasc. 1, (1980): 97. https://www.persee.fr/doc/AsPDF/rbph_0035-0818_1980_num_58_1_3275_t1_0097_0000_2.pdf.

¹²⁵ Jean-Francois Bayart, "Africa in the world: a history of extraversion", *African Affairs*, 99, no. 395, (2000): 217-267; Emmanuel Moreira Carneiro, *Le blocage historique des économies africaines : Spécialisation rentière et extraversion* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).

¹²⁶ Christine Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial, histoire et société. Les prémisses du mouvement nationaliste* (Bâle: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 2006), 27.

Beyond growing domestic pressures, international criticism led by the rise of a self-determination sentiment within the newly founded United Nations (October 1945), backed by the two anti-colonialist superpowers the United States and the Soviet Union also put Portugal in an increasingly difficult position in its insistence to preserve its colonies, leading it to officially change its administrative nature in 1949 from a colonial empire to a “pluri-continental nation” including its “overseas provinces”.¹²⁷ In December 1960, tensions were further escalated with the United Nations’ Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Country and Peoples.¹²⁸ While the international environment became increasingly hostile to the idea of colonial possessions, the domestic turmoil began to reach its breaking point.

The colonial wars, starting in 1961 in Angola, Guinea in 1963 and Mozambique the following year, also marked a clear break in the history of both Portugal’s empire as well as the foundations of Angolan nationalism. This led Portugal to abolish its colonial social caste system, a principal source of the rising pressures of local grievance and rebellion. In particular the 1899 Statute of the Portuguese Natives of the Provinces of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea, which separated the native population into an “*indígena*” category separate from the “civilized” European or “*assimilado*” blacks or *mestiços* who enjoyed the same rights as the Portuguese. This *indigenato* regime codified the daily life of the native populations and stipulated that natives “were legally bound to work in order to provide the means for their subsistence”.¹²⁹ Their exploitation through taxation created a heavy burden on these populations and led to a generalized resistance against the colonial regime. Some researchers have pointed to the issue of heavy taxation as being central to native resistance and displeasure with the colonial system ruling over them.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Philip Havik, “Colonial Administration, Public Accounts and Fiscal Extraction: Policies and Revenues in Portuguese Africa (1900-1960)”, *African Economic History*, 41, (2013): 181.

¹²⁸ Official website of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (UNHRC). See: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Independence.aspx> (accessed 24 Sept. 2020).

¹²⁹ Havik, “Colonial Administration”, 177.

¹³⁰ Justin Pearce, in his interviews from residents in Huambo province points out that “The one specific grievance with colonial rule that a substantial number of interviewees mentioned was that of taxation”. See: Justin Pearce, *Control, ideology and identity in civil war: The Angolan Central Highlands 1965-2002*, PhD dissertation, Oxford, University of Oxford, 2011, 73. Fernando Pacheco, in a personal interview from July 2017, also emphasized the administration of forced taxation as a central element to rural rebellion against the colony, but also pointed to the lack of this taxation as an important element in the relative calm among rural populations today. (personal interview, July 2017, Luanda).

Tableau 1 - Colonial social strata of Angola

Classification	Description
<i>Indígena</i> (native) Abolished 1961	Lowest social status, subjected to tribute & forced labor. An African (rarely a <i>mestiço</i>). Opposite of an <i>assimilado</i> . Comprised roughly 99% of Africans ^a . Governed by customary tribal law ^b .
<i>Contratado</i> (contract worker) Forced labor made illegal in 1962	African indentured workers, a product of modern capitalism's "rupture" with slavery, abolished in Portuguese Africa in 1878; generally forced labor established through decrees in 1875, 1899, 1914, 1926-29.
<i>Degradado</i> (deportee)	Initial waves of permanent settlers, condemned to exile in the colony due to unlawful or undesirable acts.
<i>Civilizado</i> (civilized), later replaced by: <i>Assimilado</i> ^d (assimilated) Established: 1926, 1954 Abolished: 1961	African or African-Portuguese (<i>mestiço</i>) over 18 ^e , who spoke and wrote fluent Portuguese, financially able to support self and family, adopted European culture, and of "good character". Officially enjoyed full protection of Portuguese Law.
<i>Colonos</i> (settlers)	White agricultural settlers who were encouraged to colonize interior lands. Generally under-resourced, lacked investment.

^a Jeanette Clover, "Land reform in Angola: Establishing the ground rules", in *From the Ground Up: Land Rights, Conflict and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa* (eds), Chris Huggins & Jenny Clover, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), 377.

^b Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 224.

^c Havik, "Colonial Administration", 174.

^d Michel Cahen, "Seis teses sobre o trabalho forçado no império português continental em África", *África*, no. 35, Número Especial, São Paulo, Universidade São Paulo, (2015): 129-155. <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2526-303X.v0i35p129-155>.

^d In 1950, the census counted "30,089 *assimilados* out of a total African population of more than 4 million", Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 224.

^e Earlier statutes did not explicitly require an age limit of 18 years old. Later statutes also included those who could prove to have "served in the colonial administration, was a licensed merchant, or was a partner in a business firm" (*Ibidem*).

Source: Broadhead, *Historical*, 1992; unless otherwise indicated

The marginalization of the rural farmer is nothing new, and certainly not unique to Angola.¹³¹ In fact, it is the continuation of a colonial rural economy organized around the exploitation of rural labor for the exportation of natural resources intended first and foremost for providing goods for those economies abroad providing the financial foundation of the extractivist model. This development of agrarian capitalism was measured, however, by the colonial authorities who "were restrained both by their limited resources and fear of

¹³¹ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 1978

the political consequences of doing more”.¹³² This configuration has historically favored a small, bourgeoisie elite dependent upon the exploitation of the masses. In Portugal’s colonial system, similar to other colonial models, systematic marginalization was officialized through the defined social strata:

The benefits of property ownership, trade franchises, labor recruitment contracts, and land concessions were reserved for Europeans or *assimilados*, while the burdens of forced labor, restricted mobility, and payment of the native tax were confined to the indigenous population. In the agricultural export economy the legal distinctions have affected the pattern of land ownership, the methods of labor recruitment, and the relative competitiveness of European and African production.¹³³

The weight of living and operating under the *indígena* regime and its mechanisms of marginalization were central to the local pockets of resistance against the colonial system, culminating most visibly in the countryside during the 1961 Cassanje cotton revolt explained further below, but also urban threats to the colonial system with the Luanda prison attack led by FNLA sympathizers on 4 February 1961, marking the official date of the struggle for independence.¹³⁴ Yet these uprisings merely represented the canary in the coal mine, as grievances swelled under the authoritarian yoke of the Salazar dictatorship. In order to understand the unique dynamics that led to this cataclysmic event, it is first necessary to review the installation and development of the colonial agricultural sector.

1.1.2 THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ANGOLAN AGRICULTURE

While agricultural practices have varied throughout the territory depending on the geographic and climatic conditions, subsistence farmers were mostly concentrated in a few specific areas divided by the Cuanza River. In the northern region around the modern-day Malanje plateau was where the Bakongo and the Dembos peoples were most densely populated due to favorable growing conditions for traditional crops such as cassava, rice, and

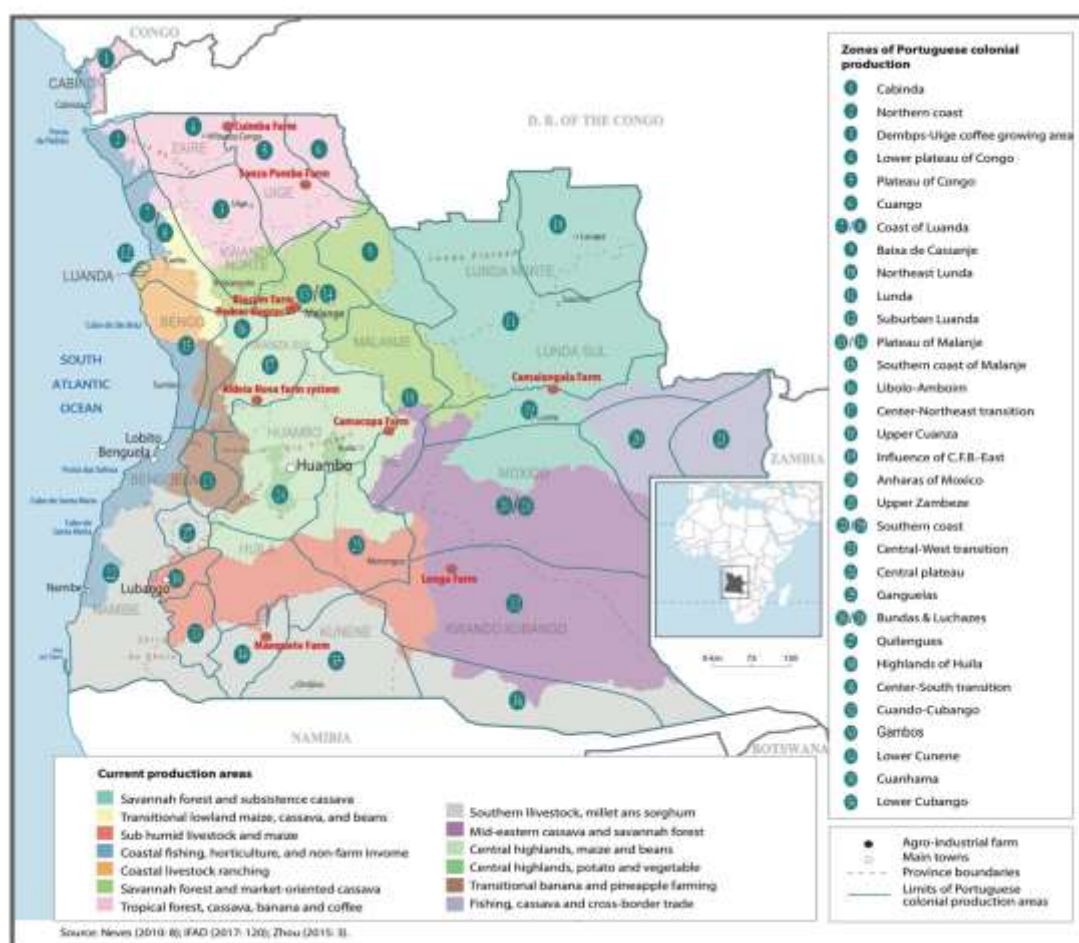
¹³² Berman, “Ethnicity, patronage”, 315.

¹³³ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 225.

¹³⁴ Guus Meijer & David Birmingham, “Angola from past to present”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process* (ed.), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 13.

coffee, as well as potatoes, bananas, beans and grains.¹³⁵ Once the word began to spread about coffee cultivation, the European farmers followed reluctantly, mostly due to the tropical diseases associated with its semitropical forests and savannas, coupled with the fierce resistance of the local populations.¹³⁶ The main coffee growing areas are located in the northern regions among the provinces of Uíge, Zaire, Luanda, Cuanza Norte and Cuanza Sul.

Map 3 - Colonial agricultural zones, production areas and sites of industrial farms



South of the Cuanza River, geography dictated different social structures. The imposing mountainous plateau of the Central Highlands proved a formidable obstacle to the Portuguese occupation, but the favorable temperate climatic conditions due to its

¹³⁵ IFAD, "Republic of Angola", 28.

¹³⁶ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 214.

considerably higher altitude (5,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level) made it an attractive objective. Ultimately, “the central plateau was the last area to be explored and occupied. Until the nineteenth century the Portuguese held only a single fort on the edge of the plateau, and even this degree of military penetration required the cooperation of the local African monarch”.¹³⁷ The semi-arid region below the plateau (lower Huíla and Cunene province) allows for more diverse economic activities with the practice of subsistence agriculture, the planting of certain cash crops (notably maize), various local cereals such as millet and sorghum,¹³⁸ as well as ideal conditions for cattle herding and pastoralism which has become a pivotal economic and cultural activity of the regional populations including the Ambo, Nyaneka-Nkumbi and Herero peoples. The major climatic constraint to the region is the erratic rainfall that leaves the region and its peoples vulnerable to cyclical periods of drought, thus creating conditions for malnourishment, increased indices of poverty, and an underperforming regional economy.

1.1.3 NATIVE PRODUCTION: FAVORED WHILE FORCED

In important structural aspects, Portugal’s approach to developing its colonial agricultural system differed significantly from its colonial counterparts, particularly due to the structural deficiencies and inability of the settlers to produce commercially without the recourse to forced labor. The massive exportation of slaves to the New World led an already sparsely populated territory to seriously lack able-bodied workers to sustain an overseas colony. Similarly, many of the Portuguese sent to populate the colony were considered *degradados* (‘degraded’ peoples, deported from the mainland) in the metropole and initially lacked the technical skills, know-how, or simply motivation to become productive members of the Portuguese empire. The cessation of slavery, approved by decree in 1858 and finally extinguished by 1878, took away a vital source of the workforce for the Portuguese overseas colonies and made the settlers’ agricultural production model obsolete as paying the workers for their labor was untenable.¹³⁹ Unable to compete with the endogenous production, the settlers instead monopolized the commercialization process of the goods produced and,

¹³⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁸ IFAD, “Republic of Angola”, 28.

¹³⁹ René Pélissier & Douglas Wheeler, *História de Angola* (Lisbon: Edições Tinta-da-China, 2009), 105.

behind the protection inferred by their privileged social status provided by the colonial government, engaged in often unfair trade practices in attempts to take advantage and further distance themselves from the local populations. They therefore enlisted the African farmers into a regime of forced cultivation of cash crops destined for export via European traders:

Whereas in the other populating colonies the States intervene in the interest of the agriculture of the whites – by putting restrictions on specific commercial crops for African farmers or large land expropriations, or even through means of assistance, notably financial – and the whites supplant the African commercial agriculture, Angolan farmers will be encouraged to produce both for the local market and for exportation.¹⁴⁰

Colonial support for native production was therefore contingent upon its ability to in turn support the development of Portuguese farmers benefitting from the groundwork laid by African tradition and know-how, while also producing the goods alimending the export market for the colonizers' commercial ventures. Both subsistence and commercialized farming of the indigenous Africans therefore had a limited yet calculated support of the colonial government.¹⁴¹ The former was recognized as essential to maintaining social stability through the practice of local culture and customs¹⁴², as well as a means to preserve the biopower¹⁴³ of the local population. The latter was viewed in a long-term development strategy as the colonial state moved to tax endogenous production locally, while reaping the benefits of the products' sale afterwards through expanded agricultural infrastructure and production, cheap raw materials for manufacturing and infrastructure goods, taxes¹⁴⁴ and customs revenue. With this system in place “the *indigena* production must, in Angola, alimend the majority of the colonizers, the major commercial companies who are often dependent on it and, through taxes and exportation licenses, the colonial state itself”.¹⁴⁵ Promoting the endogenous production was therefore essential to the colonies' growth and development.

While Portugal was supportive of local production, especially for tax and customs revenue, it created a system where the endogenous producers were marginalized at each

¹⁴⁰ Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 70.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 61-134; Pacheco, *et al.* “Contribuição para o debate”, 2013.

¹⁴² As Susan Broadhead mentions, Angolans had already established a subsistence agricultural regional trading system before 1500, based on the exchange of scarce commodities and basic manufacturing. See: Broadhead, *Historical Dictionary*, 78.

¹⁴³ Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité. 1. La volonté du savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976).

¹⁴⁴ The tax system evolved from a hut tax (1906) to a poll tax, “native” tax, direct tax and general personal and labor tax by 1961. See: Havik, “Colonial Administration”, 2013.

¹⁴⁵ Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 71.

phase of the commercialization process. This marginalization came despite the often comparable advantage African production had over its European counterparts. Gerald J. Bender provides the example in Malanje province where, according to the statistics of the *Missão de Inquéritos Agrícolas de Angola* (MIAA, Angola Board of Agricultural Surveys), an average *colonato* farm invested \$4,150 in equipment, compared to only \$1,750 invested in an average African farm, while the African farms' gross annual production was two-thirds higher, despite significantly lower financial investment.¹⁴⁶ With no institutional support and little if any investment capital, most African farmers practiced varied subsistence farming, growing the necessary for domestic consumption and later adapting to the local markets by adding the cultivation of cash crops that could be sold in local markets or through the indispensable Portuguese '*comerciantes de mato*' (bush traders). These economic agents were key figures in the foundation for the colonial export machine, as they were responsible for fixing prices, allotting credit, and distributing the goods to markets.

European farmers, on the other hand, focused much more heavily on the commercialization of cash crops, supported by local administrators and the same bush traders. At its height, these farmers were supported by a "complex system of settler-owned rural trade, premised on some 28,000 establishments serviced by about 30,000 trucks"¹⁴⁷ and "about 9,500 tractors".¹⁴⁸ Organizationally, Portuguese legislation essentially forbade the indigenous population from forming trade groups by expressly directing state resources to only a certain privileged portion of the rural economy, *de facto* cutting out the native population from receiving support.¹⁴⁹ The legislation was strict on the formation of such organizations as only medium and large-scale producers, run exclusively by Portuguese settlers, were able to officially form associations or cooperatives.¹⁵⁰ Taking advantage of the endogenous production would provide the colonial administration with funds necessary to create an institutional structure capable of supporting the Portuguese farmers in an effort to steadily take over and eventually dominate market share. Through the implementation of the tax regime and the increasing institutional support, the Portuguese settler class began to accumulate capital and increase its economic footprint in the colony. This accrual would

¹⁴⁶ Gerald Bender, *Angola and the Portuguese: the myth and the reality* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1978), 125.

¹⁴⁷ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 171.

¹⁴⁸ Herbert Steiner, *Angola's Agricultural Economy in Brief*, Foreign Demand and Competition Division, Economic Research Service, Foreign Agricultural Economic Report no. 139, Washington, D.C., Sept. 1977, 24.

¹⁴⁹ Júlio Morais & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico das Associações de Camponeses em Angola*, Luanda, ADRA, 1991, 10.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

leave this expanding social class vulnerable to further structural changes coming from the mainland.

Christine Messiant's extensive methodological research touches upon all the aspects of daily life under the colonial system, and her research will inform this study in a variety of domains. In describing the rural economic forces organized by the colonial government, she details how the government of António de Oliveira Salazar defended the Portuguese farmers against the native competition or exploited Africans' production through forced cash crop cultivation (particularly cotton), always with the principal goal being the controlled exploitation of the natural resources destined for the European market. The goal was to maximize production while maintaining strict control over the colonial producers. This was done by allowing Portuguese farmers a measured amount of liberty to self-organize in associations and to lobby the local administration for more favorable access to resources, while simultaneously allowing large state-backed commercial and agricultural companies to compete with the small- and medium-sized companies, keeping them in check through capitalistic pressures. This secondary goal of controlled assistance of the settlers was made possible through land concessions to European settlers as well as the taxation and forced cultivation of native production. The concessionary process occupied lands alongside and eventually usurped the most productive traditional lands of the rural natives:

In general, concessions were made with little regard for the rights of any African cultivators who happened to be living in the designated area. Before 1921 Portuguese colonial land policies permitted concessionaries to expropriate African lands if they either paid compensation or relocated Africans in native reserves established outside the concession.¹⁵¹

While this forced cultivation of specific goods enabled the exportation of specific cash crops, it also tied the hands of the producers and created serious anxieties among the African laborers.

Notably, the forced nature of the work in concessionary zones required the workers to travel to the zones, leaving behind their own fields of subsistence agriculture. This interrupted their own food production, disrupting African family and communal relations, while creating hardships on the vast majority of the endogenous workforce with little to no

¹⁵¹ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 233.

benefits to show for their services. The accumulation of personal and collective suffering was socially untenable, but the weak colonial production models in the agricultural sector required low or no-paid labor to function. Even with the weak accumulation of capital through labor, drastic alternations to traditional life were still underway. This new form of traditional farming alongside colonial coercion aggravated “the often tenuous and contested relations between generations and genders [...] by new sources of money income through migrant labour and cash cropping” which brought new wealth to the workers and their lands, increasing the value of land and property while destabilizing traditional patron/client relations via new resources and patronage networks.¹⁵² The colonial authorities felt compelled by their superiors to push these pressures to their breaking point.

1.1.4 FINANCIAL DICTATORSHIP RECUPERATING REVENUE

The consolidation of the *Estado Novo*¹⁵³ by the economist-turned-dictator António de Oliveira Salazar moved Portugal to impose stricter financial reforms to alleviate the heavy fiscal burden of the colonies, adopting coercive measures of fiscal capture. Policies were therefore sought to make them both self-sufficient and self-serving to the national economy. The laser-like focus on finances created a form of “financial dictatorship”¹⁵⁴ at home and abroad. In the mid-1950s the colonial project turned to an almost exclusively infrastructural nature¹⁵⁵ in order to speed up the exportation of cash crop production. Protectionist trade policies in favor of domestic production, an overhaul of the tax system, marking boards fixing prices for colonial produce, and reduced customs tariffs for strategic raw materials all represented blunt colonial tools to protect the integrity of the national economy, with the wants and needs of the colonial populations serving second fiddle to the motherland.

The quest for fiscal solvency of the colonies led Portugal to legislate and administer a vast range of fundamental changes in its relationship with the colonial populations, including

¹⁵² Berman, “Ethnicity, patronage”, 325.

¹⁵³ In Portuguese, the *Estado Novo*, installed in 1933, evolved from the military *coup d'état* on 28 May 1926. It lasted until its fall in another *coup d'état* in 25 April 1974 with the Carnation Revolution (*Revolução dos cravos*). The fall of the *Estado Novo* was in part due to the growing military frustrations of the costly colonial wars.

¹⁵⁴ Havik, “Colonial Administration”, 167.

¹⁵⁵ Christine Messiant, *1961 – l'Angola colonial, histoire et société. Les prémisses du mouvement nationaliste*, PhD dissertation, Paris, École de Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1983, 25.

the colonizers themselves. Administrative reforms designed to improve economic development accrued to the groups already favorably positioned in the colonial social order, leaving the African population further sidelined from the benefits of growth:

After 1961, Portugal relaxed many long-standing restrictions on foreign investments in its colonies. As a result, United States, European and South African money flowed into Angolan agriculture, heavy industry, manufacturing and construction, mainly benefitting European immigrants and the expatriate firms themselves.¹⁵⁶

While the settlers struggled to find their footing in commercial competition with their African counterparts, Salazar's patience appeared to wane as the cost of the colonies became an increasingly burdensome yoke on Portugal's development itself. The African populations were not the only social groups penalized by the new regulatory regime,¹⁵⁷ in particular the fiscal policies established under the *Estado Novo* taken to liberate infusions of capital, both foreign and domestic. The system was based on a Darwinian 'survival of the fittest' capitalism where the largest commercial and agricultural companies were allowed to compete with the small and medium-sized entrepreneurs who, while playing a pivotal role in assuring the development of the economy, subsequently lost special protections leading to numerous bankruptcies.¹⁵⁸ The increased competition brought increased social pressures, but the perceived economic benefits overrode any serious concerns.

1.1.5 THE STARS ALIGN ON ANGOLA'S AGRICULTURE

At the particular juncture in the world economy recovering from the massive disruptions of the two world wars ravaging Europe, North Africa, and parts of Asia, colonial Angola found itself well situated in the recovering global marketplace in the production of a small range of commercial crops (maize, beans, sugar, sisal) and natural resources (timber),

¹⁵⁶ Broadhead, *Historical Dictionary*, 79.

¹⁵⁷ For a comprehensive review of the new legal regime of the Portuguese colonies and how it affected Angola specifically, see in particular chapter 3 "Le système colonial : l'esprit des lois" of Christine Messiant 1961. *L'Angola colonial, histoire et société. Les prémisses du mouvement nationaliste*, (Bâle: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 2006), 61-134. For an overview of its effects on Portugal's colonial empire more generally, see: Philip Havik, "Colonial Administration, 159-221. While discussing the internal fiscal matters of the colonies, Philip Havik mentions that "Angola has largely remained an unexplored case" with a few recent exceptions (Ibid., 176). The perpetual understudy of Angola represents another thread of continuity throughout history, in a similar vein of Christopher Cramer's continuity discussed below.

¹⁵⁸ Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 122.

led first and foremost by coffee. This interest came at a pivotal time for the metropole as its economy was mired in stagnation before the sudden fortune bestowed upon the coffee bean, leading Angola to become “the Cinderella story of the Portuguese empire” while dreams of a new Brazil began to manifest.¹⁵⁹ As noted above, the farming sector had always been a central domestic activity in colonial Angola for its strategic importance in local food production and raw materials, but the scientific study of its production had not become a priority for the Portuguese government until its resources began attracting serious commercial interest from abroad. Eager to take advantage of its strategic position, Portugal quickly moved its resources to provide institutional support and expand production capacity. The first study of Angola's colonial agricultural production was conducted in 1950, focused on the main colonial exports on a national scale.¹⁶⁰ A decade later in 1962, the MIAA created the first national map identifying the various agricultural zones throughout the territory.¹⁶¹ Subsequent studies produced the vital statistics that would underscore the significant capacity of Angola's agricultural sector, which would later lay the foundation of the MPLA's future visions of agricultural grandeur.

¹⁵⁹ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 212.

¹⁶⁰ Bender, as cited in Messiant, *1961. L'Angola colonial*, 142.

¹⁶¹ Alexandra Guillemin de Matos e Silva Neves, “*A Agricultura Tradicional em Angola nos anos 60 do século XX*”, Master's degree thesis, Lisbon, Instituto Superior de Agronomia, 2010, 6.

Tableau 2 - Culmination of colonial labor force

	1970		1973	
	Absolute number	% of total	Absolute number	% of total
Total labor force	3,000,000	100	3,236,000	100
Rural labor force	2,453,000	81.8	2,603,000	80.4
Urban labor force	547,000	18.2	633,000	19.6
Subsistence peasants (pastoralists included)	2,209,000	73.6	2,344,000	72.4
Wage labor in agriculture^a	244,000	8.1	259,000	8
Salaried employees in all sectors	100,000	3.4	116,000	3.6
Private entrepreneurs (all sectors)	75,000	2.5	86,000	2.6

^a Includes fisheries, livestock, & forestry.

Source: M. R. Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy 1975-1985*. Research Report, no. 75, Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1986, 52. <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:277672/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

The post-World War II period led the colonial planners to put in place policies designed to maximize their share of the growing global market. Economic performance took priority in the peripheral spaces as Portugal's development plan laid out in 1953 focused almost exclusively on the construction of the infrastructure necessary (roads, ports, hydro-electric projects) to allow for the installation of settlers and the extraction of their production to overseas markets.¹⁶² The colony's political economy was retooled in the 1960s to place greater importance on developing the internal investment in the overseas province itself and, at least theoretically, improving living standards through an incremental industrialization of the colonial economies.

The retooling of the vision of Portugal's colonial empire also took shape as its previous "Colonial Pact" was rebranded as the "Portuguese Economic Space", thereby

¹⁶² Messiant, 1961 – *l'Angola colonial, histoire et société*, (1983), 25.

eliminating the semantic differentiation between the territories while formulating a stronger economic integration strategy which triggered a stronger emphasis on industrializing Angola.¹⁶³ Beyond the colonial borders, the recovering global economy would bring unprecedented foreign investment interests to Angola's doorstep. The 1960s brought global investors into sectors as diverse as mining, manufacturing, construction as well as throughout the agricultural sector including coffee, cotton, maize, rice, and cashews.¹⁶⁴ The lack of local manufacturing capacity due to protective restrictions enforced by the colonial authorities meant that most of all goods were exported as raw natural resources, led at the time by the expanding coffee industry.

The policy change promoting industrialization and easing restrictions on foreign capital quickly saw results as by 1965 the accelerated iron ore and petroleum production began to reduce the huge role of coffee in exports from Angola.¹⁶⁵ This change in exports followed a similar growth in the importation "of transport equipment, industrial and farming machinery and equipment" while "raw and worked iron indicated the effort to equip the light manufacturing and extractive industries as well as the creation of infrastructure, such as roads and other forms of communication".¹⁶⁶ These policies attempted to clear the way for major economic development in the colonies, which would have serious reverberating effects on Portugal's growth as well.

1.1.6 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND OUTSOURCING ADMINISTRATION

The major hindrance of Portugal's capacity to invest in its colonies' development was its lack of investment capital, explaining in part why it was pushed to ease restrictions. A second explication was the volatile situation provoked in the early 1960s with the outbreak of revolutionary wars and subsequent independences of new countries across the African

¹⁶³ Nuno Valério & Maria Paula Fontoura, "A evolução económica de Angola durante o Segundo período colonial – uma tentativa de síntese", *Análise Social*, 29, no. 5, 1994: 1201.

¹⁶⁴ Zbigniew Konczacki, Jane Parpart & Timothy Shaw, *The Economic History of Southern Africa: The front-line states* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 1990), 63.

¹⁶⁵ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 227; Manuel Ferreira, "Nacionalização e confisco do capital português na indústria transformadora de Angola (1975-1990)", *Análise Social*, 37, no. 162, spring (2002): 13-14.

¹⁶⁶ United Nations Development Program (UNDP) & World Bank (WB), *Angola: An introductory review (in two volumes) Volume II*, Report n° 7283-ANG, 26 June 1989, 182.

continent, surging at the time within its own colonized populations. These changes led Portugal to double down on developing its colonies in a bid to stave off the impending arrival of this revolutionary fervor to its overseas territories. Without the financial means to enact such a plan, Portugal turned to foreign capital to finance its colonial development plans.¹⁶⁷ Surprisingly, despite the escalating conflict in Angola, the economy was able to continue its expansion as “guerrilla operations did not disturb the main economic centres (except for a short period in 1961) and the presence of increased numbers of Portuguese troops and their expenditures even stimulated the economy”.¹⁶⁸ To solve structural deficiencies and in an attempt to bring much needed development, Portugal opened its colonies to massive foreign investment.

Portugal’s overly ambitious colonial project required the assistance of foreign capital to fully realize its colonial projects, with private companies serving important financial, fiscal, administrative, and even security roles in some of the colonies’ most strategic sectors. This led to the creation of what Yonah Seleti termed “dependent capitalism”.¹⁶⁹ Yet Portugal was not only dependent on capital. These foreign companies “became de facto sovereigns within their domains of extraction” as they provided the crucial financial and administrative resources that Portugal was unable to.¹⁷⁰ Philip Havik gives a concrete example of this unique public/private partnership when describing the administrative deficiencies encountered in tax collection in the colonies: “[A]dministrations attempted to anticipate revenue by outsourcing extraction to private actors (companies, traders, planters, etc.) who would deposit the expected tax returns (based upon fiscal censuses) in public coffers during the first months of the dry season relieving pressures on administrative officials”.¹⁷¹ Overall, some of the most strategic economic sectors, including agriculture, became dominated by non-Portuguese foreign capital:

Oil is dominated by the [American] Gulf Oil Corporation, diamonds by Diamang¹⁷² [American, South African, British, Belgian, Portuguese], iron by the German Krupp group,

¹⁶⁷ Konczacki, *et al. The Economic History*, 63.

¹⁶⁸ Nuno Valério & Palmira Tjipilica, *Économic activity in the Portuguese Colonial Empire: a factor analysis approach*, 14th International Congress of Economic History, Helsinki, 2006, 11. <http://www.helsinki.fi/iehc2006/papers3/Valerio.pdf>.

¹⁶⁹ in Konczacki, *et al., The Economic History*, 31.

¹⁷⁰ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 168.

¹⁷¹ Havik, “Colonial Administration”, 195.

¹⁷² Diamang held the monopoly on diamond production until 1971. See: CRISP, “L’enjeu économique international d’une décolonisation : Le cas de l’Angola (II)”, *Courrier hebdomadaire du CRISP*, no. 672, (1975): 12.

coffee by CADA [French and Belgian], sugar by the companies Cassequel [Portuguese & British] and Companhia de Açúcar de Angola [Portuguese], cotton by Cotonang [Belgian & Portuguese], etc.¹⁷³

In the table below, a select group of these foreign ventures are identified, chosen for the vital roles they play specifically in the colonial agricultural sector ranging from energy, transport, production and cultivation.

Tableau 3 - Key foreign companies in agricultural commercialization

Development Project	Foreign capital	Description
Benguela Railway (838 miles/1,348 km), begun in 1903 & formally opened in 1928 ^a	British, 90% of capital from Tanganyika Concessions Ltd ^b , owned by Robert Williams ^c .	Transport mineral wealth from Northern Rhodesia, Zaire, Zambia, and cash crops from the central Angolan plateau (servicing Nova Lisboa [Huambo] and Silva Porto [Kuito])
Lobito oil terminal ^d	Belgian (CARBONANG) ^e	Help power transportation around port activity (ultimately destined for Belgian Congo activity)
Port of Lobito, opened in 1928 ^f	American	Principal overseas trade port, key for exporting agricultural goods: African-grown beans, manioc and rice; European-grown sisal ^g .
CADA (<i>Companhia Angolana de Agricultura</i>)	Rallet Bank (French), Belgium ^h	Based in Cuanza Sul, biggest coffee producer in Angola (18 plantations) ⁱ
<i>Sociedade Agricola do Cassequel</i> , created in 1927	Portuguese/British (Barton Mayhew) venture	Based in Catambela (Benguela), With the (Portuguese) <i>Companhia de Açúcar de Angola</i> , assured 90% of sugar production
COTONANG	Belgian (<i>Société générale de Belgique</i>)	Controls 70% of cotton production, based in Malanje ^k

^a William Hance & Irene Von Dongen, "The Port of Lobito and the Benguela Railway", *Geographical Review*, 46, no. 4, (1956): 461.

^b CRISP, "L'enjeu économique", 14. The Société générale de Belgique also detained 17.47% of the Tanganyika Concessions Limited in 1975.

^c Hance & Van Dongen, "The Port of Lobito", 466.

^d *Ibid.*, 479.

^e Konczacki, Parpart & Shaw, "The Economic History", 60.

^f Hance & Van Dongen, "The Port of Lobito", 461.

^g *Ibid.*, 474.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 27.

^h Konczacki, Parpart & Shaw, “The Economic History”, 58.

ⁱ CRISP, “L’enjeu économique”, 8.

^j *Ibidem*. The company was created through the merger of the “Sociedade Agricola de Ganda” (Portuguese) and the Loge Sugar Company (British).

^k *Ibid*: 15. The company “was granted a monopoly to buy all the cotton from the concessionary zones” and did so at below-market prices. But because “the company did not engage in direct production, it incurred no risks in its pillaging of the Angolan peasants” (Konczacki, Parpart & Shaw, “The Economic History”, 59). Source: Messiant, 1961. *L’Angola colonial*, 23, if not specified otherwise.

The controlled development of the colonial economy and its inhabitants created an emerging market to in turn purchase goods manufactured in Portugal, due to restrictionist policies requiring the colonies to purchase Portuguese manufacturing while inhibiting the colonies to industrialize their own. A traditional setup between rulers and ruled, these policies were designed to satisfy the specific needs for the development of the metropole.¹⁷⁴ The purchasing power of the colony is contested, but clearly improved with the increasing agricultural production. Jeffrey Paige claims the “mercantilist” policies of Portugal limited foreign investment and thus the colonial economy's capacity to purchase manufactured goods, limited by the small European population and the poverty of most Africans.¹⁷⁵

Map 4 - Lobito-Benuela Railway (1954)



Source: Hance & Van Dongen, “The Port of Lobito”, 468.

Hance and Van Dongen in discussing the import/export market through the port of Lobito, mention wine as one of the only “luxuries” typical Portuguese allow themselves, as

¹⁷⁴ Fernando Andresen Guimarães, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War: Foreign Intervention and Domestic Political Context* (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 2001), 16.

¹⁷⁵ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 225.

they are mostly a “frugal” people accustomed to low incomes and determined “to live as far as possible on locally produced food”.¹⁷⁶ However Manuel Ennes Ferreira, supported by four decades of further perspective, emphasizes that by 1973, the colony's “strong domestic market” purchased industrial goods at a rate of over 90% of imports, even diversifying away from Portugal which couldn't fulfill the needs of the developing colonial economy, importing German (13%) and American (10%) industrial goods as well.¹⁷⁷ As the Angolan economy developed and diversified, and a local bourgeoisie began to establish itself, the restrictive industrial policies had to be relaxed in order to appease a local population growing uneasy under the authoritarian governance of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar.

1.1.7 CASH CROPS AND THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF THE COFFEE BEAN

The first major push for the forced monoculture plantation and cultivation of a cash crop was organized around cotton. Anne Pitcher (1991) has comprehensive research on the creation of the cotton industry in Portugal's colonies, viewed through its legislative and administrative history.¹⁷⁸ Researching the history of Portugal's place in the cotton industry more globally, Carlos Fortuna's thesis (1988) is an essential study.¹⁷⁹ Cotton production was a valuable resource for the Portuguese textile industry, but as the numbers below detail, crop production was extremely volatile, dependent on multiple factors such as climatic conditions, the reliability of the workforce, natural pests, administrative deficiencies and unstable market prices. The Southern plantation model built on slave labor in the United States provided Western firms with a steady production of cotton, but the outbreak of the civil war sent its prices skyrocketing. This added renewed interest in developing cotton locally to protect the Portuguese textile sector and take advantage of the inflated prices, as can be seen in the chart below. 1971 was the last year the *Estado Novo* regime imported cotton production from

¹⁷⁶ Hance & Van Dongen, “The Port of Lobito”, 477.

¹⁷⁷ Manuel Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development, 1961-2002”, *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 1, no. 1, (2006): 25.

¹⁷⁸ Pitcher, “Sowing the Seeds”, 1991.

¹⁷⁹ Carlos José Cândido Guerreiro Fortuna, *Threading Through: Cotton Production, Colonial Mozambique, and Semiperipheral Portugal in the World-Economy*, PhD Dissertation, New York-Binghamton, State University of New York, 1988.

Angola.¹⁸⁰ The Great Depression and the two World Wars would further disrupt the cotton distribution networks decades later, again incentivizing its production.

Tableau 4 - Cotton exports (1860-1926, 1961-2018)

Year	Quantity (metric tons)
1860	24.7
1870	363.9
1880	312.0
1882	59.6
1900	43.3
1910	144.3
1920	177.3
1926	749.7
1961	13,008
1970	91,200
1980	3,000
1990	12,000
2000	9,900
2010	3,400
2018	5,500

Source: FAOSTAT; Pitcher, “Sowing the Seeds”, 68.

The American Civil War would likewise change the face of both Angola and Mozambique’s territorial divisions. As the war engulfed the United States and disrupted the production chain of such a valuable commodity, the government of Portugal sought to take advantage and further solidify its position in the global cotton market. The body governing the policies of the overseas territories, the *Conselho Ultramarino* (Overseas Council), allowed the Governors General of both Angola and Mozambique to permit land concessions of up to 1,000 hectares in a bid to incentivize larger plantations and increased production amid a fall in supply and increasing demand.¹⁸¹ The official calls for colonial settlement and express support for their installation led more Portuguese colonizers to try their chance in Angola, or push out from their urban dwellings to try their hand at cotton production, eventually

¹⁸⁰ Pitcher, “Sowing the Seeds”, 43.

¹⁸¹ Pitcher, “Sowing the Seeds”, 45.

setting up along the coast around Benguela province, Novo Redondo (modern-day Sumba, the capital of Cuanza Sul province), Luanda, and Ambriz (Bengo province).

However, small profit margins and intensive labor requirements made the cotton boom short-lived as “600,000 hectares conceded to cotton cultivation were abandoned and cotton exports show a sharp decline after 1874”.¹⁸² Protectionist trade policies put in place at the height of the “Scramble for Africa” created a special economic relationship between Portugal and its colonies in the 1890s, boosting the trade relationship and reserving privileged market access for raw resources and manufacturing goods alike.¹⁸³ As settler interest in the crop waned in the colonies, private companies built on foreign capital took their place. The 1920s saw the companies *Fomento Geral de Angola* (1920) and the *Companhia Geral dos Algodões de Angola* (1926), better known as Cotonang, open for production. Their sole focus on cotton would change the social dynamic in the cotton-growing region, because in their areas of operation (principally in Malanje province) the local African farmers were forced to produce and sell their cotton to Cotonang, having secured a near monopoly on the commodities purchase.¹⁸⁴

As noted in the chart above, Cotonang managed 70% of all cotton production until a peasant uprising in 1961 in Baixa de Cassanje forced the colony to walk back its forced labor models, as it severely disrupted the social and economic lifestyles of the African populations.¹⁸⁵ The workers forced to work on cotton plantations had to leave their own families and subsistence farming behind, while those forced to grow cotton on their own traditional land were allowed only a meager income, ultimately breaking down traditional social relations as well as taking time and energy away from their traditional crops. This situation led to mounting social grievances among the native Africans, eventually leading to the revolt of the Bakongo peoples in Baixa de Cassanje.¹⁸⁶ While costing an estimated

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 46

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁸⁴ CRISP, “L’enjeu économique”, 16.

¹⁸⁵ Garcia Neves Quitari, “Agricultura familiar em Angola: as armadilhas conceituais da classificação dicotômica”, *Mulemba: Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais*, 5, no. 10, (2015): 242.

¹⁸⁶ Having been identified as one of the trigger points in the revolutionary war of Angola, the Bakongo revolt has been the subject of numerous studies and reinterpretations. For the latest of these, see Aharon de Grassi, “Rethinking the 1961 Baixa de Cassanje Revolt: Towards a Relational Geo-History of Angola”, *Mulemba, Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais*, 5, no. 10, (2015): 53-133. This latest interpretation brings in a more holistic geo-spatial view of the various social and political networks that each played a role in the culmination and aftermath of the Cassanje revolt.

20,000¹⁸⁷ to 30,000 or 40,000 Africans¹⁸⁸ lives from the fierce repression ordered up by the Belgians and the Portuguese, this uprising still represented the sole victory of peasant revolts amid the beginning of the war for independence.

As the cotton industry's volatility discouraged farmers and created heavy pressures on the native populations, crop diversification was sought by many. Pre-World War II, maize became the principal export crop.¹⁸⁹ 90% of the colonial production was spread out across African *lavouras* (planting fields) located throughout the Benguela-Bié plateau and sold through Portuguese middlemen onto the port of Lobito, which was also specialized in the exportation of "African-grown beans, manioc, and rice, and for sisal grown on European-owned estates".¹⁹⁰ However, the rising value of the coffee bean in the post war period quickly made it by far the most important cash crop during the late colonial period. The main growing region was north of the Cuanza River "with 78.0 per cent of the national coffee acreage and 79.9 per cent of the total production" principally based in the provinces of Uíge and Cuanza Norte, but also including parts of Malanje and Cuanza Sul.¹⁹¹ Leading up to the Second World War, colonial Angola achieved the highest coffee production in Africa¹⁹² making it a national priority of Portugal to create the conditions to allow its production to prosper. This led to the creation of the *Junta de Exportação do Café* on 29 August 1940 through decree n° 30714.¹⁹³ By focusing its resources on the coffee sector, the Salazarist regime was able to greatly expand production:

When the Junta do Café came into being, coffee provided 14 per cent of the total value of domestic exports. It then competed with cane sugar for first place in value of national export crops; in tonnage, maize has long been Angola's foremost national export crop. In 1953, owing to exceptionally favorable world market prices, the share of coffee rose to 53 per cent of combined export values. During the following five years, it maintained a fairly steady level of about 44 per cent of total exports.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁷ Maria Antonieta Martins Rodrigues Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity: The State, Law, and the Economy in Angola, 1975-1989*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Coventry, University of Warwick, 1994, 72-73.

¹⁸⁸ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 212.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 226.

¹⁹⁰ Hance & Van Dongen, "The Port of Lobito", 474.

¹⁹¹ Irene S. Van Dongen, "Coffee Trade, Coffee Regions, and Coffee Ports in Angola", *Economic Geography*, 37, no. 4, (1961): 326.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 321.

¹⁹³ Portugal, Ministérios das Colónias e do Comércio e Indústria, *Diário do Governo*, Série I, no. 201, decreto-lei 30714, 29 Aug. (1940): 1005-1010. <https://dre.pt/application/file/194084>.

¹⁹⁴ Van Dongen, "Coffee Trade", 323.

The size of the expansion of the coffee plantation varies between researchers, but the exponential growth is uncontested. According to Irene Van Dongen: “Over the period 1948-1958 Angolan land under *robusta* [coffee bean plants] expanded from 302,785 to 631,337 acres and the average annual harvest since 1955 has been 80,000-85,000 tons”.¹⁹⁵ Jeffrey Paige claims a smaller area growth, but with increased productive yield: “The area devoted to coffee, however, expanded from 120,000 hectares in 1948 to 500,000 in 1961, and exports increased from 53,000 to well over 100,000 tons in the same period.”¹⁹⁶ Coffee production would continue to make up a bigger share of percentage of total agricultural exports alongside the growth of the world economy.

Tableau 5 - Coffee exports and commercial value (1950-1970)

Year	Value, Million Escudos	Value, million US\$	Weight, Thousand Tons	Price, Escudos per kilo	Value, million US\$	Percent of Agricultural Exports	Percent of Total Exports
1950	746.6	25.9	37.5	19.91	.69	42.2	34.4
1955	1,275.6	44.3	60.1	21.22	.73	62.8	45.5
1960	1,264	43.9	87.2	14.49	.5	53.5	35.4
1965	2,687.1	93.4	159.2	16.88	.58	70.5	46.8
1970	3,880	134.9	180.6	21.48	.74	61	31.9

Source: Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 227. Conversion based on Pacific Exchange Rate Service, US\$1 = 28.750 Portuguese *escudos*, see: <https://fx.sauder.ubc.ca/etc/USDpages.pdf>

On scale, the growth of the colonial coffee industry sparked an economic transformation rivaling that of the oil industry post-independence and marked a pivotal turn in the modern economic history of the country.¹⁹⁷ Another modern parallel between the coffee sector and the oil sector is the concentrated disruptive economic effects that such consolidation of high value commodities have on the geographic areas most affected. The capital Luanda “blossomed on coffee profits” while, “[...] coffee monoculture has been chiefly responsible for making Carmona,¹⁹⁸ the northern coffee capital, the most expensive city in which to live in all Angola”.¹⁹⁹ Luanda, once flourishing on the back of profits grounded in agricultural exports, would later be radically transformed into one of the world's most expensive cities alongside the oil boom. Christine Messiant also links the rapid growth

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 322.

¹⁹⁶ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 226.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁹⁸ The city is today known as Uíge, the provincial capital of the same name.

¹⁹⁹ Van Dongen, “Coffee Trade”, 324, 326.

of Luanda, Lobito, and Carmona, noting that, “the growth curve of the evolution of urban construction is parallel to that of the production curve of the cash crops”.²⁰⁰ This rapid urban expansion led to early signs of the growing social and economic divisions among the population with the rural population marginalized from both of these economic booms:

Even though substantial numbers of African small holders and laborers were involved in the increased coffee production, the economic benefits of the boom were almost exclusively confined to the European population. Settler production increased much more rapidly than African production, and the proportion of total production contributed by Africans declined from 39 percent in 1941 to 26 percent in 1958.²⁰¹

As Christine Messiant meticulously points out, the colonizers eventually dominated the production and exportation of nearly all of the major cash crop production.²⁰² Through the investment incentives handed down by the authorities in the metropole, colonial farms continued to expand their boundaries and expel and marginalize more rural communities, though oftentimes leaving the land dormant due to the inability to develop it. By the beginning of the 1970s, colonial authorities had registered 8,038 commercial farms, including the few owned by Africans holding a title to the land under Portuguese law, though only 837,000 hectares out of the 3,300,000 total area occupied was dedicated to crop production.²⁰³ This means that only approximately 25% of the total land cordoned off by farm owners was used for planting, the rest neither used nor accessible to local communities. Many of these overextended farms, precipitously abandoned upon independence, would form the foundation of the ‘socialist’ rural economy that the MPLA would later impose upon the rural peasantry.

1.2 Mutations of rural marginalization

After reviewing the colonial inheritance of the socio-economic system built across key resource rich areas of Angola, one important piece in this puzzle is to understand how this historical precedent informs how the MPLA has expanded its presence and influence throughout the country during and after the civil war. Yet, informing Angola’s present

²⁰⁰ Messiant, 1961. *L’Angola colonial*, 154.

²⁰¹ Paige, *Agrarian Revolution*, 228.

²⁰² Messiant, 1961. *L’Angola colonial*, 150-161.

²⁰³ Steiner, *Angola’s Agricultural Economy*, 12.

through its past presents its own unique difficulties, given the centuries of colonial rule, whose own influence was incomplete and piecemeal, eventually leading to a frenetic modern period characterized by extremely abrupt and consequential changes. Both Ricardo Soares de Oliveira and Susan Taponir²⁰⁴ in their article on MPLA state-building in the periphery, as well as Justin Pearce in his PhD thesis²⁰⁵ on the struggle for political dominance between the MPLA and UNITA in the Central Highlands, refer to Professor Christopher Cramer's insight that "Angola's history reverberates with continuity".²⁰⁶ This notion was also picked up, though not referenced directly to Cramer, in Paulo Conceição João Faria's study on the evolving notions of Angolan citizenship, noting the "historical continuity in terms of personal rule, the concentration of resources, patrimonialism and cultural polarization along lines of race, expertise and political affiliation."²⁰⁷ The present study further confirms the prescience and problematic of Cramer's continuity, constituting a major part of this project's analysis and representing a key component in the research of the MPLA-led government's relationship with the Angolan interior while reverberating throughout the social, economic, and governance spheres.

This multi-layered continuity presents significant analytical difficulties in identifying the boundaries between historical periods and the breaks with the past they symbolize: "Dividing history into meaningful sections involves both historiographical conventions and theoretical judgments about what constitutes a more or less unified 'age,' how that period differs from others, and where to locate the boundaries between periods".²⁰⁸ In attempting to make sense of these historical divisions in Angola, Aharon de Grassi and Jesse Ovadia for example wrap this historical continuity into a nebulous "colonialism, socialism, war and liberalization" (CSWL) acronym.²⁰⁹ In order to overcome this difficulty in historical division, the main body of this thesis focuses on the post-independence era, which marks an undeniable break in the history of Angola. However, understanding the baggage of

²⁰⁴ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 167.

²⁰⁵ Justin Pearce, *Control, ideology and identity in civil war: The Angolan Central Highlands 1965-2002*, PhD dissertation, Oxford, University of Oxford, 2011, 8. Pearce makes reference to Cramer's idea that studying Angola presents the problem of knowing where to start, a reference to its continuity.

²⁰⁶ Christopher Cramer, *Civil war is Not a Stupid Thing: Accounting for Violence in Developing Countries*, (Hurst: London, 2006), 16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343309334813>.

²⁰⁷ Paulo Conceição João Faria, "The Dawning of Angola's Citizenship Revolution: A Quest for Inclusionary Politics", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, no. 2, (2013): 305.

²⁰⁸ Jeffrey Haydu, "Making Use of the Past: Time Periods as Cases to Compare and as Sequences of Problem Solving", *American Journal of Sociology*, 104, no. 2, (1998): 344.

²⁰⁹ Aharon De Grassi & Jesse Salah Ovadia, "Trajectories", 115.

Portuguese colonial heritage is vital to understanding the state that emerged from it. For this, delving into a part of the colonial period and locating a meaningful boundary allows us to reflect on the creation of the post-independence Angolan state. As state-building and local development are central themes to the present project, the early part of the 1960s was deciphered as the best time period to help inform us of how the current social and economic structures have mutated throughout time.

1.2.1 TRENDS IN CONTINUITY: GOVERNANCE

Concerning the latter, Fernando Andresen Guimarães provides key examples of this “continuity” in his book on the origins of the civil war while comparing the centralized, authoritarian governance structures of the Portuguese dictatorship and the MPLA:

The New State regime has been described as an organic socio-political state that directly implemented Salazar’s economic directives. The principal pillars of Salazar’s authority were the bureaucracy, which ran all the state’s bodies, and the armed forces, which had established the conditions that brought him to power in the first place. The security of these two groups guaranteed, and were themselves guaranteed by, the survival of the New State. Salazar’s authoritarian regime relied on taking over each and every body.²¹⁰

The incoming MPLA leaders were adept students of the Salazaran model of authoritarian governance, having grown up within its system. If you replace “Salazar” with “Dos Santos”, and the “New State” with the “MPLA”, you see a mirror image of centralized state control, with Luanda replacing Lisbon. From its political base in Luanda, the MPLA proceeded to actively occupy the entire state apparatus at all levels of administration after its ultimate victory over UNITA with the death of Jonas Savimbi. The consolidation of the *Estado Novo*, just as that of the MPLA, again followed similar models: “Emanating from the central hub of the capital, the needs of the new regime were placed above all else, and the surrounded periphery, the colonies as well as the less-developed mainland regions, were placed at the economic disposal of the centres”.²¹¹ Here again, while discussing Salazar’s vision of governance from Lisbon, Fernando Guimarães unintentionally describes the same

²¹⁰ David Birmingham. *A Short History of Modern Angola* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 7.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

governance model later adopted by the MPLA, in this case exchanging the “colonies” with the peripheral provinces outside Luanda and the main coastal cities.

Historian David Birmingham, in his *A Short History of Modern Angola*, describes the further political division between rural and urbanizing Angola resulting from the elections on 12 September 1992, through the prism of the urban-rural political schism as the MPLA was solely focused on the capital while, “the countryside was completely neglected”.²¹² In reality, the distribution of votes was much more complex than a simple urban-rural divide and this “neglect” did not translate to poor electoral performance. Anthony Pereira (1994: 22) clarifies this rural-urban cleavage by noting that in the rural interior, far from the Luanda base of Angola’s regime, in provinces such as Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, and Cunene, the MPLA won by huge margins.²¹³

Tableau 6 - Parliamentary election results for 1992 and 2017, by province

Province	Presidential election results 1992 (%)	
	MPLA	UNITA
Bengo	65.85	20.95
Benguela	32.08	59.79
Bié	11.98	83.94
Cabinda	79.68	16.60
Cuando Cubango	18.12	76.28
Cuanza Norte	81.50	8.52
Cuanza Sul	63.64	25.17
Cunene	77.70	8.88
Huambo	14.3	81.41
Huíla	53.14	32.47
Luanda	70.85	22.85
Lunda Norte	73.55	10.99
Lunda Sul	77.64	6.72
Malanje	69.46	17.72
Moxico	53.14	30.11
Namibe	59.23	29.5
Uíge	43.51	37.58
Zaire	29.41	27.83
National total	49.57	40.07

Source: African Elections Database. Available at: http://africanelections.tripod.com/ao_detail.html#1992_Presidential_Election (accessed 30 April 2020).

²¹² Inge Brinkman, “War and Identity in Angola: Two Case-Studies”, *Lusotopie*, (2003): 209.

²¹³ Aline Pereira, “The Neglected Tragedy: The Return to War in Angola, 1992-3”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 32, no. 1, (1994): 22.

Herein lies its principal difference with UNITA. The latter's belligerent ethno-nationalism was clearly rejected by a majority of voters in those areas where Ovimbundus are not numerous. In contrast, the MPLA emerged from the 1992 elections as a regionally and ethnically integrative party. Nevertheless, the election results did codify an important ideological marker in the country's political landscape with each party scoring significant electoral victories in their respective territorial bases:

For Unita, this was the south-central provinces of Benguela, Bié, Huambo and Kuando Kubango. There, it averaged 76 per cent of the two-party vote for the National Assembly and 80 per cent for the Presidency. Similarly, the M.P.L.A. performed strongly in its northern 'home' provinces of Luando, Bengo, Kwanza Norte and Malange. There its share of the two-party vote averages 85 per cent for the National Assembly and 81 per cent for the Presidency.²¹⁴

This political reality led the Dos Santos regime to double down on its urban political power centers, despite only approximately 37% of Angolan living in cities in 1990.²¹⁵ The electoral divisions were not however cleanly divided geographically. Post-election, the MPLA considered UNITA voters, disproportionately located in the heavily rural provinces, as harboring and supporting the country's enemies.²¹⁶ While it may be an exaggeration to imagine the whole national territory as a sort of 'colony' of Luanda and its centralized government, the two-tier power structure is clear.

1.2.2 TRENDS IN CONTINUITY: ECONOMIC

Having only recently discovered and developed the oil resources that would become the backbone of Angola's growth, Portugal attempted to create a second colonial 'jewel' in the image of Brazil that they lost after its independence in 1822. After the abolition of slavery cut off a major source of revenue, the colonizers instead turned to the land and its natural

²¹⁴ Pereira, "The Neglected Tragedy", 20-21.

²¹⁵ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2012*, 36. The urban/rural divide has now flipped, with the latest official census completed in 2014 showing 37.4% of the population now registered as rural. See: CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 86.

²¹⁶ Personal interview, national NGO worker specialized in supporting small-scale agriculture, 29 July 2017. The interviewee requested anonymity to speak freely. See also the political flyer found on the streets of Luanda during the 2017 elections in §7.1.3.

resources in order to facilitate a new exporting machine with an emphasis on raw resources destined to develop and expand the weak industrial base of Portugal. The political economy therefore emphasized building up the backbone of the colony through the modernization of its agricultural sector, consequently feeding, both literally and figuratively, the rest of the economy. However, this economic machine was purposefully built to prevent the capacity to lay an independent foundation for national growth and development, instead being preconfigured for a controlled growth model in the service of feeding foreign economies, specifically that of Portugal.

Emmanuel Moreira Carneiro, a former Minister of Planning and Economic Coordination (1996-1997), in determining the basis of a structural analysis of modern-day Angola, looks to his country's colonial foundations. In his 2008 analysis, a common denominator that models the politico-institutional processes of Angola is the concrete form of material production that determined the specific model of its insertion into the world system.²¹⁷ This subordinate position as a passive producer of natural resources sought by growing Western economies conditioned the degree of independence the postcolonial country could exercise in decision-making and policy positions, with the permanent interaction between the material foundations and the politico-institutional superstructure governing it a formidable force against structural change. Locked into this dynamic, the dependence on natural resource rents create a two-tier social class system, the minority in position to manage and exploit the rents (rent-seekers), and the majority condemned either to push the exploitative system along, or worse, completely marginalized by it.

Not only did Lisbon craft an extraverted colonial economy for its own benefit, but the growth model was carefully controlled in order to avoid empowering the local populations, both endogenous and European, to the point where they could become strong enough to influence colonial policy. The colonization of the interior followed the military campaigns of the 1920s as Portugal looked to secure its colonial territory against potential aggressors. The eventual campaign of populating the countryside would take decades to finally be put into place. The first official settlement project named Cela, based in the Amboím highlands near a small town named Santa Comba Dão,²¹⁸ was not operational until 1953. By that time the

²¹⁷ Carneiro, *Le blocage*, 13-14.

²¹⁸ Originally named after the small Portuguese village where Salazar was born, the Cela colony has since transformed into the city of Waku Kungo, located in today's Cuanza Sul province.

settlement program “was to some extent an anachronism that had survived the post-war modernizing and developmental agenda for Africa embraced by other colonial powers”.²¹⁹ Inspired and influenced by the nostalgia of rural Portugal, it was designed with the express purpose of following similar social and economic production models based on small-scale family farming. African labor was banned from the premises in a quest for moral and social purity. Profit-making was not the overall goal, but rather instilling a work ethic and a connection to the land to promote generational continuity in the overseas territory. Authorities saw the settlement projects, and the agricultural sector in general, as a mechanism to tighten their control. According to this logic

the intent was to improve settlers’ general wellbeing but without promoting settlers’ social mobility. That is to say, the aim was not to encourage the private pursuit of wealth and create rich farmers, whose interests might clash with those of the ruling elite, but rather modest farmers who loved and cared for their land.²²⁰

This authoritarian development model providing just enough incentives to keep the settlers motivated while simultaneously undermining their overall growth prospects out of a fear of them accumulating political power would later become a central pillar to the MPLA’s own rural social and economic model. Similar fears of an independent, empowered rural social class have led the MPLA to follow a similar model of political domination through measured (and meager) resource distribution. Holding a similar discourse praising the rural farmer and the carrying capacity of the tilled land, the rural development policies enacted have led the Angolan peasantry to a similar dependent and dominated social status. The decades of civil war made a viable rural economy impossible, but peacetime has brought little relief.

²¹⁹ Jonuel Gonçalves, “The economy of Angola: From independence to the 2008 worldwide crisis”, *Revista Tempo do Mundo*, 2, no. 3, (2010): 174.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

1.2.3 TRENDS IN CONTINUITY: SOCIAL

This nature of continuity in the governance model extends directly to the MPLA's relationship with its population, especially those living outside of the party's urban stronghold. The marginalization of the rural communities, a global phenomenon particularly present in Angola, represented another major cycle of historical continuity moving through each historical era:

Peasants always were the major victims of war: from the remote times when they were targets of slave raids, to the periods of capture of forced labour, to the military operations during the independence war for their resettlement in strategic hamlets, till the raids of the post-colonial wars to serve as conscripts in the UNITA army.²²¹

This marginalization would continue through the civil war into peacetime and, as will be demonstrated in this study, continues to this today. Beyond the authoritarian colonial legacy, the elitist patronage system inherited through its 'Marxist-Leninist' philosophical foundation further entrenched the divide of socio-political relations. As Ricardo Soares de Oliveira describes it: "One of the key aspects of continuity has to do with the Eastern Bloc institutional legacy. [...] The masses are nowhere to be found."²²² The patronage network that emerged with Agostinho Neto and further codified by José Eduardo dos Santos required unrepentant loyalty to the party in exchange for resource access, setting up independent Angola with a drastically vertical system of governance. The ruling regime operated independently and apart from the local population, handing down orders from above. With time, some attempts at mutual outreach have been organized in the last couple decades to provide at least an appearance of public accountability, although dialogue between the rulers and the ruled has been largely inexistent and carefully controlled whenever allowed.

People thus positioned themselves vertically in relation to state structures and along preferential solidarity chains of clientelism according to an 'ethic' of patrimonialism. Inherently requiring notions of reciprocity, the patrimonial system exchanged access to the

²²¹ Maria Antonieta Martins Rodrigues Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity: The State, Law, and the Economy in Angola, 1975-1989*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Coventry, University of Warwick, 1994, 94.

²²² Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 101.

newly formed state's resources in return for active loyalty to the party. The MPLA has gone to great lengths, in word and deed, to purposefully merge the political party with the symbolic apparatus of the state itself.²²³ This explicit link between the state and the political party inhibited the appearance of an alternative social logic based upon notions of citizenship or class (where people place themselves horizontally in relation to the state) and therefore hampered the emergence of civil society as understood in the West.²²⁴ Attempts at civil self-organizing in defiance of this exclusionary system have been thwarted through physical threats (both implicit and explicit), self-censorship, legal barriers, or generalized fear of reprisal, all intimidation tactics inherited through the oppressive colonial system.

Even the Portuguese colonizers, among the most privileged social groups in the colony, were wholly contained by the Salazar regime's authoritarian fervor.²²⁵ The threat of the creation of an autonomous bourgeoisie among the farming class meant that the decision-making process was carefully controlled in order to avoid a repeat of Brazil's accumulation of financial and political capital, even though the major economic players were colonizers themselves as the indigenous producers were systematically marginalized.²²⁶ These dual desires of developing the colony's economy while avoiding a build-up of accumulated capital throughout social groups of the population was described by Messiant as a "blocked society".²²⁷ Another work picking up this continued tradition of a "blocked society" is that of Tony Hodges, mentioning himself the "stalled transition" of the civil society.²²⁸ Paulo Conceição João Faria develops the idea of Angola being "stuck in transition".²²⁹ As will be demonstrated later, this colonial fear of the creation of an autonomous bourgeoisie in the countryside will remain a dormant cloud of suspicion hanging over rural Angola, with similar strategies of avoiding capital accumulation in the hands of social actors not beholden or allied to the MPLA's overall goals of hegemonic dominance.

Beyond their marginalization within the colonial administration, the rural populations faced similar oppressive structures once again due to the enduring remnants of the ensuing

²²³ *Ibid.*, 91.

²²⁴ Patrick Chabal & Nuno Vidal, *Angola: The Weight of History* (London: Hurst/New York, Columbia University Press, 2007), 203.

²²⁵ Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 122.

²²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 163-349.

²²⁸ Tony Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 43-88.

²²⁹ Faria, "The Dawning", 295-299.

civil war, based upon their geographic isolation. The influential creole families that had been heavily influenced by their contact with the ‘Western’ Portuguese system and urban environments found the rural-based political movements, UNITA and the FNLA, to be “foreign” and “menacing”.²³⁰ Likewise, the rural character of UNITA’s stronghold based in the central highlands,²³¹ headquartered first in the provincial capital of Huambo until 1993 when it was forced to find refuge in Jamba in Cuando Cubango province, made the Luanda-based MPLA deeply distrustful of large swaths of the rural populations as they were seen to be undermining the socialist revolution that fought to liberate the country. Moreover, the blood and soil nationalism of Jonas Savimbi and his claims of the Ovimbundu people as being the “real Angolans”²³² raised further hesitations of how to approach and later integrate those followers into the MPLA’s national project. The dark cloud hanging over the countryside since the 1992 general elections that saw many rural areas vote UNITA persists in the MPLA’s spirit like a foggy casualty of war and an affront to its ‘revolutionary’ colonial fight. To what extent has the Luanda-based creole elite erased this “foreign” and “menacing” attribute with the end of the civil war, but the continuation of UNITA?

1.2.4 ‘SOCIALIST’ ORGANIZING: COOPERATIVES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Understanding how the post-independence rural economy is designed needs to look into how its actors are organized and what forces exist to bring the populations together or divide them. Fernando Pacheco is a central figure in probing this question. One of Angola’s leading agronomists, the co-founder of the preeminent national NGO *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente* (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development) specialized in rural development, an independent consultant, a former senior member of the MPLA, and the current head of the Political and Social Observatory (OPSA), he has spent decades studying the agricultural sector and rural dynamics more generally. His study, published along with Júlio de Moraes, *Diagnóstico das associações de camponeses em Angola* (Study

²³⁰ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 38. While most of the focus on the early years of political party foundation in Angola focuses on the biggest three parties, the MPLA, the FNLA, and UNITA, by 1967 there were 58 political movements founded by Angolans, with many of them started by Angolans of Bakongo descent from the North and were active in Léopoldville/Kinshasa (Brinkman “War and Identity”, 205).

²³¹ This geographic area covers the provinces of Huambo, Bié, and parts of Cuanza Sul and Benguela.

²³² Justin Pearce, “L’UNITA à la recherche de « son peuple »”, *Politique Africaine*, 2, no. 110, (2008): 49.

on Peasant Associations in Angola), gives an exclusive insider account of the beginning days of social organizing post-independence²³³. Prepared in 1991, it gives a detailed scientific account of the associative and cooperative movement in the key agricultural provinces of Malanje, Huamba and Huíla (having excluded Cuanza Sul and Uíge due to the war). The data-driven study lays out how the MPLA's 'socialist' political economy, funneling a majority of investments into the state-led farming sector, revealed itself to be wholly inadequate to restarting the agricultural sector despite considerable political investment.

After the government openly acknowledged the existence of "serious problems" in the building a sustainable 'socialist' model at the first Congress of the MPLA-PT in 1980, the failing rural development policy continued unabated with only superficial modifications, leading to "a subalternization of the peasant sector and its organizations in relations to the state sector, which reinforces the verification of its almost inexistent accountability in terms of production and profitability".²³⁴ The study identifies that the failure of the rural economy is not only a consequence of the disastrous civil war, "but also for the deficiencies unique to the agrarian sector and from the distortions of the political economy".²³⁵ After identifying the MPLA's economic policy failures, the study follows the decades-long attempts at organizing the rural peasantry into manageable social units by embracing peasant cooperatives and associations while recognizing the Portuguese and Soviet influences on these organizing initiatives.²³⁶

The MPLA has historically put in significant effort to build up a rural cooperative farming infrastructure, culminating in today's *União Nacional dos Camponeses de Angola*, (UNACA, the Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola). Following its historical evolution builds upon this paper's ultimate analytical thread of the MPLA's dominance through abandonment, as it spent its entire political existence attempting to form and reform an institution like UNACA to serve the development interests of the rural economic actors, only to undercut the institution's ability to enact significant local development, all the while neutering the development capacity of arguably the nation's most important and active rural economic actors. The historical

²³³ Júlio Morais & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico das Associações de Camponeses em Angola*, Luanda, ADRA, 1991.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

²³⁶ Notably, the recognition of the Soviet-style *kolkhozy* collective farming model. See: Júlio Morais & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 11.

evolution of UNACA as a ‘mass organization’ usurped by the party-state will be developed in §3.1.5, while its contemporary (in)significance will be reviewed in §6.2.

Continuing on the topic of state-led rural organizing and its numerous pitfalls is the seminal study of M.R. Bhagavan’s 1986 report *Angola’s Political Economy 1975-1985*.²³⁷ The transitive stages moving from Portuguese colonization to independence and the MPLA’s initial implementation of their political economy has been well documented in its administrative, political, social and economic forms. Bhagavan gives an in-depth look at the composition of the labor force and their purchasing power leading up to independence, followed by the ultimately failed restructuring efforts and ineptness of these workers in the years following independence. Along the lines of Christine Messiant,²³⁸ Bhagavan points out how the colonial economy was structured to concentrate the means of production in the hands of the white settlers and allowed the formation of only a selective bourgeoisie, endowed with the capacity of exercising domestic political power, but beholden to its political masters in Portugal.²³⁹ Upon the outset, the MPLA reconstituted itself as the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola – Partido do Trabalho* (MPLA-PT, People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola – Workers’ Party) on 10 Dec 1977, adopting its explicit ‘Marxist-Leninist’ ideology and laying its future vision that “the workers, peasants, and revolutionary intellectuals in close alliance will exert democratic revolutionary dictatorship [...] creating conditions for installing the dictatorship of the proletariat in the phase of building socialism”.²⁴⁰ After taking power over the rural economy, however, the enormous divide between set production targets and actual production (sometimes only reaching 10% of their target) reveals an agricultural sector in complete disarray, accompanied by a newly-formed government incapable of turning it around.

The main decision-makers in the new government were centralized in the Political Bureau (Politiburo) and the Central Committee, subordinate to the ruling party, while the Council of Ministers was “regarded as an executive body responsible for overseeing the

²³⁷ Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy 1975-1985*. Research Report, no. 75, Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1986. <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:277672/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

²³⁸ Messiant, 1961. *L’Angola colonial*, 149-161.

²³⁹ Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 15.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 34. The MPLA-PT dropped the “Workers’ Party” label from its name in 1990, thereafter officially named the MPLA.

implementation of party policy”.²⁴¹ The Soviet methods of centralized production models and state-induced cooperatives and associations were visibly failing to produce results, yet the Council of Ministers continued with the policies regardless. It would take the entrance of a new set of actors to disrupt the stagnant status quo, creating new links and networks, and forcing the hand of the government to reconsider, at least symbolically, its relationship with the rural populations.

1.2.5 SOCIAL ORGANIZING: NGOS, CSOs, AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Following the history of the expanding patchwork of disparate actors in contact and involved with the rural populations, from the colonial times through the civil war and finally with the establishment of a peacetime character, domestic and foreign actors have come and gone, with varying degrees of size and influence. The formation and emergence of Angolan society as the war wound down quickly attracted the interest of many scholars trying to decipher the possible direction of the country in peacetime.²⁴² One of the most influential academics in my understanding of the emergence and mutations of Angola’s people is Cesaltina Abreu. Sociologist, agronomist, and professor of social sciences at the University of Agostinho Neto (Luanda), she has made serious contributions to the understanding of the state of flux of Angolan civil society at the turn of the 21st century in her PhD dissertation²⁴³ (2006) and in her article with Inge Amundsen, *Civil Society in Angola: Inroads, Space and Accountability*.²⁴⁴ The former provides a major theoretical and methodological

²⁴¹ Inge Tvedten, “The War in Angola: Internal Conditions for Peace and Recovery”, *Current African Issues*, 7, (1989): 4.

²⁴² See for example: Cesaltina Abreu, *Sociedade Civil em Angola: da realidade à utopia*, PhD dissertation, Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro, 2006; Inge Amundsen & Cesaltina Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 2006; Benjamin Castello, “A Força e o Papel da Sociedade Angolana em Busca da Paz em Angola” in *O momento para a renovação dos compromissos da Comunidade Internacional para a Paz em Angola: Lições Aprendidas e Caminhos Futuros*, Maputo, 19-20 June 2000; Michael Comerford, “Alternative voices: the Angolan peace movement”: 32-36, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004); Solival Silva Menezes, *Mamma Angola: sociedade e economia de um país nascente* (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade São Paulo, 2000); Christine Messiant, “The Eduardo Dos Santos foundation: or, how Angola’s regime is taking over civil society”, *African Affairs*, 100, no. 399, (2001): 287-309; Messiant, 1961. *L’Angola colonial*, 2006; Nelson Pestana, *As Dinâmicas da Sociedade Civil em Angola*, Lisbon, Centro de Estudos Africanos, Occasional Papers, 2003. http://www.adelinotorres.info/africa/nelson_pestana_dinamicas_da_sociedade_civil_em_angola.pdf; Vines, *et al. Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 2005.

²⁴³ Abreu, *Sociedade Civil em Angola*, 2006.

²⁴⁴ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 2006.

framework for understanding the presence and role of the of “civil society” in Angola, written only four years after the official end of the civil war. Considering its historical limitations given its context being so fresh to peacetime, chapter four is particularly illuminating in its analysis of relationships between and among civil society actors, their visibility and dynamism towards the end of the civil war, and their capacity of collective action and mutual solidarity. However, this study’s interest to the current research is somewhat limited in the fact that it treats ‘rurality’ only sparingly, with the word “rural” or its plural in Portuguese “rurais” only appearing on 30 of the 298 total pages, with its main focus being on Luanda, Benguela and Malanje.

The latter article in collaboration with Inge Amundsen reveals a detailed snapshot of the organizing forces within the burgeoning civil society in the chaotic moments emerging from the civil war and in preparation for the 2008 legislative elections. The report identifies the multitudinous weaknesses confronting the civil society's capacity to self-organize outside of a loose but growing network of NGOs, CSOs, unions, and religious organizations led by the Catholic Church. The emergence of these non-state actors and networks is a relatively new phenomenon to Angola and the overall tapestry of the different categories of actors remains in flux:

The only truly non-governmental groups allowed to operate before the end of the 1980s were church organisations like Caritas Angola and the Council of Evangelical Organisations of Angola. Only with the Bicesse peace accords and the constitutional revisions of 1991 did non-ecumenical organisations like ADRA grow up.²⁴⁵

For an in-depth analysis on the history and evolution of the Catholic Church in Angola, see Lawrence Henderson (1991).²⁴⁶ For an understanding on the colonial roots of religion giving rise to a nationalistic UNITA party, see the doctoral dissertation of Didier Péclard (2005).²⁴⁷ The Catholic Church²⁴⁸ is one of the most respected institutions in the country, with a

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

²⁴⁶ Lawrence Henderson, *The Church in Angola: A River of Many Currents* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1991).

²⁴⁷ Didier Péclard, *État colonial, missions chrétiennes et nationalisme en Angola, 1920-1975: Aux racines sociales de l'UNITA*. PhD dissertation, Paris, Institut d'Étude Politique de Paris, 2005.

²⁴⁸ Public disclosure: As mentioned in my acknowledgements, a significant part of my fieldwork (food, lodging, travel) was supported in part by the *Espírito Santo* (*Espiritanos*) congregation in Angola, both in the *comuna* of Huíla and in Luanda.

presence dating back to 1491. However, as the country has evolved, religious organizations have likewise mutated and multiplied exponentially.

A major study done by the Christian Michelsen Institute by Søren Kirk Jensen and Nelson Pestana identified²⁴⁹ “almost a thousand known churches in Angola, of which only 83 have achieved recognition by the state”, with the main currents being Catholic, Protestant, Apostolic, Messianic, Pentecostal, and Anglican. Beyond their important contributions to civil society, their capacity to organize and mobilize the population, both urban and rural, is one its most significant powers and affords them considerable sway of enduring influence. Nevertheless, that power is clearly understood by the MPLA officials. Religious leaders and institutions in general are therefore under a nebulous cloud of pressure to avoid mixing their messages with overt politics.²⁵⁰ In order to stay in the good graces of government officials and fully take advantage of their social status afforded by their elevated position among society, most respected this unofficial red line. Despite the pressures, exceptions exist by a few who have stood up and saw it as their duty to call out political officials when the situation called for it. The exemplary case of Father Jacinto Pio Wacussanga, better known as ‘Padre Pio’, will be discussed in a case study in chapter six.

An organizational weakness of the report by Inge Amundsen and Cesaltina Abreu is that it waits to explain how they categorize the difference between an NGO and a CSO until page 17 (out of 49 pages total), while continually referring to them separately in in-depth discussion previous to their definitions. On page 17 we understand that the report essentially determines that CSOs are a general umbrella term to encompass all the different categories of civil society actors, NGOs included. Eventually, the report categorizes civil society organizations into six groups: (1) National NGOs, (2) international NGOs (INGOs), (3) faith-based organizations, (4) media, (5) trade unions and professional organizations, and (6) organizational networks. The report goes on to identify at least three historical and structural factors that block civil society activism across the country, being “the Marxist-Leninist ideology adopted by the post-independence MPLA government, the establishment of a highly presidential political system in Angola (even by African standards), and a clientelist

²⁴⁹ Søren Kirk Jensen & Nelson Pestana, *The Role of the Churches in Poverty Reduction in Angola*, CMI Report no. 1, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2010, 11. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3626-the-role-of-the-churches-in-poverty-reduction-in->

²⁵⁰ This practice of avoiding politics during mass on Sunday was a constant refrain with the religious leaders I spoke with when asking about the church’s stance on advocacy, human rights and poverty reduction.

system of favours and patronage”.²⁵¹ With the six categories defined, their identification provides a clearer framework at understanding the establishment of Angola’s growing network of civil society actors. Lifting the veil further, the division of categories is made even more difficult, especially given the intrusion and usurpation of the MPLA within these nascent organizations. There is for example an entire network of ‘GONGOs’, or government controlled (or initiated) NGOs, also referred to as ‘mass organizations’ that present themselves as spontaneous civil society organizations, but have the tacit political support of the political elites. These ‘mass organizations’ will be detailed in §4.3.2.

This research project, however, will add our own seventh category to the list, taking the name of ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs. This newest category of ‘grassroots elite’ associations and organizations comes from Inge Ruigrok’s (2010) article mentioning this idea of “Elite Associations” in its title,²⁵² which provoked serious consideration in my own understanding of the non-state actors currently active in Angola. While Ruigrok does not give an explicit definition of his “elite” terminology, he nevertheless uses the term to analyze two associations based in Southern Huíla province: the *Associação dos Naturais e Amigos de Kuvango* (Anakujachi – Association of Natives and Friends of Kuvango, Jamba and Chipindo) and the *Associação Solidariedade Nyaneka-Humbi* (SNH – Nyanyeka-Humbi Solidarity Association). In the article, the “elitist” roots are vaguely defined as having been “established by an educated, urban elite that identifies with a particular region”, having representatives with “positions within the state, both national and locally”, and capable of drawing from “collective local memory and symbolic repertoires either to legitimize or contest claims of belonging”.²⁵³ For this project’s purposes, we will define the “elitism” of these organizations by two categories: (1) either having official direct or indirect connections to the MPLA itself, similar to Ruigrok, or just as importantly, (2) having established official connections and recognition with reputable organizations or institutions abroad (African Commission, United Nations or an affiliated agency, official support of another country, etc.).

Some key examples of actors in this first category are ADRA (one of its founding members, Fernando Pacheco, having served as an MPLA official within the government) or Development Workshop (its founder directly connected with the Canadian government,

²⁵¹ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 2.

²⁵² Inge Ruigrok, “Facing up to the Centre: The Emergence of Regional Elite Associations in Angola’s Political Transition Process”, *Development and Change*, 41, no. 4, (2010): 637-658.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 637, 639.

with its headquarters within the Canadian Consulate itself in Luanda). Both of these organizations have also adopted a constructive approach to their working relationship with the government, largely avoiding direct criticism, which has enabled them to be called upon as intermediaries when necessary. For the purposes of this study, the second category is exemplified by the *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Building Communities). Its co-founder, the previously mentioned Catholic Priest Jacinto Pio Wacussanga, has had his NGO officially recognized by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and has been recognized internationally²⁵⁴ for his work fighting for human rights in Southern Angola, having won as recently as 2018 the "Human Rights Defender Award" of 2018 presented by the Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network.²⁵⁵ In conversation with Padre Pio, he pointed to these international connections as a key component of allowing him the space to act and advance in his local development initiatives and general advocacy campaigns. As will be demonstrated in chapter five, these 'elite' connections provide vital institutional support to their missions and increase their agency exponentially. Chapter five and six will then discuss how, through this 'elite' status, their actions have had direct impacts on local politics, developing and transforming rural agency along the way.

Another major contribution to understanding the beginning formations of rural society post-Independence and its emerging partnership with non-state organizations is the work of the Brazilian Rodrigo de Souza Pain stemming from his PhD dissertation (2007) *Desafios da participação social em um país de conflito agudo: estudo a partir da ONG angolana Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA)*.²⁵⁶ Rodrigo de Souza Pain delves deep into the turmoil of the political transition of independence and the resulting civil war, taking an institutionalist view of how the new Angolan State attempts to recreate a rural political

²⁵⁴ Participant of the Sixth Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders, an organization with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations as well as Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The organization seeks to promote human rights' defender worldwide and provides temporary protections when possible and necessary. See: www.frontlinedefenders.org.

²⁵⁵ Club-K, "Padre angolano Pio Wacussanga ganha prémio 'Defensor de Direitos Humanos de 2018'", Luanda, 16 Nov. 2018. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33956:padre-angolano-pio-wacussanga-ganha-premio-defensor-de-direitos-humanos-de-2018&catid=2&Itemid=1069&lang=pt.

²⁵⁶ Rodrigo de Souza Pain, *Desafios da Participação Social em um País de Conflito Agudo: Estudo a partir da ONG Angolana Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA)*, PhD dissertation, Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, 2007.

economy based upon the colonial model but heavily influenced by the ‘Marxist-Leninist’ leanings of the new political advisors coming in from the Soviet Union to assist the transition. While his PhD dissertation focuses on ADRA and its role in developing rural civil society within an authoritarian governance structure, his overall research provides a comprehensive snapshot of the complexities existing within the elite-rural relationship. The patronage network built by the MPLA attests to the marginalized nature of the rural peasants, dependent on elite NGOs such as ADRA to receive significant public aid and assistance in the peripheries, help that is not effectively provided otherwise. The numerous citations of his works in later chapters attest to the importance of his research to my current project.

The integral role of NGOs and CSOs in providing rural social assistance and development will be a point of analysis in chapters five and six, including its pivotal role in the case study of *Rede Terra*’s historic direct collaboration with the MPLA. While the NGOs, alongside the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), were the biggest non-governmental players in the *Rede Terra* projects and negotiations, it was also the arduous work of the CSOs laying the foundation for this encounter. The unique political environment leading to the civil society participation in negotiations with the government over the newly proposed Land Law was set up, “...by the new multiparty ‘freedom’ and ‘democratic’ legislative framework, fueling the emerging Angolan CSOs, which were able to grow throughout the nineties and voice growing criticism of the government despite the severe constraints imposed by the regime”.²⁵⁷ These organizations are especially important in the study of Angola due to their deep involvement in the country during the civil war period. With the MPLA unable or even unwilling to provide basic goods and services to some parts of the population, especially outside of their urban political fiefdoms, some NGOs essentially replaced the role of government in key service areas. For many of the people dependent on their aid and assistance, the difference in their relationship between the MPLA and the NGOs was largely indistinguishable. Because of this fact, much interest has focused on the role and impact of NGOs in contemporary Angola.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Chabal & Vidal, *Angola: The Weight*, 204.

²⁵⁸ See, for example: Joaquim Assis, “Práticas sociais e políticas das ONGs em Angola. Metodologias e relações de poder: O caso da ADRA e da Visão Mundial”, *Mulemba, Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais*, 10, no. 10, (2015): 261-288. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/mulemba.2037>; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 1, no. 2, Fortaleza, Oxfam Novib, Sept. 2008: 21-86; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 1, no. 3, Fortaleza, Oxfam Novib, Sept. 2008a: 86-247; JMJ Angola, Ministério do Planeamento de Angola, *Mapeamento de Redes de Organizações da Sociedade Civil em Angola*, Programa de Apoio aos Actores Não Estatais (PAANE), Luanda, Oct. 2009; Inge Tvedten, *Angola*

The Angolan researcher and economist Nuno Vidal has also been an astute observer of the evolutions of Angolan civil society and has made significant contributions to the topic. His extensive work on Angola stems from an ambitious research-action project in collaboration with Justino Pinto de Andrade intitled “Democratic and Development Processes in Angolan and Southern Angola” begun in 2004 and culminating in 2020.²⁵⁹ One of the most significant works aiding this study is his collaboration with Justino Pinto de Andrade (2008) on the regional and international framework of Angolan civil society.²⁶⁰ Also, his co-edited work with Patrick Chabal *Angola: The Weight of History* (2007) contains his chapter entitled, “Social Neglect and the Emergence of Civil Society” which provides an in-depth analysis of the fractured social structure of Angolan society leading up to the tense moment of the 2008 legislative elections, when such political exercises evoked the instability and bloodshed of the recent past.²⁶¹ The authoritarian heritage of the colonial past is on full display as he describes the MPLA’s elitist tendencies and distant relationship with its people.

One of his latest publications²⁶² on the topic captures civil resistance since the 1990s using all of the social, cultural and technological tools available to them to push back against the dominant power structures, provokingly referring these disparate groups of civil resistance to the “Arab Spring” generation that recently toppled (Tunisia, January 2011; Egypt, February 2011; Libya, October 2011; Yemen, February 2012) or threatened (Bahrain,

2000/2001 *Key Development Issues and the Role of NGOs*, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, no. 1, 2001. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/955-angola-2000-2001.pdf>; Inge Tvedten, Éric Morier-Genoud & Brigitte Lachartre, “La scène angolaise : Limites et potentiel des ONG” : 171-188 in *Lusotopie*, Les organisations non gouvernementales en Lusophonie. Terrains et débats, no. 9, 1st semestre (2002); Maliana Serrano, *Strengthening institutions or institutionalizing weaknesses? Interactions between aid and local institutions in Huíla Province, Angola*. PhD dissertation, Wageningen, Wageningen University, 2012; Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal (eds), *Southern Africa. Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies*, (Luanda: Media XXI/Lisbon: Firmamento, 2009); USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington D.C. 2010. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/2010_NGOSI_Africa.pdf; USAID, *2015 CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington D.C., 2015. https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/2015_Africa_CSOSI.pdf; USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade da Organização da Sociedade Civil para Angola em 2017*, Washington D.C., 2017. <https://adpp-angola.org/images/Civil-Society-Organization-Sustainability-Index-CSOSI-report.pdf>; World Bank, *Consultations with Civil Society, A Sourcebook*, Working document, Feb. 2007. https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/Civil%20Society/cso_documents/ConsultationsSourcebook_Feb2007.pdf.

²⁵⁹ Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral, 2º Quinquénio 2009/2010 – 2014*, Relatório de Progresso, Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Editora Firmamento/Lisbon, Media XXI, Jan. 2015, 5.

²⁶⁰ Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade, (eds), *Sociedade Civil e Política em Angola, Enquadramento Regional e Internacional* (Lisbon: Edições Firmamento/Luanda: Media XXI, Aug. 2008), 3rd ed.

²⁶¹ Chabal & Vidal, *Angola: The Weight*, 200-236.

²⁶² Nuno Vidal, “Angolan civil society activism since the 1990s: reformists, confrontationists and young revolutionaries of the Arab spring generation”, *Review of African Political Economy*, 42, no. 143, (2015): 77-91.

Syria) other dictatorships and authoritarian regimes throughout North Africa and the Middle East. Such radical action and widespread disobedience seem unlikely under the current conditions in Angola, though predicting the future is a fools' errand. The increasing activation of the civil society is nevertheless undeniable, despite its clear weaknesses, and follows simultaneously alongside the similarly weak growth and stunted expansion of the MPLA's influence into a dilapidated countryside.

1.3 Rebuilding the Periphery

The sociological schisms resulting from 41 years of war, between fighting for independence and the subsequent civil war, has definitively marked the ethos of the country for the foreseeable future. As Didier Péclard notes, war has been a central influence in the construction of Angola's postcolonial state "because the pursuit of war after independence has profoundly marked the political economy of Angola's political powers".²⁶³ While the fog of war is fading, this analysis remains pertinent to this day, particularly in the strategies the MPLA has adopted in establishing its power and authority throughout the periphery.

1.3.1 SELECTIVE EMULATION OF COLONIAL INHERITANCE

Many areas of the country were significantly affected during the war for independence, but the fighting remained outside of the key areas of the countryside where the colonial agricultural infrastructure had been developed and did not achieve the level of sustained, intense combat seen during the civil war.²⁶⁴ Prior to the civil war that broke out shortly after independence, the agricultural infrastructure was therefore still mostly physically intact, but was heavily dependent on the technical know-how of the colonial class to keep the systems up and running. The sudden arrival of the colonialists to take advantage of the growing commercialization of agricultural goods created an atmosphere of increasing

²⁶³ Didier Péclard, "Les chemins de la « reconversion autoritaire » en Angola", *Politique africaine*, 110, no. 2, (2008): 6.

²⁶⁴ Rodrigo de Souza Pain, "As características da experiência socialista na agricultura de Angola após a independência", *Revista OPSIS*, Dossiê Cultura e Identidades, 18, no. 10, (2008): 183. <https://doi.org/10.5216/o.v8i10.9300>.

resentment among the marginalized local populations 'The expansion of the settlers across the countryside further excluded the native producers right at the same time they began agitating for more inclusion into the colonial system.²⁶⁵ Amid the rising tensions and social instability sparking the war for independence, these colonialists fled the country *en masse* upon independence: "Between 1975 and 1976, in the space of one year, about 300,000 of these settlers left Angola. They too decamped with consumer durables, vehicles, boats, machinery and equipment, and sabotaged what they could not take with them".²⁶⁶ The vital bush traders accompanied the exodus of the Portuguese upon independence and the loss of this middleman role was one of the most crucial victims for the viability of the rural economy going forward, their absence contributing significantly to the complete disarticulation of the rural commercial network.

This breakdown in the urban/rural connection²⁶⁷ is arguably the most significant loss for the rural economy post-independence. The transitional government led by Agostinho Neto had, however, resolved itself to reversing the depreciation of the rural world and providing it with institutional support to get it back to its colonial-era production levels. This grand vision ultimately faded upon contact with the many internal and external structural obstacles facing the new nation. The transitional period, led by the structure designed by the Alvor Agreement signed on 15 January 1975 and the ensuing piecemeal institutional reconstruction, along with the multitude of barriers and hurdles encountered throughout the regime of Agostinho Neto, will be detailed in chapter four of this study.

Reality was that, during the years following independence, the rural economy was both rhetorically elevated as a principal source of the coming 'socialist revolution' led in part by the rural proletariat and neglected by the powers that be, unable and unwilling to properly address the metastasizing breakdown of the rural economy. According to Fernando Pacheco, *et al.*: "During the years of the civil war and inadequate policies for the agricultural sector, a regression of technology and practices occurred. The importance that the Portuguese

²⁶⁵ Pereira, "The Neglected Tragedy", 8.

²⁶⁶ Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 7.

²⁶⁷ One of the most recent studies revealing this rural/urban breakdown is Inge Tvedten's 2017 study "Comparing urban and rural poverty in Angola & Rural Poverty in Malanje, Angola". It compares urban and rural poverty Kalandula *município* in Malanje province, providing some of the most up-to-date images of poverty comparisons between urban and rural populations and how their experiences merge and differ. See: Inge Tvedten, *Comparing urban and rural poverty in Angola*, CMI Brief, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, no. 5, Nov. 2018. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/6676-comparing-urban-and-rural-poverty-in-angola>.

colonial government bestowed upon family agriculture...was never understood or assumed by the Angolan government.”²⁶⁸ As Rodrigo Pain describes it: “The agricultural sector, despite containing 80% of the population, received the least amounts of public investments.”²⁶⁹ These political choices taken amid the intensifying civil war resigned the rural populations into a position of exclusion politically, socially, economically, institutionally, and even symbolically.²⁷⁰ Over forty years later, the rural economy is still in search of ways to reproduce the complex role played by the invaluable bush traders from the colonial days.

The agricultural sector was severely undercut by the loss of the technical capacity and *savoir-faire* jealously guarded by the Portuguese settlers, as well as the crumbling of the commercial network and middlemen that delivered the goods from the fields to the markets. The Portuguese colonial legacy of concentrating decision-making power within a small group of elites left the native population with a huge deficit of not just investment capital, but also human capital. Revitalizing the abandoned farms became an urgent priority of the newly independent nation, but restarting them following the same colonial model proved to be too difficult for the group of managers tasked with rebuilding them. The production targets remained unchanged; how to reach them was left unanswered. Underproduction and misappropriation of resources are two threads that run from 1975 to the present day.

1.3.2 'SOCIALIST' IDEALS MEET CAPITALIST REALITIES

Post-independence, the MPLA went to great lengths to lay the foundations for a ‘socialist’ economy, influenced by the political philosophies of the Soviet Union and China. These ideals bent however to economic realities, as exceptions abound regarding their adherence to a truly socialist character.²⁷¹ Bhagavan highlights a speech by then-President Agostinho Neto in 1978 wherein he

²⁶⁸ Pacheco, *et al.* “Contribuição para o debate”, 332.

²⁶⁹ Pain, “As características da experiência”, 189-190.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 186.

²⁷¹ This policy contradiction between professed “socialism” and capitalist practices will embody a constant thread throughout the analysis of the rural political economy of Angola. See for example: Hance & Von Dongen, “The Port of Lobito”, 1956; Manuel Ferreira, “Nacionalização e confisco do capital português na

categorically stated that the Party and the state were not against private enterprise as such. However, what would not be tolerated is a situation where the involvement of private capital, whether Angolan or foreign, becomes so large or critically important as to exercise control over the economy.²⁷²

Furthermore, in Dec. 1978 President Neto even “declared that private ownership of small enterprises would be allowed” and that this exception did not represent a clash with the revolutionary principals he was otherwise expounding.²⁷³ The small Angolan business class would therefore be allowed to invest in state enterprises, and foreign capital could continue to invest in the major exporting machines as long as the state maintained majority ownership. This can be analyzed through the lens of the need for rebuilding a devastated economy while ensuring economic sovereignty over the new country, which it surely was,²⁷⁴ but it can also be analyzed through the lens of maximizing rent control and amassing the means of production within the levers of direct state control.

Furthermore, this position vis-à-vis foreign participation in the rural economy is a direct inheritance and continuation of the colonial policies described in §1.1.5-1.1.7. In this perspective, the MPLA clearly shows its willingness to bend its political ideology to *realeconomie* and *realpolitik*.²⁷⁵ The accepting of private capital was far from the ‘Marxist-Leninist’ state-centric models, but it demonstrates the extent to which the new Angolan government clearly acknowledged the costs of the ensuing civil war. In order to ensure the economic engine continued to hum, Angola’s economy was open for business with private

indústria transformadora de Angola (1975-1990)”, *Análise Social*, 37, no. 162, spring (2002): 47-90; Manuel Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development, 1961-2002”, *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, no. 1, (2006): 25-29; Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Can Angola’s elite transform itself?”, *The Africa Report*, Paris, 3 Dec. 2014. <https://www.theafricareport.com/3656/can-angolas-elite-transform-itself/>; Pain, “As características da experiência”, 2008; Konczacki, *et al.*, *The Economic History*, 1990.

²⁷² Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 26.

²⁷³ M. R. Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects for Socialist Industrialisation*, Research report, no. 57, Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1980, 19. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:274875/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

²⁷⁴ Control of foreign investment particularly came through the Law of State Intervention (Feb. 1976) allowing for the confiscation of private property, the Law on Petroleum Activities of 1978 and the Law of Foreign Investment and Mines of 1979, the latter declaring that all minerals found in Angola belong to the Angolan people. See: Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 38.

²⁷⁵ In reference to the article of Manuel Ferreira “Realeconomie e realpolitik nos recursos naturais em Angola”, *Relações Internacionais*, no. 6, (2005): 73-89. Ferreira notes that the realpolitik went both ways, as the fervently anti-communist United States CIA and State Department allowed Gulf Oil to continue operating in Angola post-independence, effectively financing and working alongside the budding ‘Marxist-Leninist’ government of Angola.

investments, at least in the few key areas of resource extraction already developed under the Portuguese, most notably oil:

Oil production, organized totally outside of the norms of the socialist economy and conducted by transnational firms in isolated enclaves, accounted for close to 90 per cent of export earnings, and these revenues enabled the military to purchase increasing quantities of arms and ammunition. The state virtually abandoned the peasantry and agricultural production, while the cities subsisted as best they could on exports.²⁷⁶

However, where foreign expertise was not dominant, the concentration of the economic system within an untested and unprepared bureaucratic apparatus proved to be extremely detrimental to the country as a whole. In time, centralized state planning “has become farcical at the level of both the central Ministry of Planning and the sectorial ministries of agriculture, industry, etc. They have become mere paper exercises with no grounding in reality”.²⁷⁷ Bureaucratic ineptitude and technocratic amateurism began to engrain itself. Fast forward to the turn of the century, and each new program proposed had goals unachieved and targets unmet, with policy instead becoming embroiled among interested political and economic actors.²⁷⁸

Towards the end of the civil war, another marked characteristic of Angolan statecraft became apparent: the illiberal nature of its social and economic reconstruction.²⁷⁹ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira’s article “Illiberal peacebuilding in Angola” (2011) aided in placing this reconstruction project in its historical and global context, describing this ‘illiberalness’ as

a process of post-war reconstruction managed by local elites in defiance of liberal peace precepts regarding civil liberties, the rule of law, the expansion of economic freedoms and poverty alleviation, with a view to constructing a hegemonic order and an elite stranglehold over the political economy.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Pereira, “The Neglected Tragedy”, 10.

²⁷⁷ Bhagavan, M. R., *Angola’s Political Economy*, 43.

²⁷⁸ Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development”, 28.

²⁷⁹ While this study focuses on the illiberal state-building in the peripheries, for a local perspective on how this process played out in urban areas see Chloé Buire “Intimate Encounters with the State in Post-War Luanda, Angola”, *Journal of Development Studies*, 54, no. 1, (2018): 1-17.

²⁸⁰ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Illiberal peacebuilding in Angola”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 49, no. 2, (2011): 288.

Taking into account the late historical stage that the MPLA's establishment in the periphery took place, the political flexibility afforded by the abundant oil wealth assisted by the arrival of Chinese state financing to the continent and the avoidance of Western-based loan conditionalities, the illiberal takeover of the periphery comes into starker focus.

The MPLA with José Eduardo dos Santos at the helm was able to enact an expansion of the state in its own image with technocratic assistance and advice only where and when it deemed appropriate. This elitist vision sought grandiose development projects to revitalize the economic viability of the countryside, but with minimal attention provided to the local communities along the way. Moreover, the party leading the charge had never showed itself capable of undertaking such a monumental task, but chose to go it largely alone regardless. At the moment the MPLA saw itself fit to embark on a national reconstruction project, “Angola's population was amongst the world's most deprived; the state was incapable of performing a host of sovereign functions, and largely uninterested in the governance of the hinterland and the administration of its people”.²⁸¹ The MPLA, finding itself dependent on an ultra-concentrated economy²⁸² reliant on offshore oil production to fill its government coffers, was able to use these resources to construct a political machine that would come to overshadow every sector of society. Clientelism would serve as the favored tool to silence critics, placate allies, and spread the wealth among the well-connected. Agrarian development, requiring the empowerment of a complex network of actors and institutions, suffered heavily under these extraordinary conditions. Angola's countryside, and its vast populations living throughout, struggle under the yoke of this hubris to this day, while the MPLA waffles and points fingers for its ineptitude.

1.3.3 RURAL POWER STRUGGLES: TRADITION MEETS MODERNITY

The rebuilding project would involve a complex web of both fundamental changes and deepening continuities, touching on culture, lifestyle, social power relations, and

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 291.

²⁸² Angola has the world's second most concentrated economy, only followed by that of Iraq. See: Chr. Michelson Institute-Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica (CMI-CEIC), “Diversification of the Angolan Economy” CMI Insight, no. 5, Bergen, Chr. Michelson Institute, September 2014, 1-3. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/5212-diversification-of-the-angolan-economy.pdf>.

economics. The weakened but resolute MPLA, still highly militarized from the war and with an authoritarian mindset, set off to finally unite its sovereign territory under a single governmental control in an historically unprecedented, ‘manifest destiny’-type mission. With little to no experience and lacking the resources to do so, the government employed a “dizzying array of post-war strategies ranging from high-modernist, pseudo-developmental state activism to extensive subcontracting to non-state actors that are used to expand the writ of the state from the political centre and provincial capitals to the remotest regions”.²⁸³ Paradoxically, in the countryside amid all these changes, the MPLA is both everywhere and nowhere to be seen. In traditional life, this paradox is most clearly manifested in the empty uniform of the local traditional leader, the *soba*. Empty, not because of the person contained within it, but rather for the lack of power that it bestows upon the wearer, suddenly finding himself “outside of any legal or institutional framework” upon independence, though the dissolution of his powers dates back to the colonial period.²⁸⁴ Forced to change from their customary clothing to a full military uniform, the visuals represent a metaphor of the modern MPLA’s incarnation of traditional social structures.

The military imagery evokes the elitist class of privileged officials honored for their role in liberating the country from the colonial overlords and finishing the revolution with the defeat of UNITA. But in the countryside, the military uniform does not necessarily carry the same prestige, as rural populations were tortured and/or raped²⁸⁵ by soldiers during wartime,²⁸⁶ while also dispossessed and displaced by armed forces and government officials²⁸⁷ throughout contemporary history. For the generations with these memories still fresh, seeing the local respected elder *soba* wearing military garb can either be seen as a reassurance for the supporters of the MPLA, or as a form of Orwellian doublethink as respect engrained toward the local elders suddenly morphs into acquiescence to state military power.

²⁸³ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 165-166.

²⁸⁴ Jeanette Clover, *Framing issues of environmental security in Angola and Mozambique – The nexus of land, conflicts and sustainable livelihoods in post-conflict situations*, PhD dissertation, Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, 2007, 218.

²⁸⁵ Justin Pearce, *Control, ideology and identity in civil war: The Angolan Central Highlands 1965-2002*, PhD dissertation, Oxford, University of Oxford, 2011, 243.

²⁸⁶ See also Inge Brinkman “Ways of Death: Account of Terror from Angolan Refugees in Namibia”, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 70, n. 1, (2000): 1-24. <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/5816655/file/5816656.pdf>. The different torture methods are described throughout, while the rape or “perverted sexuality” episodes are found on p. 13.

²⁸⁷ Clover, “Framing issues”, 186-187, 232; Péclard, “Les chemins”, 14-15.

Beyond the clearly symbolic clothing, the *sobas* have seen their social status diminished across the board, retaining some important traditional roles but reduced more generally to a ‘yes’ man when MPLA interests are in play. Aslak Orre (2009) evokes Greek mythology’s “trojan horse” in his analysis of how the MPLA’s has taken control of the traditional power structure, noting later that by the early 2000s the MPLA-led government had copied the colonial playbook “of winning the local chiefs’ loyalty by paying monthly subsidies to at least forty thousand ‘traditional authorities’”.²⁸⁸ As Ricardo Soares de Oliveira describes it: “The cheap uniform that sobas resent is a sign of subservience, their meagre salaries are often unpaid or pocketed by provincial officials and at every turn *sobas* are clearly outranked by the party-state”.²⁸⁹ Aslak Orre lists all of the traditional authorities’ monthly salaries paid in the province of Malanje in October 2008. The 1,422 total sobas in the provinces earned a combined US\$173,655 equaling approximately US\$122 per soba per month.²⁹⁰ The modern state has thus drained the *soba* of his traditional powers and responsibilities, replaced with local officials taking direct orders from Luanda.

In attempts to transition the rural economy, the reconstruction of the periphery focused on replacing traditional farming methods to one powered by modernization. This transition was initially sought through the *Projecto de Agricultura Familiar Orientado para o Mercado* (MOSAP, Market Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project), which was a project initially elaborated and financed by the World Bank in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2007. Alongside the *Fundo de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento* (Agriculture Development Fund, FADA), a financial institution initially set up in 1986 to assist smallholders, the stated “core of the project design centered around the need to re-capitalize smallholder producers and re-activate market linkages to support broad-scale and sustainable agricultural production among smallholder farmers who comprised the majority of the population”.²⁹¹ Financed initially by the World Bank (US\$30 million), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (US\$8 million), the government of Japan (US\$4 million), US\$3 million by the government and US\$3 million contributed by the private sector,

²⁸⁸ Aslak Orre, “Who’s to challenge the party-state in Angola? Political space & opposition in parties and civil society”, Conference: Election processes, liberation movements and democratic change in Africa, Maputo, 8-11 April 2010, 19 p. https://www.iese.ac.mz/~iesecmz/lib/publication/proelit/Aslak_Orre.pdf.

²⁸⁹ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 122.

²⁹⁰ Orre, “Kalandula and the CACS”, 16.

²⁹¹ World Bank, “Implementation completion and results report (COFN-C1270, IDA-45020 TF-57303 TF-57845) on a IDA credit in the amount of SDR 13.0 million (US\$20.0 million equivalent to the Republic of Angola for a market oriented smallholder agriculture project”, Report n° ICR00003886, Agriculture Global Practice, Africa Region, Washington D.C., 28 Sept. 2016, 7.

the program was originally designed for a period of six years and focused on 25 *comunas* in 12 *municípios* within the three provinces of Bié, Huambo and Malanje.²⁹² The program was led by the World Bank within its 2007-2009 interim country strategy, at the same time that the government itself was awash in petrol dollars.

The stated goals were (i) strengthening public sector management and institutional capacity (ii) rebuilding vital infrastructure for the delivery of poverty reduction public services (iii) promoting economic growth in non-mineral sectors, as well as the IFAD's 2008-2009 country strategy based on reducing rural poverty and facilitating private sector development.²⁹³ The project itself was implemented in the 2010/2011 agricultural season²⁹⁴ and had four major components destined for the peasantry: (1) agricultural productivity, (2) pilot fertilizer market improvement program, (3) capacity building, (4) project management.²⁹⁵ In order to implement such an ambitious project it required the coordination of a vast network of actors. The program was run through the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute of Agrarian Development) within the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) at the national and provincial level coordinating with the *Estações de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (EDA, Agricultural Development Station) at the local level, alongside local *município* officials, NGOs,²⁹⁶ local communities and peasant associations.²⁹⁷ The FAO also played a key role in assisting the IDA and EDAs through the establishment of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) where farmers "could strengthen their technical and managerial skills, establish and strengthen their associations and cooperatives".²⁹⁸ As the project was designed for a six-year period, it came to term in 2016.

The original program was deemed particularly successful for women benefitting from increased production and income, as well as an independent evaluation finding over 70% of

²⁹² Vladimir Russo, "Projecto Agrícola de Produtores Familiares Orientado para o Mercado (MOSAP): Quadro de gestão ambiental e social", World Bank & Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Luanda, 2007, ii-iii. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/575321468010002177/pdf/E1605.pdf>.

²⁹³ World Bank, "Implementation completion", 1.

²⁹⁴ IFAD, "Republic of Angola Country Strategic Opportunities Program 2019-2024", Rome, Dec. 2018a, 49. <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/125/docs/EB-2018-125-R-26-Rev-1.pdf>.

²⁹⁵ Russo, "Projecto Agrícola", ix.

²⁹⁶ The specific NGOs mentioned were ADRA, AFRICARE and *Ajuda de Desenvolvimento de Povo para Povo* (ADPP, Humana People to People), as well as the Spanish Foundation CODESPA. See IFAD, "Project Completion Report", 4.

²⁹⁷ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2014*, 184.

²⁹⁸ IFAD, "Project Completion Report Validation", Market-Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project (MOSAP), Republic of Angola, Rome, Nov. 2017a, 4. <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714182/39730985/PCRV+MOSAP+Angola.pdf>.

the projects “sustainable”.²⁹⁹ The creation of 726 FFS benefitted a total of 22,432 farmers, comprising 42% of all beneficiaries that work lands between half a hectare to two hectares maximum.³⁰⁰ The community-demand driven approach focused on the sustainability of knowledge and techniques acquired through a strong focus on capacity development. The project’s success led to a replication of its model leading to the “Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project” (SADCP-C&H-SAMAP). Formulated in 2017 and based in the provinces of Cuanza Sul and Huíla, it hopes to scale up the MOSAP model that reached 50,000 farming families by increasing to a target of 235,000 farmers.³⁰¹ Furthermore, at the same time that the first MOSAP came to term in 2016, the government, the World Bank, the FAO and IFAD began transitioning to a continuation of the program through the establishment of a five-year long program MOSAP II focused on continuing the progress made through its pilot program.³⁰² Begun in 2016, MOSAP II will remain active until 2021 throughout most of the first mandate of President João Lourenço.

While MOSAP solidified the initial push to commercialize agricultural production, the push for industrializing the rural economy was most representative in 2015 through the *Programa de Fomento à Pequena Indústria Rural* (PROFIR, Rural Industry Development Program) through presidential decree n° 111 of 13 May 2015 as a central part of the government’s “action plan” for the period between 2015-2017 leading up to the elections, and tucked within the government National Development Plan 2013-2017.³⁰³ The economic diversification program hoped to increase employment and revenue for workers, reduce poverty in rural areas, reduce regional asymmetries, support small businesses in the transformation of their products, as well as the integration of the informal market into formal channels.

The program’s central investment would be operationalizing 256 light industry sites, including the building of 117 new industrial sites and refurbishing a further 139 by 2017 through an investment of 6.2 billion kwanzas (US\$61.8 million). The industrial sites were to

²⁹⁹ IFAD, “Republic of Angola Country”, 5.

³⁰⁰ IFAD, “Project Completion Report”, 7.

³⁰¹ IFAD, *Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project in Cuanza Sul and Huila Provinces (SADCP-C&H-SAMAP)*, Final project design report, Rome, 28 April 2017, vii. <https://operations.ifad.org/documents/654016/707cd881-9285-4939-ac54-ee57b3efedad>.

³⁰² Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), *Smallholder agriculture development and commercialization project – MOSAP II*, Environmental and social management framework, GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA, Luanda, 11 Dec. 2015. https://ewdata.rightsindevelopment.org/files/documents/47/WB-P154447_1I8XGWZ.pdf.

³⁰³ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 68, Luanda, 13 May 2015: 1925-1947.

be scattered throughout the country with 18 projects planned in the provinces of Benguela, Bié, Lunda Norte and Namibe, 17 projects each in Cuando Cubango, Huambo, Huíla, 16 projects for Moxico, eight for Luanda and three for Cunene, all spanning the sectors of agriculture, food processing, forestry, and general services.³⁰⁴ This program was extremely ambitious and complex in the logistics that it would require to not only to build the new industrial parks, but then attempt to maximize the investments. Fernando Pacheco deemed this program as a positive step, yet remained cautious about the combination of underinvesting in the program potentially undermining their viability as well as the overly ambitious character of the program itself.³⁰⁵ In following the trends of poor program implementation, PROFIR only achieved 20% of its first-year objectives according to the Minister of Industry himself, Bernarda Martins, being built only in the *comuna* of Canjala (Benguela) and Tomboco (Zaire).³⁰⁶ The considerable delays were blamed on the difficult economic period that the country was enduring, reducing the resources available to implement the program.

The administration of João Lourenço sought to bring continuity to the program one year after it was supposed to have been finished. In 2018, the new government tried to engineer an institutional partnership between the key institution for smallholder production the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute of Agrarian Development) with its industrial version, the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Industrial de Angola*, (IDIA, Institute of Industrial Development of Angola) in order to merge smallholder production into the industrial parks being built. The director of IDIA announced in June 2018 the continuation of PROFIR through the creation of 50 industrial parks throughout the country before the end of 2022. At the time of the announcement, only three industrial parks had been built including in Cacuso (Malanje) as well as the two mentioned previously.

The construction of just these three parks costs a reported 1.8 billion kwanzas.³⁰⁷ Seven other projects were reportedly in construction in Maquela do Zombo (Uíge), Quibaxe

³⁰⁴ Ricardo David Lopes, “PROFIR põe em marche 257 unidades industriais até 2017”, *Expansão*, Luanda, 16 June 2015. <http://www.expansao.co.ao/artigo/58463/profir-poe-em-marcha-257-unidades-industriais-ate-2017?seccao=5>.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁶ Isabel Dinis, “Governo privatize sete projectos agrícolas”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 16 May 2016. <http://www.valoreconomico.co.ao/economia-politica/item/703-governo-privatiza-sete-projectos-agricolas>.

³⁰⁷ António Eugénio, “IDIA aplica Kz 1,8 mil milhões”, *Economia & Finanças*, Luanda, 23 Nov. 2018. <http://jornaldeeconomia.sapo.ao/capa/idia-aplica-kz-18-mil-milhoes?desktop>.

(Bengo), Waco Kungo (Cuanza Sul), Andulo (Bié), Calenga (Huambo), Catchiungo (Huambo) and Quibala (Cuanza Sul).³⁰⁸ Five years after the ambitious program was announced, the results are sobering. The three years of planned investments are laid out in the chart below.

Tableau 7 - Planned evolution of PROFIR investments

Year	Planned investment		Amount invested	
	New	Refurbished	kwanzas	US\$
2015	23	85	2.1 billion	20.9 million
2016	37	37	2 billion	20.5 million
2017	57	17	2 billion	20.5 million
Results				
2020	15			

Source: Eugênio “IDIA aplica”, 2018; LOPES, “PROFIR põe”, 2015; UNCTAD, “Revisão da Política de Investimento – Angola”, Geneva, United Nations, 2020.

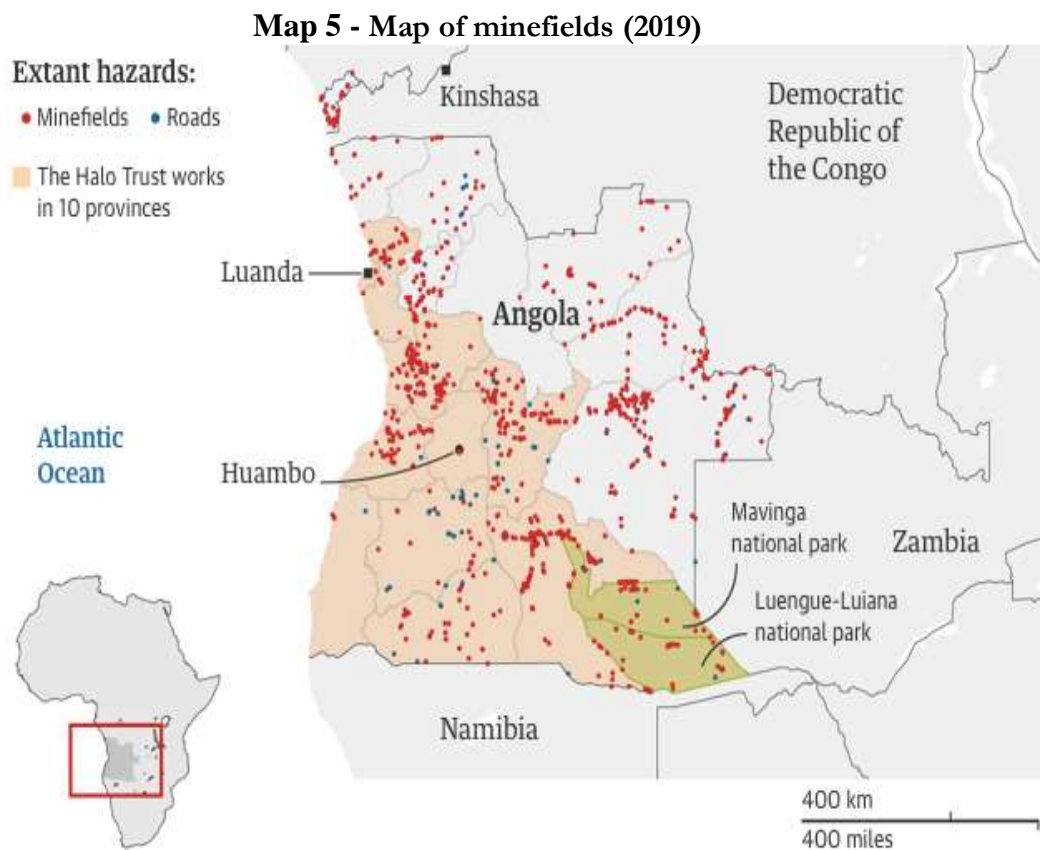
The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) found in 2020 that of the 117 light rural industrial sites and the rehabilitation of 139 others (256 total), the program was only able to build 15 in three different industrial parks between Canjala (Benguela province), Cacuso (Malanje), and Tomboco (Zaire).³⁰⁹ According to the review conducted by UNCTAD, this would mean that each of the seven projects reportedly under construction by the Lourenço administration were also unfinished and unaccounted for. It is unclear how much money was actually invested into the various projects beyond the aforementioned 1.8 billion kwanzas reported in 2018. Nevertheless, finalizing 15 of the 256 planned projects (6%) is by nearly any measure a policy failure, except for the three areas that actually benefitted. The administration of Lourenço still has two years before its own self-imposed project deadline arrives in 2022, so more progress, however modest, could still be made.

³⁰⁸ Ana Paulo, “Anunciados 50 parques industriais”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 26 June 2018. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/anunciados_50_parques_industriais.

³⁰⁹ UNCTAD, “Revisão da Política”, 47.

1.3.4 CUSTOMARY RIGHTS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any attempt at rebuilding the periphery in peacetime has at its heart the issue of land, a central issue historically under the purview of the *soba*. Who owns it, who uses it, who has rights to it, and who manages it? As the MPLA has expanded its outreach into the interior, these questions have followed closely behind, with the local *soba* often in lockstep. For rural populations, the land is not only their greatest asset, it is their livelihood, their culture, their ancestry, their way of life and their transmission upon death. In order to be able to find answers to the aforementioned questions, first an important legacy of the civil war must be addressed: land mines. Angola remains one of the most heavily mined countries in the world.



Guardian graphic. Source: IMSMA National Database, September 2019

Source: Rachel Cooke, "Inch by inch: how Angola is clearing its killing fields", The *Guardian*, 29 Sept. 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/sep/29/angola-landmines-killing-fields-prince-harry-princess-diana>.

As recently highlighted by Prince Harry of England's visit to Angola in September 2019 in support of the anti-mine campaign led by his mother Princess Diana, the omnipresent danger of mines has remained a central concern to recovering significant swaths of land across Angola. While exact numbers are unknown, according to Halo Trust (2019),³¹⁰ a British NGO specialized in clearing landmines worldwide and present in Angola since 1994, has so far cleared 100,000 landmines while 1,100 known minefields remain, counting up to 500,000 devices, and leaving approximately 88,000 victims.

To give an idea of the hectic nature of the civil war and its international character, "as many as 51 different types of landmines from 18 countries had been identified".³¹¹ According to the *Comissão Nacional Intesectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária* (CNIDAH, Intersectoral National Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance) the Angolan institution responsible for landmine removal, 1,230 minefields remain, comprising 115,083,405 square meters. \$50 million has been allocated by the government for the 2018-2022 budget plan for demining operations.³¹² The plan is to be landmine free by 2025, but that ambitious target would require an estimated \$275 million in additional investment.³¹³ While the Angolan government has provided 69% of the overall demining financial support, the fall in oil prices has left it struggling to keep pace, while international funding has dropped drastically as well.³¹⁴ Interestingly, the government's support has been "almost exclusively in support of major infrastructure projects [...]. Clearance of rural areas has not typically been funded by the government, and assistance from international demining organisations has been vital to clear poor and rural areas".³¹⁵ This follows alongside the thread of the MPLA neglecting rural populations and preferring to invest in major projects more

³¹⁰ See the NGO's website at: www.halotrust.org/where-we-work/africa/angola/ (accessed 12 Aug. 2020).

³¹¹ Christopher Vandome, *Mine Action in Angola: Clearing the Legacies of Conflict to Harness the Potential of Peace*, Briefing note, Chatham House, London, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, June 2019, 2. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2019-06-17-Angola.pdf>.

³¹² CNIDAH, "Angola Mine Action Programme 2019-2025", Edition One, no. 1, Feb. 2019, 1-2.

³¹³ Vandome, *Mine Action*, 7.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³¹⁵ Mine Action Review, *Clearing the Mines 2017*, A report by Mine Action Review for the sixteenth meeting of states parties to the anti-personnel mine ban convention, Dec. 2017, 29. <http://www.mineactionreview.org/assets/downloads/Clearing-the-Mines-2017.pdf>. The latest report notes that little had changed in this dynamic: "Angola's government has provided funding for survey and clearance operations for national and commercial operators working under the CED [Executive Commission for Demining]. It has not, however, provided funding for humanitarian demining in recent years, leaving the most vulnerable, mainly poor, rural communities, the most at risk from mines and ERW [Explosive remnants of war]." (Mine Action Review, *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2019: Angola*. 2019: 111. http://www.mineactionreview.org/assets/downloads/10799_NPA_Cluster_Munition_Remnants_2019_WE_B.pdf).

geared toward the economic modernization of the periphery. Many of the remaining mines are contaminating key agricultural areas throughout the country and represent a key obstacle not only to the rural development in the affected areas, but the larger agricultural sector as a whole.

For the productive land, the issue of land rights has been central to many researchers of rural studies in Angola. A non-exclusive list includes Conor Foley (2007),³¹⁶ Paulo Groppo, *et al.* (2004),³¹⁷ Jeannette Clover (2005, 2007, 2010),³¹⁸ Fernando Pacheco (1991, 1996, 2002a, 2002b, 2005, 2013, 2019),³¹⁹ Rodrigo de Souza Pain (2006, 2008, 2014),³²⁰ Guilherme Santos & Inácio Zacarias (2010).³²¹ The discussions on rural land rights center heavily around the questions of land rights, use, and ownership, with rural communities at the heart of the subject. The issue of land is made much more difficult however given that even the amount of productive land is up for debate.

Emerging from the war in 2004, the FAO divided up the potentially productive land in Angola as having three million hectares of arable land, half a million hectares of land under permanent cultivation, 75 thousand hectares of irrigated land and 29 million hectares of pastoral land.³²² Nowadays, a 2018 World Bank report identified both 59 million hectares (p. 1) and 57.4 million hectares (p. 26), with between 8 and 14% under cultivation.³²³ This is advanced from only 3% in 2003, at the time hindered “because of civil unrest, transport

³¹⁶ Conor Foley, *Land Rights in Angola: poverty and plenty*, HPG Working Paper, London, Overseas Development Institute, Nov. 2007. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/91177/2007-11_Land%20Rights%20in%20Angola.pdf.

³¹⁷ Groppo, *et al.*, “Land tenure support in post-conflict Angola”, Rome, FAO, 2004. <http://www.fao.org/3/y5639t/y5639t0a.html>.

³¹⁸ Jeanette Clover, “Land reform in Angola: Establishing the ground rules”: 347-380, in *From the Ground Up: Land Rights, Conflict and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (eds), Chris Huggins & Jenny Clover, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005); Jeanette Clover, *Framing issues*, 2007; Jenny Clover, “The role of land”, 2010.

³¹⁹ Júlio Morais & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 1991; Fernando Pacheco, *A Terra: Factor de Desenvolvimento ou de Conflito*, ADRA, Lubango, 1996; Fernando Pacheco, *A questão da terra para fins agrícolas*, FAO, Luanda, January 2002; Fernando Pacheco, *Sociedade Civil Angolana: Relatório Final*, 23 March 2002a; Fernando Pacheco, *Land and agriculture in Angola*, Jan. 2002b; Fernando Pacheco, *Sistemas de uso da terra agrícolas em Angola: Estudos de case nas províncias do Huambo, Lunda Sul e Uíje*, Luanda, Centro de Estudos Sociais e Desenvolvimento, 2005; Pacheco, *et al.*, “Contribuição para o debate”, 2013; Fernando Pacheco, “Problemas Políticos e da Política Agrícola”, *Conversa na Mulemba*, 132, 17 March (2019).

³²⁰ Rodrigo de Souza Pain & Marilise Martins dos Reis, “Em busca do despertar”, 2006; Pain, “As características da experiência”, 2008; Pain, “A questão da terra”, 2014.

³²¹ Santos & Zacarias, “*Pesquisa sobre os Diferendos*”, 2010. This study by ADRA plays a major role in this research project. It is at once one of the initial sparks of interest that led to this research project, as well as a central source of the project’s reorientation and renewed skepticism in studying Angolan sources.

³²² CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 124-125.

³²³ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country Diagnostic. Creating Assets for the Poor*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2018b. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/337691552357946557/pdf/angola-scd-03072019-636877656084587895.pdf>.

problems, and a lack of proper marketing facilities and incentives”.³²⁴ The Ministry of Agriculture in 2018 identified 57 million hectares of arable land, with 4 million already under cultivation.³²⁵ A government-sponsored investment manual from the exact same time period (July 2018), complete with a preface signed by the President himself, João Lourenço, identifies only 35 million hectares of ‘arable’ land, with 14% (approximately 5 million) in use,³²⁶ but then in the same manual later cites the FAO as identifying 58 million “potential” hectares, including 10% (5.8 million) covered by forest. It later identifies that of the five million hectares under cultivation, 95% of that area “is occupied by the seven principal crops: wheat (37%), manioc (24%), beans (17%), peanuts (7%), sorghum (4%), sweet potato (4%) and potato (2.5%)”, with coffee making up .6%.³²⁷

As a territory, Angola covers 1,246,700 square kilometers.³²⁸ If we accept the FAO’s 58 million hectares of “potential” agricultural land, that would equal approximately 580,000 square kilometers, equaling 46% of the entire territory. Regardless of the different climatic zones of the country, including the semi-arid and desert conditions found in the provinces along the border with Namibia, this general vision only allows for “potential” given very specific circumstances (the right equipment, favorable climatic conditions, proper tools and machinery, technical capacity and know-how). Given that currently only five million hectares are in use, the 58 million seems a hyperbolic number, and certainly misleading in its manual for private investment. The most productive and best-positioned lands in Angola today are nearly all occupied by peri-urban and rural farmers or commercial farms and ranches, many practicing subsistence farming. Enticing private investors with ideas of massive, unexplored and unoccupied fertile ground is a recipe for land conflict.

Jeannette Clover’s dissertation *Framing issues of environmental security in Angola and Mozambique – The nexus of land, conflicts and sustainable livelihoods in post-conflict situations* (2007)³²⁹

³²⁴ John Hughes, “Economy”, in *Africa South of the Sahara 2004*, (Europa Publications: London Psychology Press, 2003), 42.

³²⁵ Bassimba Dissolouquele, *et al.*, Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas, “Projecto para o aumento de produtividade agrícola na África austral APPSA-ANGOLA”, Quadro de Gestão Ambiental e Social (QGAS), Chianga, July 2018, i.

³²⁶ Angola, *Angola is Now: Guia de Investimento em Angola*, Câmara de Comércio Americana em Angola, Agência Angolana para a Promoção do Investimento e das Exportações, Luanda, 2018a, 35. https://www.missionangola.ch/telechargements/guia_investimento_angola_isnow.pdf.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 105.

³²⁸ 1 square kilometer = 100 hectares.

³²⁹ Clover, *Framing issues*, 2007.

and related articles (2005, 2010)³³⁰ on the legislative history around land issues were particularly important in understanding how the MPLA and its patronage network has employed a Weberian legal-rational authority to usurp *comunal* lands for either private benefit or ‘public interest’ claims. She meticulously follows the evolution of the different land laws put in place under the MPLA all the while situating the debates in their historical context and identifying the failures of each law that would need to be addressed in future legislation.

The current land law (*Lei de Terras* n° 9 of 2004), filled with various loopholes and deficiencies, is once again on the political agenda for revision, purportedly to empower the rural populations by reversing on the last forty years of land policy and returning customary land control to their traditional owners.³³¹ These latest changes will be reviewed in chapter seven covering the transformations in the MPLA’s relationship with the countryside enacted by President João Lourenço. Jeannette Clover’s extensive work in this area of study on Angola, alongside her dissertation exploring the development ramifications of the links between law, livelihood, ecology, and rural conflict means that she will be a principal reference for the case study discussion involving *Rede Terra*’s civic mobilization campaign and will be a principal reference in the legal ramification on this issue.

1.3.5 LEVERAGING RURAL INTERESTS

The Chatham House, part of the Royal Institute of International Affairs based in London, has had a strong focus on Angola's economy, civil society, and politics (both domestic and international) since establishing its Angola Forum in 1998³³². Its research on the complex evolution of the Angolan civil society was an early influence on this research project. In particular, the last section of their research paper *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3: Civil Society³³³ intitled “Emerging Leverage Points for Mobilisation: Lessons, Experiences and Opportunities” provided an initial look at the capacity of civil society

³³⁰ Clover, “Land reform in Angola”, 2005; Clover, “The role of land”, 2010.

³³¹ Angop, “MINOTH recomenda revisão da Lei de Terras na perspectiva autárquica”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 27 March 2019. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/2/13/MINOTH-recomenda-revisao-Lei-Terras-perspectiva-autarquica,c02f8cc4-6361-4f74-b4bf-b7e2da868968.html.

³³² According to its website: “The Angola Forum - formerly known as the British Angola Forum (BAF) was one of the first centres of expertise on Angolan affairs and international relations outside of Portuguese-speaking countries” See: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/research/regions/africa/angola> (accessed 22 May 2020).

³³³ Vines, *et al.*, “*Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3”, 26-32.

mobilization and the willingness of the MPLA to allow and/or participate in this process. Having written the paper in 2005, one insight has certainly held up against the test of time:

One the one hand, the well-established MPLA machinery will opportunistically work with civil society groups, in order to use their capacity for service delivery far more than to engage in genuinely consultative activities. On the other hand, the MPLA has been in power for almost three decades, and it will not readily let go of the means of power at its disposal. It may periodically appreciate the advantages of working more closely with others, but it will attempt to do so within the realm of its own interests.³³⁴

A major piece of this research project has therefore been the quest to uncover the breadth and depth of that last sentence: how much space is the MPLA willing to cede, according to how it perceives “the realm of its own interests”. How deep do these interests go?

As a political institution governing over a country only recently officially establishing its peacetime character, its main interests center on obtaining and preserving its monopoly of legitimate violence over the entire territory. But to what extent does this monopoly allow dissent, criticism, and civic pushback? And how far do the MPLA interests extend beyond the political realm and into the economic? As it will be discussed later, the systematic stifling and undermining of the rural peasantry's economic potential demonstrates that the MPLA's officials believe that directly controlling the whole span of the economy, from its obvious vast oil wealth down to the country's cattle, egg, and grain production, evolved into being a central pillar of its own interests, both political and personal.

This chapter has attempted to trace many of the major scholars on Angola in describing the transformations of rural Angola's social and economic structures through the colonial era into its reconstruction. Through a vast yet incomplete literature review, it has demonstrated the different strains of continuity between colonial and independent Angola in the sectors of governance, economy and society. The thriving agricultural sector reaching its apex in 1973 has long been held up as a sort of lodestar for the MPLA's aspirations of diversifying the economy. This goal has been pursued through a mixture of government-led ‘socialist’ organization of the rural actors into peasant associations and cooperatives

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

alongside the work of a multitude of Non-State Actors actively participating alongside the MPLA.

While working in tandem, the overall goals of the mission to promote socio-economic development in the countryside merge and diverge. They merge with the promotion of achieving food security, of providing basic social services, and securing a stable livelihood. They diverge when resource accumulation comes into the picture, through the promotion of private enterprise, entrepreneurship and commercialization. In the latter instance, the MPLA's *modus operandi* is to control the flow of rents and capital accumulation. In the next chapter, we will investigate the theoretical underpinnings of this strategy set on achieving domination through a structural framework built around the total control of resource distribution and the effects of its accumulation and deprivation.

Chapter 2 – Power, agency & resource distribution: a theoretical review

The current study is firmly planted in peripheral geographic spaces understood as non-urban and its principal analysis must be understood through this specific prism. Rural and, to a lesser extent, peri-urban areas, are at an inherent disadvantage in state formation and development. While unique in geography, topography, and natural resource endowment, rural areas all share the commonalities of isolation and low population density, as well as the relative lack of services, resources, political representation, and economic opportunities. It is from this position of subordination to urban bias that the rural spaces of Angola have been under construction. Urban bias occurs when “political elites deliberately formed urban-based coalitions favoring the interests of urban capital and labor over the mass of rural cultivators”.³³⁵ The MPLA, with its headquarters in Luanda and occupying many of the major cities throughout the civil war, was pragmatically predisposed to an urban biased agenda through its leaders’ historical link to the capital as its *de facto* headquarters going back to colonial times, its strong social links to the dominant creole culture, and later due to its attractiveness as a space of refuge, stability and economic opportunity as the decades of war served as an accelerant to the country’s mass exodus of rural populations and their subsequent urbanization. Nevertheless, the power and the pull of Luanda has its own geographic limits. Particularly concerning the growth of the rural economy with food production at its heart, “agriculture is perhaps the prototypical example of an activity that is not best managed from a capital city”.³³⁶ This is especially true for Angola, where coastal Luanda and its clique of creole elites have little to nothing in common with the vast, sparsely-populated peripheries.

The de-concentration of state power and authority emanating from urban to rural areas is a common phenomenon in weakened states, especially in occurrence of a civil war.

³³⁵ David Waldner, Brenton Peterson & Jon Shoup, “Against the Grain of Urban Bias: Elite Conflict and the Logic of Coalition Formation in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa”, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, no. 52, (2017): 1.

³³⁶ World Bank, *Angola Country Economic Memorandum: Oil, Broad-Based Growth, and Equity*, Report No. 35362-AO, Washington D.C., 2 Oct. 2006, 99. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/591191468002432699/pdf/35362.pdf>.

Angolans' own identities and mindsets have been shaped by their geographical position vis-à-vis the relative presence of political systems attempting to impose their authority. This notion of geographical political identity is “central to how people in Angola made sense of the social cleavages and of the political possibilities associated with the Angolan conflict. Ideas of the urban and the rural are embedded in Angolan political ideologies”[.]³³⁷ As analyzing rural spaces comes with its own unique perspective, so shall the theoretical underpinnings outlined in this chapter. Whether pondering power wielded by the administrative state or by its subjects acting through agency, whether it be conceiving a political economy aligned to serve peripheral populations, or whether it be the creation and consolidation of rent distribution channels, the structural inequities of the rural-urban divide will be omnipresent. The question will remain as to what degree this ‘structural scarcity’ is a result of natural processes, as well as to what extent it has been politically engineered as such.

2.1 Power and agency: the unique socio-economic geography of Angola

When approaching the concepts of power and agency, it must first be determined who wields them and how. In state formations, traditionally power and its distribution have been seen from a Hobbesian perspective as a centralized institutional system, described by his construct of the Leviathan. From this standpoint, “political theory has always conceived of power as emanating from a central, symbolic place or position in society”.³³⁸ Michel Foucault’s analysis of power as being multi-level, decentralized, and antagonistic questioned the centralized Hobbesian theory of power, arguing that “[j]ust as power cannot be reduced to the economic dominance of the bourgeoisie, nor can it be reduced to the institution of the state”.³³⁹ This study follows this Foucauldian theoretical vision of power dispersion among actors and seeks to better understand how power and agency is exercised ‘top down’ in classical form, but just as importantly ‘from the bottom’ through the various social and institutional networks that have been under construction in the countryside. In practice, however, a Hobbesian vision of a power struggle between an all-powerful actor (MPLA) and

³³⁷ Pearce, *Control, ideology*, 22.

³³⁸ Saul Newman, “The Place of Power in Political Discourse”, *International Political Science Review*, 25, no. 2, (2004): 139-157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512104041281>.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

the population does seem apt. Despite talk and attempts at decentralizing the state,³⁴⁰ Angola remains one of the most centralized states in Africa,³⁴¹ especially given “the concentration of political power and administrative centralization paralleled by an increasing ‘elitism’ in the access to patrimonial benefits and privileges”.³⁴² The executive has become so powerful within Angola that some even deem the concentration of power as “‘hyper presidentialism’, blurring the lines of separation of powers and the necessary checks to counter intrusive influence over institutions”.³⁴³ Within this structure, examples of ‘bottom up’ demonstrations of political power continue to be extremely rare at all levels of the political arena. How then has the MPLA amassed and projected its power across its vast territory?

Like their colonial predecessors, the MPLA-led government labored intensively to extend their power throughout the sovereign territory. However, it must be reminded that upon independence in 1975, one of the first actions taken by the ‘Marxist-Leninist’-inspired administration of President Agostinho Neto was the nationalization of the country’s resources. This move effectively projected the state’s power, symbolically at first and then physically for most areas, directly into the intimate lives of each and every Angolan, even if they did not recognize it at the time. In transforming into the ultimate arbitrator of land rights and land use, the most valuable asset of rural and urban populations alike, the government triggered a major process of state formation on a scale it never could have done otherwise due to its own structural shortcomings.

Though it would take time to project a physical presence, this action essentially declared the superiority of the new modern state apparatus over the traditional power structures at the time, despite the fact that the same modern state apparatus was unable to impose its domination throughout the territory. The traditional leaders, the *regedorias* and *sobas*, saw their agency drastically reduced, and subsequently that of the communities dependent on the *sobas*’ power and authority to wield its influence in their name. As Catherine

³⁴⁰ Rui Verde, “As Autarquias e o Gradualismo em Angola”, MakaAngola, 24 May 2018. <https://www.makaangola.org/2018/05/as-autarquias-e-o-gradualismo-em-angola/>.

³⁴¹ Aslak Orre, “33 Years and 10 to go? The Future of Angolan Democracy”, paper presented at the conference Angola: Growth, Development and Inequality, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, Dec. 2012.

³⁴² Nuno Vidal, “The genesis and development of the Angolan political and administrative system from 1975 to the present” in *Lusophone Africa: Intersections between social sciences*, Steve Kyle, (Ithaca: Cornell Institute for African Development, 2003), 1.

³⁴³ Paula Cristina Roques, *Angola’s new president. Reforming to survive*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report, no. 38, April 2020, 4. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/sar38.pdf>.

Boone notes, “it is largely as arbitrator of land rights that the central state has projected its authority across space, categorized and organized populations into territorial jurisdictions, (re)constituted local-level political authority, and subordinated local authority to the central state”.³⁴⁴ The ensuing civil war, however, seriously hampered the state’s capacity to wield its power in space. As described by Justin Pearce: “Any understanding of state power in Angola needs to recognize that at no time prior to 2002 did the recognized government exercise even notional control over the whole of the national territory.”³⁴⁵ If 2002 represents its final extension of authority across the territory, the MPLA party-state itself had begun to reassert itself since 1999 when UNITA lost its headquarters and thus its ability to wage a coordinated, sustained war.³⁴⁶ The MPLA would have an enormous task ahead of itself as it aimed to be the first modern state power to govern the entire territory.

In fact, the period just prior to the end of the war for independence characterized the height of ‘State-ness’ in Angola in territorial and administrative terms,³⁴⁷ before fracturing into competing power players due to the civil war. This territorial integrity would not be recuperated, and eventually superseded, until the decade following the end of the civil war alongside the reconstruction boom period. The territorial takeovers during the civil war between the MPLA and UNITA³⁴⁸ have yet to receive a comprehensive micro analysis on how that process played out among the warring factions and the populations caught in the firefight, and how the MPLA was received by the various communities as it definitively regained rebel-held territory and installed itself as the *de facto* official political power in the area. Analyzing both these processes is made difficult because of the relatively short historical timeframe, having been in constant flux until the death of Jonas Savimbi on 22 February 2002 in Lukusse, Moxico. The expansion and reception of the MPLA’s projection of power and authority throughout the inner provinces remains a key area of study in understanding the links between urban and rural Angola today, yet the subject remains a

³⁴⁴ Boone, “Electoral Populism”, 186.

³⁴⁵ Pearce, *Control, ideology*, 15.

³⁴⁶ Fernando Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External Development Actors in Post-Conflict Scenarios”, Coimbra, Oficina do CES, no. 258, Sept. 2006, 3. <https://www.ces.uc.pt/ces/publicacoes/oficina/258/258.pdf>.

³⁴⁷ Oliveira, “Illiberal peacebuilding”, 298.

³⁴⁸ For an-depth study of UNITA’s territorial control, see notably the work of Justin Pearce, *Political Identity and Conflict in Central Angola, 1975-2002* (2015) based on his PhD dissertation (2011). Ricardo Soares de Oliveira described it as “the takeover of the country by ‘two single parties’, both of which presided in an authoritarian manner” (Oliveira, *Magnificent Beggar Land*, 11). For a view on the “everyday life” of soldiers normalizing war in Angola, see also Teresa Koloma Beck, *The Normality of Civil War. Armed Groups and Everyday Life in Angola*, (New York-Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2013).

vastly understudied aspect of Angolan Studies.

2.1.1 ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY: MONOPOLY OF VIOLENCE

The territorial sovereignty of Angola's state today was fashioned by its colonial power guided by the precepts of Western statehood established through the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Though its structural foundation is therefore a relic of European imperialism, this study accepts the approach of Jean-François Bayart's "*La politique du ventre*" (politics of the stomach) (1989)³⁴⁹ emphasizing that the consolidation and administration of the state itself needs to take into account both its endogenous and exogenous roots. In emphasizing this duality, Bayart "highlights the endogenous factors shaping the evolution of the postcolonial state [...] and stresses the capture of the state by the local functionaries, who have used their positions to straddle and hegemonize the economy, intensifying primitive accumulation and corruption".³⁵⁰ Furthermore, the destructive decades of war from colonial times until the twenty-first century were not merely phases of destruction, but equally and importantly active reconstruction of a new state formation³⁵¹ crafted by the belligerents and, in Angola's case, won outright by the MPLA and the death of Jonas Savimbi. If we are to take Max Weber's theory on the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence within a territory as being the basis of a legitimate state,³⁵² the civil war impeded the MPLA from achieving that claim

³⁴⁹ Jean-François Bayart, *L'État en Afrique. La politique du ventre* (Paris: Fayard, 1989).

³⁵⁰ Atieno Odhiambo, "From the Political Platform to the Village Farm: Perspectives on African Development", *Journal des africanistes*, tome 61, fascicule 1, (1991), 103-106. https://www.persee.fr/doc/AsPDF/jafr_0399-0346_1991_num_61_1_2310.pdf.

³⁵¹ For different perspectives on the state's reformation made possible through the destruction of certain parts of its former model, see: Jean-François Bayart, "La guerre en Afrique : dépérissement ou formation de l'État ? République sud-africaine, Congo-Kinshasa, Guinée-Bissau", *Esprit*, no. 11, (2018): 55-73 ; Christopher Cramer, *Civil war*, 2006; Christopher Clapham, "Introduction: Analysing African Insurgencies": 1-18, in *African Guerrillas*, (ed), Christopher Clapham, (Oxford: James Currey, 1998); Didier Péclard & Delphine Mechoulam, *Rebel Governance and the Politics of Civil War*, Working papers series, Bern, Swisspeace, 2005. https://www.swisspeace.ch/assets/publications/downloads/Working-Papers/3b4a3caa24/Rebel-Governance-and-the-Politics-of-Civil-War-Working-Paper-15-swisspeace-didier_peclard.pdf; Didier Péclard, et al., *Civil Wars and State Formation. Violence and the Politics of Legitimacy in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire and South Sudan*, Working paper, Geneva, Université de Genève, July 2019. https://www.swisspeace.ch/assets/publications/downloads/69e83133d2/2016_Peclard_Working-Paper.pdf; Charles Tilly, "La guerre et la construction de l'État en tant que crime organisé", *Politix*, 13, no. 49, (2000): 97-117. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3406/polix.2000.1075>.

³⁵² Hans Heinrich Gerth & Wright C. Mills, "Politics as Vocation", in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Max Weber, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 77-128.

as its absolute arbitrator until at least 2002.

The concept of legitimacy poses fundamental questions. Firstly, the concept of 'legitimization' "refers to making something legal or legalized. From the Latin word 'legitimus' (for example, lawful, legal), the word is related to 'lex/legis' (for example, law, agreement). Nowadays, the word is used outside the legal jargon and often entails the semantics of 'justification'".³⁵³ The MPLA was unable to establish itself as the legitimate arbitrator of law across the territory due to their lack of physical presence in certain areas, their arbitrary enforcement of laws that do exist, as well as the weak relationship of common citizens to the institutions charged with determining decisions.³⁵⁴ Where the modern state had not yet built its connections, traditional power structures remained. Where UNITA held territory, claims for legitimacy were three-fold (traditional, UNITA & MPLA).

Once the war was over, however, its internecine nature posed even more problems for the MPLA, given that "[s]tate-building after a civil war, in turn, requires the reconstruction of both the state's monopoly of violence and the legitimacy of that monopoly".³⁵⁵ The concept of 'legitimacy', despite being a central concept to political science³⁵⁶ and to the presumption of a viable governance system, encounters particular conceptual problems in the case of Angola. While it is assumed that in democratic states citizens make a distinction between the state and the government that rules, this is not the case "when the government has 'captured' the state – that is, where it has overstepped the bounds of holding office to actually define that office. A better term for this would be 'state-embedded polity', which covers those cases where leaders, parties or governments are indistinguishable from the state".³⁵⁷ As the MPLA has blurred the lines between its formation as a political party and the construction of the state, assigning it legitimacy in Angola has

³⁵³ Antonio Reyes, "Strategies of legitimization in political discourse: From words to actions", *Discourse & Society*, 22, no. 6, (2011): 782. 10.1177/0957926511419927.

³⁵⁴ Pacheco, *et al.* "The Role of External", 4.

³⁵⁵ David Lake, "Building Legitimate States after Civil Wars", in *Strengthening Peace in Post-Civil War States: Transforming Spoilers Into Stakeholders*, Matthew Hoodie & Caroline Hartzell, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 1. DOI:10.7208/chicago/9780226351261.003.0002.

³⁵⁶ Legitimacy in political science "is most often used in terms of degrees, as a continuous variable" (Bruce Gilley, "The meaning and measure of state legitimacy: Results for 72 countries", *European Journal of Political Research*, 45, (2006): 501). As a non-fixed variable, state legitimacy is defined by Gilley as: "a state is more legitimate the more that it is treated by its citizens as rightfully holding and exercising political power" (*Ibidem*).

³⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

become a dual process.

Complicating matters further, the belated arrival of the MPLA's authority in the periphery generated a two-way track crisis of legitimacy. The Luanda-based elites questioned the allegiance of those previously under UNITA control, with the analysis of Christine Messiant describing the division between the two parties as being that of two "societies",³⁵⁸ while the aloof authoritarianism of the MPLA created tensions between their heavy-handed control of the populations and their chronic absence in basic service provision. This crisis of legitimacy was further strained with the arrival of non-state actors into the periphery. Throughout the countryside, NGOs or aid agencies have oftentimes had to play a replacement role for the government.³⁵⁹ Their presence, while necessary, further undermined the government's claim of legitimacy. The MPLA would need to prove that it was capable of providing for all Angolans if it were to become the unifying party it sought to be. Otherwise, it would have to impose itself by adopting a political strategy of domination through coercion and extraction, suppressing potential rivals it perceives through predatory practices.³⁶⁰ In the countryside, it ultimately chose the latter.

As has been demonstrated, Angola as a governed sovereign territory is a remarkably recent formation when compared to its regional neighbors. Building and expanding their governmental presence has thus been a key concern to the MPLA-led government, and rightfully so. Beyond a mere territorial presence, rural rebuilding would firstly require renewing whatever existed of the 'social contract' between Angolan officials and those living within the countryside. Yet, given the unique character of the MPLA achieving authoritative control over a country through a decisive victory in a civil war, not only did the victorious political party need to renew this 'social contract', but the same restoration work existed for the state itself. According to this social-contract theory of the state:

[A]uthority derives from a mutually beneficial contract in which the ruler provides a social order of benefit to the ruled, and the ruled in turn comply with the extractions (e.g., law) that are necessary to the production of that order. The contract becomes self-enforcing – or

³⁵⁸ Christine Messiant, "Angola, les voies de l'ethnisation et de la décomposition. I - De la guerre à la paix (1975-1991) : Le conflit armé, les interventions internationales et le peuple angolais", *Lusotopie*, Feb. (1994): 196-198.

³⁵⁹ Enrico Pavignani & Alessandro Colombo, *Providing health services in countries disrupted by civil wars: a comparative analysis of Mozambique and Angola 1975-2000*, Rome, World Health Organization, 2001, 12. <https://apps.who.int/disasters/rep0/14052.pdf>

³⁶⁰ Robinson, "When is a State Predatory?", 1999.

legitimate – when individuals and groups become vested in that social order by undertaking investments specific to the particular contract, in short, when they become stakeholders to the peace.³⁶¹

However, given the unique economic structure of the Angolan government's dependence on oil revenue to finance the state, falling into the 'resource curse' category creates arguably more significant hurdles to any establishment of this 'social contract' theory. With countries capable of self-financing without necessary recourse to broad-based taxes on the population, the typical mechanisms of accountability, citizen engagement and ultimately democracy are severely distorted.³⁶² The government's ability to keep taxes low or even nil for some deteriorates the delicate balance of imposing control and demanding accountability, particularly for the rural populations, and even more so for those living 'off the grid'. Worse still, imposing taxes on economic agents that see little to no benefit in return can incite those taxpayers to circumvent and minimize their connection to a state deemed illegitimate.

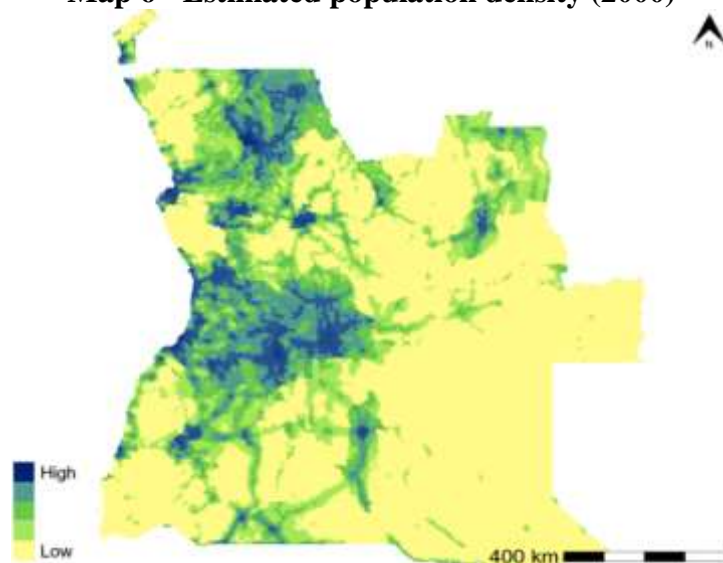
Immediately after the war, the MPLA deployed a heavily authoritarian security apparatus throughout the country in order to reestablish both state and human security, given that "40% of the territory was not under its administration by 2002; while it controlled all provincial governments, many *municípios* (the second-tier administrative unit) were empty, as were most *comunas* (the third-tier); the fourth-tier of local administration *was not active at all, anywhere*".³⁶³ The government's territorial absence must however be relativized with the demographic realities of the population, with vast expanses left nearly empty.

³⁶¹ Lake, "Building Legitimate States", 30-31.

³⁶² Amundsen & Abreu "Civil Society", 5.

³⁶³ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 173, authors' emphasis.

Map 6 - Estimated population density (2000)



Source: WorldPop, <https://dx.doi.org/10.5258/SOTON/WP00674> (accessed 7 Oct. 2020).

Where populations were present, the MPLA found itself in dire need of occupying those spaces if its manifest destiny goals of transforming from revolutionary liberators to legitimate leaders were to be fulfilled.

In this objective, a massive deployment of public resources was enacted, destined for a nationwide reconstruction effort focused on transportation networks, schools, government offices and medical posts. This resource deployment: first the security apparatus, followed by the reconstruction initiative, itself accompanied by the implantation of government officials, effectively established the MPLA as the legitimate modern-legal authority throughout the territory, among a population worn down from war and seeking more than anything else a return to social stability and human security. However, the bleak presence of the government at the local level and its disconnect from the populations it is tasked to nominally serve undermine its attempts to spread its influence and capacity outside of urban areas:

What distinguishes the current process of institutional creation in local governance in Angola is that the recent reforms have taken place in a local governance setting where no previous structures of even nominal electoral institutions exist, and where local government leaders

have hardly ever had the political, legal or personal motives to be accountable to the local citizens.³⁶⁴

The relatively basic expectations from many Angolans went hand in hand with the low capacity of the MPLA to properly provide basic resources and services, especially in isolated spaces in the country's interior.

As the government took control of territory and attempted to establish its authority, a notion of national identity had to be forged in order to bring a sense of 'nation' to disparate peoples. This would be a monumental task given the expansive territory inhabited by a kaleidoscope of different ethnicities and indigenous languages. According to René Pélissier, the Angolan people made up between 92 and 112 tribal groups among the different ethnicities, constituting a "divided mass".³⁶⁵ This push for a single 'nation' built in the image of the Westernized, creole-dominated, Luandan elite assumes an important ideological form of state construction in itself by imposing a homogeneous set of specific ideals, habits and norms on a heterogenous populace, all in the search of an elusive notion of 'nationhood'. Not conforming to the imposed social rules pushes the non-conformists to the margins of the state in construction.

Furthermore, constructing 'nationhood' in a state under construction means the notion of 'nationhood' and 'citizenship' are evolutionary concepts that evolve alongside the consolidation of the state, thereby mutating in parallel to the reconstruction efforts. These difficulties, added to the arbitrary borders written by European colonialism, combine to create significant hurdles to the establishment of a cohesive national population who would share a common "imagined community" in the words of Benedict Anderson (1996).³⁶⁶ Even today, a notion of Angolan 'citizenship' has different degrees of meaning, depending on socio-economic background and especially geographic position. Vasco Martins (2016) studied the question of the "politics of power and hierarchies of citizenship", eventually identifying Angolans' identity and connection to the state as being "an oscillating system, a vector of sorts, where an individual can be both inside and outside the state apparatus, both

³⁶⁴ Aslak Orre, "Fantoques e Cavalos de Tróia, Instrumentalização das autoridades tradicionais em Angola e Moçambique", *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, (2009): 2. <http://journals.openedition.org/cea/190>.

³⁶⁵ As cited in Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 36. For a look at the ethnic and geographic composition of Angola's population under Portuguese control in 1960, see: *Ibid.*, 31-60.

³⁶⁶ Benedict Anderson, *L'imaginaire national. Réflexions sur l'origine et l'essor du nationalisme*, (Paris: La Découverte, 1996).

included and marginalized, while evading the limiting concept of exclusion and opting instead for the generation and maintenance of alterity statuses...”.³⁶⁷ A mutual sense of legitimate power and obedience to this authority continues to be an ongoing, amorphous social process.

2.1.2 FROM STATE TO HUMAN SECURITY

As is the complex process of civil war, after fighting to achieve state security and establishing itself as the sole arbitrator of legitimate violence, the MPLA then had to quickly transform its mission into establishing conditions for human security of its populations. Moving from state security to human security

meant that the primary threats to be dealt with were no longer the exclusive domain of military forces. Primary threats were seen as internal: economic failure, violation of human rights, political discrimination. Hence, the guarantee of national security no longer lay in military power, but in favorable social, political and economic conditions, the promotion of human development, and the protection of human rights.³⁶⁸

This transitional phase has always been necessary, but it just so happened that as the country was to emerge from the brutal civil war, the notion itself of human security had begun to establish itself as a normative process across the ‘international community’ as acknowledgement of the complex relationship between conflict and security within states, rather than just between them, began to gain considerable attention.

The major turning point in this reflection was its development in chapter two (p. 24-46) of the 1994 *Human Development Report*, wherein it lays the conceptual groundwork: “Human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities”.³⁶⁹ Two major reports were later commissioned to further refine the concept

³⁶⁷ Vasco Martins, “Politics of power and hierarchies of citizenship in Angola”, *Citizenship Studies*, (2016): 2. DOI: 10.1080/13621025.2016.1252718.

³⁶⁸ Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, “Human Security: Conceptions and Implications with an Application to Post-Intervention Challenges in Afghanistan”, *Les Études du CERI*, no. 117-118, (2005), 4-5.

³⁶⁹ UNDP, *Human Development Report*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1994, 23. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf.

and officialize it into the literature on the evolution of a country's obligations towards its own people: *The Responsibility to Protect* (2001)³⁷⁰ of the International Commission on Intervention and States Sovereignty (ICISS) and *Human Security Now* (2003)³⁷¹ of the Commission on Human Security. This emerging concept of human security was therefore integrated into the priorities of the international community as it sought an end to the bellicose conflict and became part of the post-war donor negotiations³⁷² in rebuilding the country.

The establishment of security, whether state or human, denotes the elimination or suppression of conflict. However, while conflict is most commonly associated with physical violence, it can and does take many forms, as “non-violent conflict may be as important as violent strife in undermining livelihoods and social and economic sustainability”.³⁷³ In the ADRA report that became a heavy influence in this study, it proclaims the eminent endogenous organization of rural communities rising up against violence inflicted upon them by authorities and political elites, yet their analysis assumes that the land conflicts will largely lead to the outbreak of physical violence.³⁷⁴ The key misunderstanding in this aforementioned analysis is putting too much emphasis on conflict in its physical manifestation of violence, as well as the ability and even willingness of the rural communities in question to stand their

³⁷⁰ ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*, Ottawa, International Development Research Centre, 2001. <https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/openbooks/963-1/index.html>. The “Responsibility to Protect” doctrine has faced its share of criticism as it supposes that if a sovereign country does not “protect” its citizens sufficiently, the responsibility falls upon the “international community” to intervene. For a larger discussion on the topic, see: Camila Puppato, “The Responsibility to Protect: Emerging Norm or Failed Doctrine?”, *Global Tides*, 11, no. 9, (2015).

³⁷¹ Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now*, New York, United Nations, 2003. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/91BAEEDBA50C6907C1256D19006A9353-chs-security-may03.pdf>. The commission and reports were convened under the initiative of the government of Japan.

³⁷² See for example Elizabeth Stites & Jennifer Leaning, *Human Security in Angola: A Retrospective Study*, Cambridge, Harvard School of Public Health, Dec. 2002. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.507.998&rep=rep1&type=pdf>. The work of James Tiburcio makes the case that the powerful religious community missed a major opportunity to step in and demand more emphasis on human security after the end of the civil war, and that the Angolan State itself continues to impede the establishment of human security, especially in the rural areas (“Human Security in Angola: The Role of Religious Non-state Actors”, *Journal of Human Security*, 6, no. 2, July (2010): 47-57. 10.3316/JHS0602047). The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) of the World Bank organized a workshop in June 2004 on identifying the most pressing aspects of improving human security. The report by Colonel Manuel Correia de Barros (2005) emphasizes the need for education for young workers in Luanda. See: Colonel Manuel Correia de Barros, “Profiling youth involved in the informal markets of Luanda”: 201-224, in *The Many Faces of Human Security: Case Studies of Seven Countries in Southern Africa*, (eds), Keith Muloongo, Roger Kibasomba & Jemima Njeri Kariri, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005). <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/108608/MANYFACESOFTHEADCPDF>.

³⁷³ Clover, *Framing issues*, 6.

³⁷⁴ Santos & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 13.

ground when confronted by the “authorities and political elites” given the severe power imbalance inherent in this relationship. As will be explained below, this calculation is known as “opportunity perspective” where the actors perceiving injustice must decide whether confrontation is worth the risks it entails and how then to measure such a response. Furthermore, the alarmist rhetoric of the report must be understood in the context of its NGO origins, being institutionally led by ADRA, and its own persistent need to secure financing for future activities.³⁷⁵ Presuming imminent social conflict creates necessity for further development programs and thus, further funding.

In Angola’s countryside, the land conflicts are structural according to the resources sought and the economic systems put in place to profit off of them. While physical violence has certainly manifested itself in particular cases,³⁷⁶ this represents the most alarming and expressive form of violence. The character itself of physical violence is the most easily recognizable and the easiest to denounce as it has the highest probability of being transmitted through visual images and physical evidence. After seemingly decades of constant violence, confusion, and threats, the populations prefer risk aversion when faced with such structural violence,³⁷⁷ although their will to bend is not limitless. In the stabilizing countryside of Angola, all parties have it in their self-interest to avoid physical altercations.

Since the end of the civil war, the rural populations have been awaiting the construction of a solid social and economic foundation, wherein they can find personal security on their own cultural terms. This desire has clashed with those looking to take advantage of the economic potential of exploiting these same ancestral lands. Therein lies the fundamental problem at the core of Angola’s latent land conflicts. Furthermore, as Catherine Bonne summarizes:

Demographic and environmental stress, the wide changes in producer prices that have been set in motion by market liberalization, shifts in the balance of power between communities at the local level, and the continuing growth of inequality within rural societies across much of

³⁷⁵ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 August 2017.

³⁷⁶ For some examples of the national press coverage: [n.a.], “Conflito de terras toma proporções alarmantes”, *O Independente*, Luanda, 11 Oct. 2003: 2-3; N’Vunda Kassinda, “Conflito de terras provocou guerra e morte nos Gambos”, *Folha* 8, Sept. 2003: 11-12; Pedro Kalweyo, “Camponeses e generais desentendem-se por terras”, *Agora*, 2003: 13; [n.a.], “Conflito de terras no sul de Angola mata quatro pessoas”, *Angonoticias*, 4 Sept. 2004.

³⁷⁷ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

Africa are all conspiring to increase the incidence, scope, and intensity of land-related conflict in the rural areas.³⁷⁸

As the exploitation of these lands proceeds apace, the affected rural populations are subjected to violence in the form of coercion and domination. This leads to structural forms of violence through coerced labor or strict production and trade restrictions, which themselves lead to local resistance in its myriad of forms. Depending on the amount of pressure and type of violence employed, the low-key resistance can intensify into uprising, riots or strikes.³⁷⁹ Meanwhile the MPLA, cognizant of its responsibilities to ensure social stability and adapting to the new rules of an electoral political system, appears to have reconsidered its strategy of rural exploitation as to avoid provoking major social consternation and containing conflicts locally. Furthermore, while it has usurped rural authority in most issues of power balance, the MPLA has left in place the conflict resolution capacity of the traditional communities. News reports have emerged of land grabs³⁸⁰ and new fencing³⁸¹ appearing overnight that blocks communities from accessing their land, but these practices are done discreetly enough that while they provoke the ire of the affected peoples, for the moment it has not led to the emergence of spontaneous mobilizations of rural actors to openly and defiantly contest the land takeovers. Certainly, counter examples exist. Most notably the mediatized conflict resolution of Padre Pio Wacussanga in the Gambos, which will be further discussed in chapter six.

³⁷⁸ Boone, “Electoral Populism”, 187.

³⁷⁹ Philippe Le Billon, “The Geopolitical Economy of Resource Wars”, *Geopolitics*, March (2004): 26.

³⁸⁰ Ricardo Marques de Morais, “General Awards Himself More Than 300 Square Kilometers of Land”, MakaAngola, Luanda, 21 Nov. 2014. http://www.makaangola.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11495:land-grabbing-general-awards-himself-a-territory-larger-than-monaco&catid=26&lang=en; Ricardo Marques de Morais, “General-Governador toma de assalto terras do Kwanza-Sul”, MakaAngola, Luanda, 27 Nov. 2014. http://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/off_view/24272; Rafael Marques de Morais, “Abuse of power in Angola (part 1): How the MPLA elite clears land for their own use”, MakaAngola, 23 Aug. 2016. <https://www.makaangola.org/2016/08/abuse-of-power-in-angola-part-i-how-the-mpla-elite-clears-land-for-their-own-use/>; Rafael Marques de Morais, “Being the big man: Angola’s long-ruling president has constructed an image of himself straight out of Stalin’s playbook”, *Index on Censorship*, 46, no. 2, 19 June (2017): 46-48. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306422017716019>; Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle’s Paradise*, 2019.

³⁸¹ Nelson Sul D’Angola, “Invasão de terras ameaça grupos étnicos do sul de Angola”, *Deutsche Welle*, Luanda, 13 April 2016. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/invasão-de-terras-ameaça-grupos-étnicos-do-sul-de-angola/a-19183430>. The land occupations in Cunene of the Vahimba, Vankhumbi and Vangambwe minorities are connected to figures of the Angolan Armed Forces and only became mediatized due to the intervention of the national *Associação Construindo Comunidades*, (ACC, Association Building Communities) led in part by Father Pio Wakassunga, known for his work in the Gambos (Southern Huíla province). The NGO ACC, as mentioned in chapter 2, is recognized by African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and thus has a ‘protected’ status to wield its agency capacity as an ‘elite’ organization.

2.1.3 THE CONSOLIDATION OF POLITICAL POWER

While each country is shaped by its unique heritage, Sub-Saharan Africa shares parallels of authoritarian political power dynamics throughout the region. The theoretical roots of these authoritarian strains are based upon economic, social or cultural structures.³⁸² Portuguese-speaking Africa, as a group of five countries, achieved independence³⁸³ significantly later than other African countries and all endured authoritarian colonial structures heavily influenced by the dictatorship of António de Oliveira Salazar. This gave them a unique historical timeframe in setting up their political systems and inserting themselves into the larger geopolitical systems. In the case of Angola and Mozambique, rebuilding the state and attempting to forge a national identity was made even more difficult through the immediate transition to civil war,³⁸⁴ further dividing the construction of a national consensus identity between the differing visions of the MPLA and UNITA in Angola, and Frelimo and Renamo in Mozambique. The role of uniting the people would come down to the respective victorious parties. In Angola, those that have come to wield the most power are often codified in the amorphous category of ‘elites’,³⁸⁵ a terminology that

³⁸² Daniel Bourmaud, “Aux sources de l’autoritarisme en Afrique : des idéologies et des hommes”, *Revue internationale de politique comparée*, 13, no. 4, (2006): 625.

³⁸³ Including Angola (11 Nov. 1975), Mozambique (25 June 1975), Guinea-Bissau (25 Sept. 1973), São Tomé and Príncipe (12 July 1975), and Cape Verde (5 July 1975).

³⁸⁴ Guinea-Bissau also experienced civil war from June 1998 to May 1999, but it was triggered by a coup d’état 25 years after independence.

³⁸⁵ A non-exhaustive list of references to Angola’s ‘elites’ includes: Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 1-2, 4-5, 25, 30, 38; Mathias Jourdain de Alencastro, *Diamond Politics in the Angolan Periphery: Colonial and Postcolonial Lunda 1917-2002*, PhD Dissertation, Oxford, St. Antony’s College, 2014, 24, 47-51, 55-57, 66, 77, 80-81; Mathias de Alencastro, “Angola under Lourenço: Towards a Negotiated Hegemony”, *Notes de l’Ifri*, Paris, Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI), Feb. 2018, 6. <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/notes-de-lifri/angola-under-lourenco-towards-negotiated-hegemony>; Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 32; Inge Brinkman, “War and Identity in Angola: Two Case-Studies”, *Luotopia*, (2003): 202, 209-210, 220; Clover, “The role of land”, 148, 152, 154, 159-161, 165-168; Jacopo Corrado, *The Creole Elite and the Rise of Angolan Protonationalism: 1870-1920* (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2008); Aaron De Grassi, *Provisional Reconstruction: Geo-Histories of Infrastructure and Agrarian Configuration in Malanje, Angola*. PhD Dissertation, Berkeley, University of California, 2015, 2-6, 9, 9-12, 18, 22, 53, 87-90, 121-124; Manuel Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development, 1961-2002”, *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 1, no. 1, (2006): 27-29; Mary Harper, “Elite hoard Angola’s new-found wealth”, BBC News, 27 March 2015. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32067602>; Estefanía Jover, Anthony Lopes Pinto & Alexandra Marchand, “Angola Private Sector: Country Profile”, African Development Bank, September 2012, 5. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Evaluation-Reports-_Shared-With-OPEV_/Angola%20-%20Private%20Sector%20Country%20Profile.pdf; Christine Messiant, “Angola, les voies de l’ethnisation”, 159-171; Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Business success, Angola-style: postcolonial politics and the rise and rise of Sonangol”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 45, no. 4, (2007): 595-596, 603, 607-610; Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 166-167, 171, 173, 179, 182-183; Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Can Angola’s elite transform itself?”, *The Africa Report*, Paris, 3 Dec. 2014.

first arose in the wave of independence across Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. Oftentimes, the denomination of this term in social sciences was evoked by the very actors themselves in self reference, becoming not just a category of analysis but also of social and political practice.³⁸⁶ This group is understood to be comprised of a relatively small circle of politicians, businessmen, military generals, certain members of the clergy and civil servants as well as family and friends of these groups.³⁸⁷

The influence of the elites holds most prominently in the political and economic spheres, though the socio-cultural sphere is also a key factor. In Angola, this group of elites is so restricted and so powerful that it dominates across all spheres. In referencing this group, Aslak Orre emphasizes “how the Angolan political and economic elite is one – and it reproduces its grip on power both through formal mechanisms of constitutionally favourable institutions (such as the winner-takes-all system) but also through the informal ties that the ‘camaraderie’ of the Party provides”.³⁸⁸ When referring to elites throughout this study, we will take up the ‘functional elites’ approach proposed by Lentz “understanding elites as individuals in leading positions in the political sphere or other societal fields with regular influence on decision-making that affects larger groups”.³⁸⁹ As will be shown in the power struggles between political authorities and the general population, this conception of ‘elitism’ has evolved into a dual category, top heavy for sure, but beginning to fill out from

<https://www.theafricareport.com/3656/can-angolas-elite-transform-itself/>; Orre, “Who’s to challenge”, 5, 13-14; Jesse Salah Ovadia, “The Reinvention of Elite Accumulation in the Angolan Oil Sector: Emergent capitalism in a rentier economy”, *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, (2013): 33-63. <https://journals.openedition.org/cea/839>; Rodrigo de Souza Pain, *Desafios da Participação Social em um País de Conflito Agudo: Estudo a partir da ONG Angolana Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA)*, PhD dissertation, Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, 2007, 63, 70, 84, 88, 91; Rodrigo de Souza Pain, “A Centralização Política e o Autoritarismo em Angola”, *Revista Eletrônica do Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo*, no. 33, (2008a), 3, 5; Pearce, “L’UNITA à la recherche”, 49; Pearce, *Control, ideology*, 25, 40, 74-75; Pestana, “As Dinâmicas”, 1, 8, 11-12, 36; Jon Schubert “‘Democratização’ e Consolidação do Poder Político em Angola no Pós-Guerra”, *Relações Internacionais*, 37, March (2013): 89; Ruigrok, “Facing up to the Centre”, 2010; Inge Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 4, 6, 15, 19, 28; Nuno Vidal, “The historical-sociological matrix and ethos at the heart and strength of MPLA’s modern Angola”, *Tempo*, 25, no. 1, (2019): 155-163, 167-168. 10.1590/TEM-1980-542X2018v250108.

³⁸⁶ Carola Lentz, “African middle classes: lessons from transnational studies and a research agenda”, in *The Rise of Africa’s Middle Class. Myths, Realities and Critical Engagements*, (ed), Henning Melber, (London: Zed Books, 2016), 18.

³⁸⁷ While the origin and development of Angola’s elites, with their historical roots going back to the colonial period, will not be discussed in detail, see: Christine Messiant, “Luanda 1945-1961 : colonisés, société coloniale et engagement nationaliste” in *Bourgs et villes en Afrique lusophone*, (ed), Michel Cahen, (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1989), 125-199; Nelson Pestana, “A classe dirigente e o poder em Angola”, VIII Congresso Luso-Afro-Brasileiro de Ciências Sociais, Coimbra, Sept. 2004. https://www.ces.uc.pt/lab2004/pdfs/Nelson_pestana.pdf; Ovadia, “The Reinvention”, 2013.

³⁸⁸ Aslak Orre, “Who’s to challenge” 13.

³⁸⁹ Carola Lentz, “African middle classes”, 40.

the bottom.³⁹⁰

While the modern state has extended its presence across the territory, the authority of traditional leaders and their ability to manage local politics remains intact in many ways. In fact, rural African cultures have shown both resilience and ingenuity in their encounters with various rulers and their policies. Current institutional processes at the local level can be seen as an ongoing exercise in adjusting to the multiple pressures imposed by a volatile climate, unpredictable macro-policies, changing economic circumstances, and increasing land scarcity.³⁹¹

This has been most obvious in the remarkable resettling process alongside the demobilization period after the civil war. The redistribution of land and the rights to use it was enacted through an exceptionally peaceful transfer that took place in communities across the country. While the process was officially sanctioned by various influential actors, including the victorious MPLA, the Catholic church, international donors and NGOs, traditional powerbrokers were also key to its success. The fact that this was a mostly non-violent process and its structure remains so today attests to the enduring power of the *soba*, even though his powers are overshadowed by the machinery of the modern authority where and when it is deemed necessary. Interestingly, the traditional 'elite' status of the *sobas*, in terms of being the customary power brokers, is not generally described with such terminology in their traditional social role, revealing the depths of their displacement by modern authorities.

Ricardo Soares de Oliveira and Susan Taponier refer to some *sobas* as "elites", but in the case of referring to those that have sought to take personal advantage of their political connections with the MPLA.³⁹² This marks a clear fusion with the modern, party-based political structure and social elitism. Instead, when referring to *sobas* in their role as traditional power brokers, which affords them an 'elite' status in customary terms of wielding significant

³⁹⁰ See §4.4.4 for a discussion of "The emergence of 'grassroots elite' NGOs".

³⁹¹ Christian Lund, Rie Odgaard, & Espen Sjasstad, *Land Rights and Land Conflicts in Africa: A review of issues and experiences*, (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2006), 6.

³⁹² Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 179.

decision-making power, *sobas* are referred to as “traditional” authorities³⁹³ or leaders.³⁹⁴ Jon Schubert’s 2019 anthropological study on the social distribution of power within the major family ties in Angola evokes the term “elite” five of seventeen pages, but never in relation to *sobas*. Instead, *sobas* are here characterized as the “legitimate political authority”.³⁹⁵ In fact, Schubert goes even further into this discursive analysis revealing the deep cleavages between modern and traditional society.

In his analysis, the practice of making reference to traditional order, i.e. referencing *sobas*, is itself a critique of the modern power structures perceived as being indifferent to the needs of the people.³⁹⁶ The expansive evocation of elitism in analysis of modern Angolan society as well as its use in everyday discourse has become inherently linked to the modern party-based system. Therefore, the lack of elite status afforded to traditional power structures furthers the social divide between modern and traditional Angola. However, its absence could also inoculate the traditional values and traditional society from the corrosive effects bestowed upon achieving elitism within today’s political system, thereby preserving it in a state of suspended nostalgia as it stands apart from the corrosive system built post-independence. Furthermore, the term “traditional” is “important in the political vernacular in rural and small town politics” as it contrasts with the national level or outsiders more broadly.³⁹⁷ Preserving tradition is what brings legitimacy to the *sobas*. Attaching ‘eliteness’ could both contradict and degrade their core source of respect and authenticity.

³⁹³ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 2019; Aslak Orre, “Kalandula and the CACS: Voice or Accountability”, CMI Working Paper, no. 5, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2009: 7. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3367-kalandu-and-the-cacs-voice-or-accountability>; Aslak Orre, “Who’s to challenge”, 12; Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 178; Fernando Pacheco, *Autoridades Tradicionais e Estruturas Locais de Poder em Angola: Aspectos Essenciais a Ter em Conta na Futura Administração Autárquica*, paper prepared for cycle Descentralização e o Quadro Autárquico em Angola, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 12 May 2002c, 6; World Bank, *Angola Country Economic*, 115.

³⁹⁴ Allen Cain, “Housing microfinance in post-conflict Angola. Overcoming socioeconomic exclusion through land tenure and access to credit”, *Environment & Urbanization*, 19, no. 2, (2007): 364, 385. [10.1177/0956247807082819](https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247807082819).

³⁹⁵ Jon Schubert, “Les ‘glorieuses familles’ : Lines de parenté situationnels, stratégie agentielle et critique du pouvoir en Angola”, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, no. 234, (2019): 10.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁹⁷ Christian Lund, “Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa”, *Development and Change*, 37, no. 4, (2006): 693-694. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2006.00497.x>.

2.1.4 PEOPLE POWER: THE QUEST FOR AGENCY

In order to look into the nature of power and its interconnections with agency, an investigation into social strata must be enacted in order to discover who is able to wield these dueling concepts. The categorization of African society is made difficult with Western concepts as nearly every African country has been transformed by late European colonization, which has had profound effects on the internal structure of their respective traditional societies. In the Marxist theoretical tradition, the analysis of the rural-urban relationship in this study is viewed not as ‘class’ struggle *per se*, as the Western concept of ‘class’ does not fit neatly with African societies, and much less that of Angola’s society that is only now settling into prolonged peacetime, but rather as a struggle between highly unequal social groups and how these structural imbalances were constructed and, in some cases, resisted. Adopting the Marxist approach, it “has long placed political struggle and the agency of the oppressed at the centre of analysis and this approach has informed much of the scholarship examining forms of resistance and political struggle in Africa”.³⁹⁸ The case studies that will reveal these power struggles and the forms of resistance and agency attributed in part³⁹⁹ to the rural communities are rooted in the formation of the NGO network *Rede Terra* in 2001, which represented a historic first in initiating official dialogue between the budding civil society and the government centered around land issues, as well as the conflict over natural resources (water) between elite interests and the local communities of the Gambos (Huíla province).

Observing social organizing mainly through NGOs and CSOs is admittedly a Euro-centric approach to understanding power relations between and among civil society actors.⁴⁰⁰ The notion of ‘civil society’ is itself a charged term in African Studies and has dubious scientific value if not specified to the individual ‘society’. As described by Cahen, Pommerolle and Tall, some consider that the term might have lost its value as it is repeated “*ad nauseam*”

³⁹⁸ Bice Maiguashca & Raffaele Marchetti, *Contemporary Political Agency: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2013), 165.

³⁹⁹ As will be described later, *Rede Terra* was in reality a largely urban initiative, though highly active in the countryside.

⁴⁰⁰ Kadya Tall, Marie-Emmanuelle Pommerolle & Michel Cahen, (eds), *Collective Mobilisation in Africa/Mobilisations collective en Afrique: Enough is Enough!/Ça suffit !* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015), 3.

by sponsors looking to spur democratic norms, others use it when the term “social movement” does not provide an adequate description, while still others employ it to describe “a specialized stratum of society” demarking the citizens who are engaged in politics and the bystanders, ultimately finding that the term “civil society no longer works, despite the (abstract) universal words used for it, simply because it is defined in a Euro-centric way”.⁴⁰¹ David Soogge even went as far as describing the limited role of civil society in the post-war period as being a “State without citizens”.⁴⁰² While citizen participation was indeed heavily weakened by the war and the authoritarian government, our analysis attempts to peel back Sogge’s strong stance by focusing on the significance of the accumulating activities engineered at the local levels culminating in varied levels of broader influence.

With that goal in mind, this study has adopted the definition of civil society as a theoretical concept previously proposed by Michael Bratton in which he describes the sphere of social interaction between the population and the state manifesting into “community cooperation, structures of voluntary association, and networks of public communication”.⁴⁰³ Categorically, putting Angola’s rural economic actors into a clear framework vis-à-vis the state is made nearly impossible given the severe lack of reliable data on these heterogeneous groups of populations. Furthermore, identifying them with any ‘class’ label, implicitly uniting them into some sort of constructed heterogeneous group of actors, is made extremely difficult given the present conditions of categorized knowledge about the groups concerned. As Jean Copans explains: “The use of the term ‘class’ explicitly implies going back to the notion of relations, of fights and of global society. This exercise is even more complex because we don’t have homogenous and comparable empirical data for all of the social categories of a given nation-state at a precise time in history”.⁴⁰⁴ He continues: “Today it seems clear that the enormous weakness of statistical administrative and demographic indicators shuts down any individual attempts of quantitative study”.⁴⁰⁵ With respect to

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁴⁰² David Sogge, “Angola: e onde está a “boa governação” do mundo?” *Working Paper 23*, Coimbra, Núcleo de Estados para a Paz, June 2006, 9. <https://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/pdfs/DavidSogge.pdf>.

⁴⁰³ Michael Bratton, “Civil Society and Political Transition in Africa”, *IDR Reports*, Boston, Institute for Development Research 11, no. 6, 1994, 2.

⁴⁰⁴ Jean Copans, “Les classes sociales d’hier ont-elles disparu des problématiques africanistes ou la réalité africaine est-elle formée de nouvelles classes ? Point de vue d’un anthropologue français”, University Paris Descartes, Paris, 2016, 3-4.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

current Angolan studies, Jon Schubert analyzes the ‘classification’ of the country’s society through the same economic-centric Marxist lens as our current study:

In the Marxist language of earlier analytics of the late 1970s and 1980s, classes were described as ‘bourgeoisie,’ ‘peasants’ and ‘semi-proletariat’ and defined by the modes of production and ownership of those [...]. In practice, this meant in the 1980s mainly the difference between the socialist party *nomenklatura* and the vast masses of the *povo* (people). From the 1990s, however, processes of differentiation and stratification began as a result of economic liberalization.⁴⁰⁶

This economic classification is complemented by the divide and conquer social approach of Angolan authorities. Paulo Conceição João Faria (2013) conceptualizes the regime’s means of control of the public sphere as molding the public into two bifurcated masses: the pseudo-public and the counter-public.⁴⁰⁷

The pseudo-public is characterized through conformity and adaptation to the regime’s dictates and perpetuates the logic of the government’s rules and norms in the interminable expansion of its clientelistic network of access to power and resources. The counter-public therefore characterizes the marginalized voices resisting the status quo carefully crafted by the regime through its unlimited power of distribution which “is not only applied to access material resources, services and employment, but is also extended to the realm of ideas, beliefs and identities; the notion of competition manufactures the appearance of ‘pluralism’”.⁴⁰⁸ This weakened “pluralism” offers the counter-public very little margin to maneuver, leaving them isolated and exposed to threats or co-optation.

Given the centuries-long Portuguese colonization, the gradual insertion of Angola’s economic extraversion into the world economy, and the late independence in an already globalized world, focusing on the evolution and development of social organizing still appears to provide one of the clearest methodologies for understanding internal social, economic and political dynamics in Angola. Following this line, Fernando Pacheco notes that in Angola “the State, the political parties and civil society organizations (CSOs) constitute

⁴⁰⁶ Jon Schubert, “Emerging middle class political subjectivities in post-war Angola”, in *The rise of Africa’s middle class: Myths, realities and critical engagements*, (ed), Henning Melber, (London: Zed Books, 2016), 147.

⁴⁰⁷ Paulo Conceição João Faria, “The Dawning of Angola’s Citizenship Revolution: A Quest for Inclusionary Politics”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, no. 2, (2013).

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 302.

the vertexes of the triangle with which one should analyze the processes of democratizations, its accomplishments and inadequacies”.⁴⁰⁹ The emergence of these CSOs was assisted by a combination of state fragility through war and the presence of foreign actors, notably through NGOs, assisting local populations in the place of the state’s absence.⁴¹⁰ It is through this lens that we attempt to better understand the eventual coming together of a fractured rural population and its interaction with a state apparatus characterized by a contradictory combination of absenteeism and authoritarianism. Pitting the country’s elites against this amorphous ‘civil society’, this study will provide a window into the capacity of rural Angolans to engage their agency in a modern state that systematically neglects them.

Importantly, as with all societies that are in constant flux under the different pressures of a given time period, the modalities of life also change in time. However, as pressures on states and societies ebb and flow, so too does the grip on power in authoritarian states built on legal-rational authority but oftentimes devolve into a Big Man model led by a charismatic authority figure, in this case that of José Eduardo dos Santos.⁴¹¹ Authoritarian governments do however occasionally bend to pressure, whether coming from the population or outside forces. The MPLA under President José Eduardo dos Santos was categorically authoritarian and accepted little, if any, challenge to his power. The jailing of the rapper Luaty Beirao and sixteen other citizens in June 2015 for the crime of discussing books⁴¹² in a book club, supposedly fomenting ‘rebellion’, is exemplary of the severe authoritarian nature of the Dos Santos regime, or some would even say the nervousness the regime feels towards a civil society that demands more from its government.⁴¹³ The fact that such high levels of pressure were still being applied to social organizing in 2015 is a demonstration of how the passing of time ratcheted up the pressure applied by the government, rather than finding more accommodating positions. More precisely, it provided a window into the selective paranoid thoughts and actions of an aging African strongman and his inner elite circle unsure of how

⁴⁰⁹ Fernando Pacheco, “Civil Society in Angola: Fiction or Agent of Change?”, in *Southern Africa. Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, (Luanda: Media XXI/Lisbon: Firmamento, 2009), 124.

⁴¹⁰ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 2.

⁴¹¹ Rafael Marques de Morais, “Being the big man: Angola’s long-ruling president has constructed an image of himself straight out of Stalin’s playbook”, *Index on Censorship*, 46, no. 2, (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306422017716019>.

⁴¹² The book under discussion was Gene Sharp’s 1994 work *From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation*. Though they were sentenced to jail between two and eight years, they were ordered to be released by the Supreme Court three months later.

⁴¹³ Simon Allison, “Reading the revolution: the book club that terrified the Angolan regime”, *The Guardian*, 30 June 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/30/angola-book-club-dos-santos-arrests>.

to maintain their social status and privileged patronage networks while the specter of political transition beckoned. A decade out from the civil war, researchers Juliana Lima (2013)⁴¹⁴ and Nuno Vidal (2015)⁴¹⁵ began to question how long the iron fist of the MPLA would be able to hold on without relieving some of the pressures put on the civil society.

As the memories of civil war fades and the post-war youth bulge⁴¹⁶ comes of age having never experienced it, the limits of political agency are being tested as never before. Following the trends of ‘elitism’ as a concept and a practice, the most effective actors in exercising agency vis-à-vis the government are those civil society actors working within ‘grassroots’ “elite associations”:⁴¹⁷ those with clear connections to (1) political insiders or (2) reputable outside institutions, as briefly described in §1.2.5 and §4.4.4. The case study of *Rede Terra* falls into this category, as internal and external pressures pushed the MPLA into its first civic dialogue with non-governmental actors over the revision of a then-defunct Land Law.

2.1.5 REDE TERRA AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The literature on social movement theory is vast.⁴¹⁸ At its most basic, social movements include “any set of noninstitutionalized collective actions consciously oriented towards social change (or resisting such changes) and possessing a minimum of organization”.⁴¹⁹ Looking at the genesis of the *Rede Terra* movement, however, it is clear that the principal motivator of the creation of the NGO network was centered upon influencing institutional changes (i.e. legal reforms) in the distribution, possession, and utilization of resources, specifically land. This framework fits the organizing effort into the theoretical thread of resource mobilization. According to this position, social movements

restricted their focus to movements of institutional change that attempt to alter ‘elements of

⁴¹⁴ Juliana Lima, “Des « printemps arabes » à la « nouvelle révolution » en Angola » Mobilisation et contestation politique dans l'après-guerre”, *Afrique contemporaine*, 245, no. 1, (2013): 23-36.

⁴¹⁵ Nuno Vidal, “Angolan civil society activism since the 1990s: reformists, confrontationists and young revolutionaries of the Arab spring generation”, *Review of African Political Economy*, 42, no. 143, (2015): 77-91.

⁴¹⁶ Henrik Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict: Assessing the Role of Population Growth and Youth Bulges*, Working Paper no. 2, Centre for Research on Peace and Development, Leuven, University of Leuven, 2011.

⁴¹⁷ Ruigrok, “Facing up”, 2010.

⁴¹⁸ See for example the dictionary of social movements by Olivier Fillieule, Lilian Mathieu & Cécile Péchu (dirs), *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2009).

⁴¹⁹ J. Craig Jenkins, “Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements”, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 9, (1983): 529.

social structure and/or the reward distribution of society' (McCarthy & Zald 1977: 1218), organize previously unorganized groups against institutional elites (Gamson 1975: 16-18), or represent the interest of groups excluded from the polity (Jenkins & Perrow 1977; Tilly 1978, 1979).⁴²⁰

The motivations behind the mobilization efforts, led by the FAO and various nationally-based NGOs (notably ADRA and Development Workshop (DW)), were focused on institutional changes in the fundamental legal-rational authority of the state's power structure, focused squarely on land issues. This specific focus on land is notably important given its related "policies express, implicitly or explicitly, the political choices made concerning the distribution of power between the state, its citizens, and local systems of authority".⁴²¹ *Rede Terra* attempted to "alter elements of social structure" through the official recognition and protection of customary lands, thereby providing a platform of social stability to populations that were otherwise vulnerable to dispossession without due recourse. To this end, informational campaigns were organized across geographical spaces, including both urban, peri-urban, and rural populations. A major emphasis of their campaign was focused on reaching out to the rural populations in an attempt to organize and inform these 'previously unorganized groups'. Finally, these rural populations had been and some continue to be 'groups excluded from the polity'. *Rede Terra* fit all three of these requirements.

However, qualifying *Rede Terra* as a 'rural social movement' confronts serious structural issues. One of the biggest difficulties in this qualification was the geography of its organization and action. While mobilization was in part destined for the countryside, it was planned and organized in urban spaces, notably centralized in Luanda, and conceived for both urban and rural populations. Rural populations were engaged and their voices made heard, but this connection was instigated through urban initiatives and the participation of 'rural voices' was mostly relayed through secondary sources. The network ultimately encompassed a national perspective, with a major part of the operations in the countryside. While all of these actions were historically significant for an emerging civil society finding its footing in the emergence of social stability, the organization of the *Rede Terra* network was more in line with a complex campaign of civil society organizers orchestrating a time-specific campaign and instigated through formal negotiations with the government. It was decidedly

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 528.

⁴²¹ Lund, *et al.*, *Land Rights*, 3.

not a ‘spontaneous’ social movement, but rather a pro-peasant civil organization⁴²², which would require organic mobilization forces operating in space and time. Furthermore, the majority of rural communities engaged during the process were preordained through a ‘top-down’ process, rather than the rural communities mobilizing organically and reaching out to the organizers.

A further issue arises alongside the reality that in Angola, as well as throughout much of Africa, the relationship between the civil society and the state is not characterized by a clear separation of opposing forces as in the West, but rather a complex, interwoven series of formal and informal relationships and partnerships between elected officials and the society at large playing out across multiple levels of society. Rather than being codified and formalized, “in Africa the substance of politics is to be found in the myriad networks which link the various levels of power, from top to bottom”.⁴²³ It for this reason that we broaden our scope in understanding the evolution of (rural) agency within Angola to encompass the larger networks of collaborations between the government, members of the civil society, and Non-State Actors,⁴²⁴ all of which played a key role in producing the *Rede Terra* project as well as subsequent activities. The ‘mobilization’ of *Rede Terra*, while central to this study in revealing the power balance relationship the rural society holds vis-à-vis the government, plays a secondary role to the omnipresent MPLA party-state. As the unquestionably most decisive factor in determining the ultimate structure of resource distribution, the MPLA’s ideologies, motivations, and actions remain the central tenet of analysis. In the absence of an engaged and mobilized civil society, the construction of state power and authority in the periphery ultimately determines the mode of interactions it will build upon vis-à-vis the rural populations, a relationship dictated by unequal demographic distribution, vast geographic expanses, and traditional cultures confronted with an under resourced modern bureaucratic apparatus:

A key political issue is therefore where and with whom the institutions for the management of land are found (national government, district, local, etc.) and the degree of control which different groups are able to exert on them. Essentially, it is a question of whether the institutions of justice are accessible by ordinary people or reserved for an influential minority.

⁴²² I thank my dissertation director Michel Cahen for this term.

⁴²³ Chabal & Daloz, *Africa Works*, 2.

⁴²⁴ Chapter five will focus on building these networks, while §4.4.2 contains a detailed timeline describing these collaborations.

Questions of language (English, French, Portuguese, etc. versus national languages) as well as geographical and economic accessibility to such institutions are decisive.⁴²⁵

The capacity of *Rede Terra* to put together such an operation without precedent in Angola points to a considerable degree of organizational capacity of the civil society and NGO networks at the turn of the century. Furthermore, it demonstrates the motivational capacity resource distribution had in an Angola emerging from war and looking towards a more peacetime character. The enduring ‘socialist’ nature of the relationship between the population and the state, in which the government provides the resources for the people, is a fundamental mindset that must be considered as well. Ultimately, however, it is the state apparatus that sets the framework for engagement.

2.2 Authoritarian transitions, rent capture, and resource distribution

This study positions itself within a theoretical vein inspired by a Marxian political economy perspective, supported by a ‘structural scarcity’ political ecology approach in rent accumulation and the distribution of resources,⁴²⁶ with the emphasis on the origins of the ‘structural scarcity’ being political calculations by an authoritarian party-state intent on maintaining control over the means of economic production and capital accumulation in a self-preservation logic of political and social reproduction.⁴²⁷ ‘Resources’ here however extend beyond natural resources, instead comprising all mobilizable resources. This study’s main theoretical thread is therefore the structural scarcity experienced by the rural populations *as engineered largely by political factors*.

Natural ecological degradation caused by a multitude of endogenous and exogenous factors are also recognized and relevant.⁴²⁸ For our purposes, however, the ecological degradation not caused by inevitable adverse climatic conditions represent a secondary consequence of the politically engineered structural scarcity. The politico-environmental-civil strife combination has little theoretical precedent in Angola and Portuguese-speaking

⁴²⁵ Lund, *et al.*, *Land Rights*, 20.

⁴²⁶ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 2006.

⁴²⁷ Chabal & Daloz, *Africa Works*, 1999.

⁴²⁸ Malnourishment and poverty caused in part by drought conditions in Cunene and Southern Huíla provinces offer stark examples. See for example: PDNA, *Seca em Angola 2012-2016*, Comissão Nacional da Protecção Civil, Luanda, July 2017.

Africa in general, given that “society-environment issues are still largely absent from the research agenda of scholars based in these countries”.⁴²⁹ Nevertheless, the culmination of researching the issue, supported largely by the fieldwork conducted and realities observed in Huíla province, has led us to adopt this theoretical tradition to assist in explaining how Angola’s government has approached the development agenda of its countryside amid the confluence of internal and external actors all vying for influence.

Our theoretical approach on the construction of rural deprivation in Angola closely follows the political ecology model as laid out by Colin Kahl, notably in his 2006 work *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World* (2006), wherein Kahl “identified two alternative ‘state-centric’ causal pathways from resource scarcity to internal violent conflict; the state failure and the state exploitation hypotheses”.⁴³⁰ The state exploitation thesis itself closely follows the theories of the predatory state, based on coercion and extraction, versus the contractual state, based on equitable provision of public goods and services.⁴³¹ Rather than being motivated for the public good, this rural resource deprivation model is associated with “the undersupply of public goods” based on the calculation that “[i]f the future gainers of power cannot make credible commitments, it may be better for those who control power to retain it rather than to promote development”.⁴³² This statement however presumes the presence of political transitions, whereas in Angola the system is constructed in the aim of maintaining party control over the levers of power and avoiding the arrival of “future gainers of power”. And yet, with little prospect for the appearance of a viable alternative, the MPLA-led government has still yet to prove it can construct an inclusive rural economy built for both the peasantry and agro-business. Instead, it has chosen to maximize its power over the former, while promoting the latter.

Intersecting population, natural resource scarcity, and the potential for violent conflict led to a modified political ecology approach centered on a ‘state exploitation hypothesis’. Following this pathway in turn generates multiple secondary effects, categorized into two tiers: the first-tier effects include renewable resource scarcity, economic

⁴²⁹ Tiago Ávila Martins Freitas & Augusto Cesar Salomão Moine, “Towards a lusophone political ecology: assessing ‘para inglês ver’ environments”, in *The International Handbook of Political Ecology*, (ed), Raymond Bryant, (Cheltenham-Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), 613.

⁴³⁰ Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict*, 4.

⁴³¹ Mehrdad Vahabi, “Introduction: a symposium on the predatory state”, *Public Choice*, 182, no. 3, (2020): 233. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11127-019-00715-2>.

⁴³² James Robinson, “When is a State Predatory?”, 2-3.

marginalization, and demographic shifts. The second-tier effects comprise increased social grievances and state weakness.⁴³³ Two further variables, ‘groupness’ and ‘institutional inclusivity’ influence which countries are more likely to experience state exploitation conflicts. ‘Groupness’ refers to how likely mobilization efforts will form depending on how “deeply cleaved along ethno-cultural, religious or class lines” the population is, while ‘institutional inclusivity’ refers to “the degree to which a wide array of societal actors have the ability to influence the government and, in particular, constrain the executive”.⁴³⁴ This theoretical approach finds significant influence in neo-Malthusian, neoclassical economics, and political ecology theories.

2.2.1 NEOCLASSICAL ECONOMICS CONFRONT NEO-MALTHUSIANS

The analysis of the neo-Malthusian school⁴³⁵ couples population growth with environmental ‘scarcities’, identified as productive agricultural land, forests, fauna, aquifers and fisheries, and attempts to explain violent civil or international conflict through this prism. Thomas Homer-Dixon, the foremost theoretician of this school of thought, frames his analysis around the ideas of resource scarcity, which is understood “as a product of three different factors interacting – population growth, resource degradation, and the distribution of resources between individuals and groups. Homer-Dixon has called this demand-induced, supply-induced and structural scarcity respectively”.⁴³⁶ The theory follows that the reduction of physically controllable environmental resources will ultimately lead to national or interstate resource wars. These scarcities would also provoke mass population movements, inciting “group-identity” conflicts emanating from their respective connections to specific resources.

Finally, they would provoke economic deprivation of the affected populations and

⁴³³ Woodrow Wilson Center. *Environmental Change & Security Project Report*, no. 6, Washington D.C., 2000, 175.

⁴³⁴ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 25-27.

⁴³⁵ As Colin Kahl succinctly summarizes: “Neo-Malthusians work broadly within the intellectual tradition of the Reverend Thomas Malthus, whose famous 1798 treatise, *An Essay on the Principles of Population*, argued that exponential population growth would eventually outpace the ability of the planet to provide for human needs” (*Ibid.*, 4).

⁴³⁶ Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict*, 3.

disrupt key social institutions, causing “deprivation” conflicts.⁴³⁷ The concept of “deprivation” is key to the theory: “According to the deprivation hypothesis, population growth, environmental degradation, and maldistributions of natural resources often conspire to produce absolute and relative deprivation among the poor in developing countries, thereby increasing the risks of political turmoil”.⁴³⁸ The current study finds important theoretical notions stemming from Homer-Dixon’s theory, especially concerning the central role played by resources. The potential of civil strife due to resource scarcity “has traditionally relied heavily on the state weakness hypothesis, positing that the impact of resource scarcity will weaken state institutions and provide opportunities for potential rebel groups to challenge state authority”.⁴³⁹ In rural Angola, however, the state is made up of a duality of a seemingly all-powerful centralized authority surrounded by a sliding scale of weak, incomplete, and at times redundant “twilight institutions”⁴⁴⁰, most prominently the *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, The Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola)⁴⁴¹ and the Ministry of Agriculture.⁴⁴² The state weakness hypothesis follows alongside the urban-rural divide omnipresent throughout this study. However, overall the Neo-Malthusian theory is too focused on the natural supply and demand distribution of resources, while in rural Angola politics trump these natural laws.

Resource scarcity as theorized by Homer-Dixon faces serious problems in its argumentation, principally stemming from neoclassical economics and political ecology.⁴⁴³ Neoclassical economists have provided a strong argument against neo-Malthusian theories that portend imminent conflicts due to the combination of population growth and increasing resource scarcity, pointing to the combination of human innovation, adaptation, and new technologies all having provided solutions to the central neo-Malthusian postulate. Furthermore, neoclassical economists have also argued that “resource abundance, rather than scarcity, is more likely to produce underdevelopment, political instability, and

⁴³⁷ Thomas Homer-Dixon, “Environment, Scarcity and Violence”, *International Security*, 11, no. 1, summer (1994): 6-7.

⁴³⁸ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 9.

⁴³⁹ Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict*, 3.

⁴⁴⁰ Lund, “Twilight Institutions”, 2006.

⁴⁴¹ UNACA is the key ‘mass organization’ institution organizing and assisting peasant cooperatives and associations. For its supposed central role in the rural economy at the local level, it is referenced in various parts throughout the study. See: §3.1.5 & §6.2.1.

⁴⁴² See §3.3.3 and §7.2.3 for the multiple transformations in design and mission of the Ministry of Agriculture.

⁴⁴³ Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict*, 4.

violence”.⁴⁴⁴ The oil and diamond wealth of Angola and some other petrol states exemplifies this argument.

Ultimately, adherents to neoclassicalism portend that government policies are far more important in determining the direction of economic development and social stability.⁴⁴⁵ However, while neo-classical economic solutions are currently being applied in part to achieve social stability in rural Angola, this theoretical framework cannot account for direct political *manipulation* in the process of resource distribution and application of solutions provided by this branch of economics. In other words, while neo-classical economics aid in finding solutions, the implantation of its framework is an inherently political exercise that goes beyond simple mechanisms and ideal policy formulation. This leaves open the possibility that policies can be intentionally designed to produce structural scarcity for specific social and economic areas. For this reason, neo-classical economics help explain developments in rural Angola, but fall short in explaining the ‘dominance through strategic abandon’ hypothesis in this paper.

The second theoretical tradition challenging the neo-Malthusian resource scarcity perspective is that of political ecology, which in turn addresses the *political* calculations of “resource distribution as the main mediating factor between the environment and conflict”.⁴⁴⁶ Rather than focusing on population growth and environmental degradation as the principal source of social conflicts, political ecologists stress the need to focus more on the historical and structural origins of structural inequalities, giving “priority to how these entitlements are distributed, reproduced, and fought over in the course of shaping, and being shaped by, patterns of accumulation”.⁴⁴⁷ Furthermore, given that neo-Malthusians emphasize the duality between population growth-resource degradation, political ecologists contest the late inclusion of the ‘structural scarcity’ explication into their model, deriding it as “analytical obfuscation” given its sharp divergence from the previous two reasonings.⁴⁴⁸ Likewise, a similar critique of overreach is applied to the at times obtuse theoretical tradition of political ecology itself, given that through its multiple applications “the field now encompasses a vast array of topics and approaches that all but defy ready classification” constituting today “an

⁴⁴⁴ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 11.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁴⁶ Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict*, 4.

⁴⁴⁷ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 22.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

endless research agenda”.⁴⁴⁹ Carefully defining one’s place in this field is therefore of utmost importance as to not get lost in a theoretical no-man’s-land. While the theory’s approach to looking into the historical origins of structural inequalities reflects in part the approach that this paper hopes to expose, we find that Kahl’s approach to political ecology, analyzing his ‘state exploitation hypothesis’ and its two-tier secondary effects best reveals the analysis this study hopes to reveal.

2.2.2 ECOLOGICAL MARGINALIZATION DRIVEN BY MARKET FORCES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS, NOT POPULATION GROWTH

One important concept of the neo-Malthusian resource scarcity theory is that of ‘ecological marginalization’, meaning that as population growth increases, populations are forced into less productive areas, putting their livelihoods at risk. In Angola’s countryside, this theory is borne out, specifically in the process of the slow encroachment of ranchers and modernized farms into productive *comunal* lands.⁴⁵⁰ Regarding relative land abundance, the statistics have changed markedly little since the end of the civil war. The main difference is the slow installation and development of private capital in the agricultural sectors. Angola’s countryside presents an interesting case in this consideration, as has been reviewed in §1.3.4. The World Bank identified 59 million hectares of potential land, with between 8-14% currently under cultivation.⁴⁵¹ The government itself produced a report in 2018 dedicated to private investors identifying 35 million hectares of ‘arable’ land, with only 14% currently under cultivation.⁴⁵² These numbers would appear to show significant land abundance in Angola with considerable opportunity for private investment. However, these statistics do not appear to account for land currently occupied by traditional communities under customary law, much of which is not under legal title.

⁴⁴⁹ Bryant, *The International Handbook*, 20.

⁴⁵⁰ See notably §5.1.5.

⁴⁵¹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country Diagnostic. Creating Assets for the Poor*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2018b, 1. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/337691552357946557/pdf/angola-scd-03072019-636877656084587895.pdf>.

⁴⁵² Angola, *Angola is Now*, 35.

Despite having a vast land mass, productive land is almost inevitably occupied by rural communities, especially if it is located along strategic transportation routes (either roads, navigable rivers, or railway tracks). In reality, unoccupied land with strong productive potential is indeed a scarce resource, which explains why major commercial projects so often find themselves confronted by local communities claiming the lands identified for commercial exploitation. Conflict-free land in Angola is therefore not abundant, even despite the progressive rural exodus that has taken place throughout the latest decades. In fact, statistics show that this rural exodus has been accompanied by a steady increase in absolute numbers of rural populations in general.⁴⁵³ The idea that rapid urbanization is somehow freeing up rural productive lands is not based in evidence.

During this prolonged transitional phase attempting to attract and insert private investment capital into the country, potential conflicts reside in the progressive development of capitalist enterprises trying to exploit the land, whether they be from foreign firms attracted by potential gains or the national investors or businessmen trying their own hand at entrepreneurship with colonial-era profits ripe in their minds. When the projects go through, accompanied by *Gesterra* if the rules are followed, then the local communities are indeed displaced to less productive lands, giving credence to the process of ‘ecological marginalization’ described by Homer-Dixon. *Gesterra* (*Gestão de Terras Aráveis* [Management of Arable Lands], S.A) is a public company created on 4 March 2004 to prepare, administer, and accompany land transfers, as well as assisting in the evolution and eventual takeover of certain state farms⁴⁵⁴. Under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture, it is in charge of preparing the groundwork for the installation of the major agro-industrial projects as well as promoting the development of the rural economy in general.⁴⁵⁵ The role of *Gesterra* will be detailed in §3.3.3 and §6.3.2. At least in the case of Angola, potential land conflicts appear to arise more from financial investment in economic development opportunities than population growth. Nevertheless, the low use of fertilizers and in-puts coupled with the adverse climatic events, notably droughts, and the degradation of the soil makes

⁴⁵³ Angola, *Resultados definitivos*, 2016.

⁴⁵⁴ The first joint venture *Gesterra* participated in was with Brazilian Odebrecht and the Pungo Andongo farm. See: Nicolau Sululo & Céline Henriques, *Relatório do estudo do impacto da plena participação de Angola na zona de comércio livre da SADC sobre a captação de investimento directo*, Projecto CRIS/FED/2009/021-626, Europe Aid, Nov. 2017, 53.

⁴⁵⁵ Jover, *et al.* *Angola Private Sector*, 62.

environmental displacement a persistent reality to consider as well.⁴⁵⁶

Resource scarcity in rural Angola is in large part structured through political means. Importantly, the structural scarcity described by this study diverges significantly from the analysis of Homer-Dixon in the sense that access to land and its use is not seriously impeded through political forces, but rather actively disrupted in its development potential. This is not a situation such as Apartheid South Africa where the majority lacked representation and access to land. In rural Angola the situation is the opposite, where 92% of the cultivated land is held by rural Angolans. The structural scarcity instead comes in where the commercial agricultural sector is attempting to impose its footprint in agricultural areas where the unoccupied productive land is mostly a myth. The scarcity is thus two-fold: top-down, it resides in finding productive, arable lands that are viable for commercial means, mostly sought after by entrepreneurial elites with political connections to make an official land transfer by Gesterra possible. Bottom-up, the scarcity arises from the structured absence of public assistance to the production of the peasantry, including the government's restrictions on NGO activity attempting to supplement this engineered absence. The MPLA-led government's selective adherence to the liberalized market forces and apparent hesitancy to unleash these forces across the countryside outside of a closely controlled model leads this study to revolve around the nexus of power, conflict, and structural resource scarcity.

2.2.3 ENGINEERING RESOURCE SCARCITY

The authoritarian nature of the MPLA's governance methods have served to establish social stability and firm political control throughout the country. We postulate that the government has positioned itself into a dominant political position in the countryside through a policy of strategic abandon by carefully controlling the flow of resources that make their way into the rural areas. When considering 'resources', however, this study includes natural resources but also expands the category more broadly. Through 'strategic abandon', we include the structural scarcity of natural resources, financial resources, both public and private, material resources (fertilizer, tools, in-puts, seeds, machinery), human

⁴⁵⁶ A detailed description of the limited investment in land productivity is discussed in §7.3.

resources and technical know-how, as well as resources provided by the state and its institutions, notably administrative. In its holistic approach to dominating the peripheries,

the state never interests itself in including the experiences and dynamics of the rural populations in its strategies and policies [which] translates to a process of social exclusion in different domains: economically, by the rupture of the system of exchanges between the city and the countryside and by the absence of employment; institutionally, by the weak service offer in areas such as education, health, drinking water, by the inexistence of other links to justice and to civic and political rights and by the disregard of traditional authorities; territorially, by the abandonment of extensive regions; in symbolic references, by the pretentiousness regarding identities, self-esteem, self-confidence, of future uncertainty, of dependence, first in relation to the state, and secondly in relation to donors.⁴⁵⁷

Carefully managing the economic and social organizing forces in the rural world is therefore a central tenet of an authoritarian power keen on maintaining a tight grip on peripheral activities. Keeping tabs on the distribution lines of resources, following who is doing what with whom, should be key to this strategy: “The state is obsessed with political intelligence and deploys a cast of foot soldiers – police, SINFO,⁴⁵⁸ sobas, MPLA structures and associated organisations, private security – for that purpose. Otherwise its ignorance is absolute”.⁴⁵⁹ The fact that the MPLA neglects a proper economic data gathering operation in exchange for social control could imply either that they are not particularly concerned with carefully following the developmental forces (weak as they may be), or rather that they feel confident that their current surveillance state is sufficient for their present needs of assuring political dominance while the populations persist in poverty.

The structural scarcity that has come to represent the urban-rural relations in Angola has been forged with a purpose; it is not happenstance. As Jeannette Clover points out, “scarcity is often determined by politics rather than by the physical limitation of natural resources”[.]⁴⁶⁰ In the particular case of Angola, where oil is king and has been the preeminent resource centralized in the hands of the MPLA, it is important to consider this reality as a

⁴⁵⁷ Mónica Rafael Simões & Fernando Pacheco, “Sociedade Civil e Ajuda Internacional em Angola”, in *Sociedade Civil e Política em Angola, Enquadramento Regional e Internacional*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade, (Luanda: Média XXI/Lisbon: Edições Firmamento, 2008), 280.

⁴⁵⁸ SINFO (*O Serviço de Informação*) is the government’s internal security network, reporting to the Interior Ministry. In 2010, SINFO changed to SISE (*O Serviço de Inteligência e de Segurança do Estado*, the State Intelligence and Security Service). In the countryside, it is known to recruit local informants to keep tabs on influential individuals. I had my own run in with such informants with Padre Pio Wakassunga in Huíla province prior to the presidential elections of 2017.

⁴⁵⁹ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 181.

⁴⁶⁰ Jeanette Clover, *Framing issues*, 26.

further political dimension when discussing the rural economy and its production of goods. Food production is obviously a strategic resource, especially in achieving national food security, job production, and revenue accumulation. This goal has been a constant refrain by the top government officials.

However, consumable goods, both through agriculture and animal production, also represent exchangeable market commodities that, in their aggregate, hold enormous economic value in their daily exchanges. Viewed through the millions of daily informal exchanges between buyers and sellers, the economic benefits are spread out across the territory. In normal market conditions, this free flow of goods and capital would represent a proper functioning system. However, the perspective of the MPLA under President José Eduardo dos Santos viewed free accumulation of capital as a clear and present threat to their hold on power: “For the MPLA, any effort to accumulate beyond its supervision is a matter of zero tolerance, for that could lead to autonomous bases of power. Hence there are no Angolans making money on a substantial scale outside the purview and participation of the political class”.⁴⁶¹ This predatory perspective of natural resource production aligns with a ‘rentier state’ model:

When states capture enormous rents from natural resources, they face far fewer incentives to bargain away greater economic and political accountability to the populace in exchange for broader rights of taxation. Instead, natural resource wealth can be used to maintain rule through patronage networks and outright coercion. The institutional makeup of rentier states therefore reduces the prospects for broad-based, benevolent economic and political reform, weakening the state over the long term and generating substantial societal grievances.⁴⁶²

Through the current modernization policies of the rural farming sector, the ultimate goal and the logical outcome of the government’s vision is the increased concentration of production and profits into the hands of a privileged few with access to the necessary resources to manage large-scale operations, alongside the further destitution of the peasantry. However, this outcome requires either serious increases in production efficiencies, or a substantial expansion in land use. This second option, more likely than the former, at least initially, greatly increases the likelihood of producing more civil strife throughout the countryside.

⁴⁶¹ David Sogge, *Angola: Reinventing Pasts and Futures*, Transnational Institute, 7 June 2010. <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/angola-reinventing-pasts-and-futures>.

⁴⁶² Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 16.

2.2.4 POLITICAL TRANSITIONS & ELECTORAL FIGHTS

In the transition toward democratic practices, first initiated in Angola under the Bicesse Accords in 1991 paving the way to the first multi-party democratic elections in 1992, political parties engaged in a new political arena of zero sum games to win over key constituencies of civil society, as well as any individuals or groups that they could break away from their political rivals' support. While urban areas hold the most electoral sway due to population mass and density, at the time of the 1992 election the rural populations was approximately 78% of the total,⁴⁶³ revealing the importance of formulating strategies to translate these rural masses into electoral success and mobilizing rural resources for the country's development. This process, known as "rural incorporation", is described as "the construction of political coalitions that included modest rural producers – implementing policies that favored rural producers, mobilizing them, and bringing them into organizations that institutionalized their political voice".⁴⁶⁴ However, the same authors note that:

Mass-based coalitions with modest rural producers – rural incorporation, in other words – are tremendously costly in terms of both public policy and political institution-building. Therefore, elites will select a rural-incorporating coalition strategy if and only if its expected utility exceeds the benefits they receive from forming the urban-centric coalitions that are associated with urban bias.⁴⁶⁵

One issue with this analysis is it assumes that a country's elites have already identified the rural producers susceptible to align with. In the case of Angola, however, multiple studies and reports have noted that Angolan authorities have never made serious attempts at understanding the array and diversity of agricultural producers throughout the countryside.⁴⁶⁶ The lack of knowledge of the rural population and their economic productive activities reveal a disregard for a targeted "rural incorporation" political strategy, instead

⁴⁶³ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 32.

⁴⁶⁴ David Waldner, Brenton Peterson & Jon Shoup, "Against the Grain of Urban Bias: Elite Conflict and the Logic of Coalition Formation in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa", *Studies in Comparative International Development*, no. 52, (2017): 327.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁴⁶⁶ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 87; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 63.

seemingly lumping the rural populations together as a homogenous bloc in the pursuit of public policy and institution building. Further disincentivizing a rural incorporation strategy is the stark reality that it “imposes political costs; the threat that a mobilized population – difficult to monitor in the countryside – will turn against the regime”.⁴⁶⁷ This potential threat of organized opposition to total political dominance in the rural sphere is a principal ideological driver motivating the MPLA-led government to withhold from encouraging autonomous organizing in the periphery, whether it be social, capital, economic, or otherwise.

2.2.5 REACTING TO RESOURCE SCARCITY: A SLIDING SCALE

A lack of ‘rural incorporation’ leaves rural populations in a situation of structural resource scarcity as the political economy is organized alongside an urban bias, underfunding rural development. Rural areas are left to fend for themselves through adaptation and innovation with the few resources they have, or become dependent on foreign assistance if those options are available. If the structural resource scarcity is accompanied by exploitative actions wherein a government that is mostly absent in the daily lives of rural communities is simultaneously seen as exploiting them, in cases of land appropriation for example, the likelihood of social strife increases. However, social grievance or perceived injustice alone will not produce such actions: “High levels of grievance do not necessarily lead to widespread civil violence. At least two other factors must be present: groups with strong collective identities that can coherently challenge state authority, and clearly advantageous opportunities for violent collective action against authority”.⁴⁶⁸ This is known as the ‘opportunity perspective’. In rural Angola, the low population density, the relative lack of resources, and the communal nature of traditional society all work in tandem against rural social organizing.

Such initiative would therefore have to come up through each community’s traditional social hierarchy where horizontal support systems are rare.⁴⁶⁹ According to Carlos Pacatolo, this ‘opportunity perspective’ does not exist for various reasons: (1) the decision to remain in the periphery is a decision to live with limited resources while confronting the

⁴⁶⁷ Waldner, *et al.*, “Against the Grain”, 7.

⁴⁶⁸ Percival & Homer-Dixon, “Environmental Scarcity”, 280.

⁴⁶⁹ Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 66.

natural elements inherent in dependence on subsistence agriculture, (2) in part due to this adaptation to living with less, the rural populations are inherently humble and adapted to hardship, (3) the legacy of trauma from the war disincentivizes social rebellion, (4) rural populations are more likely to be believers and practitioners of religious faith, thereby practicing conflict-resolution, (5) the cases of land conflicts in Angola are localized and few opportunities exist to create connections between them.⁴⁷⁰ An omnipresent factor in the character of the civil society-State relations is the extremely violent history behind those relations, particularly for the percentage of the populations old enough to remember the conditions during the civil war. These memories serve as a type of generational insurance for the MPLA that social stability reigns supreme in many of the motivations behind social actions. While concrete demographic statistics are lacking, it is estimated that over half of the country (57%) is less than 20 years old,⁴⁷¹ thus with little to no memory of wartime. Nevertheless, the time that the MPLA can count on these psychological scars as deterrence from civil disobedience is on the wane.

A central tenet of the theories of political ecology is measuring the question of imminent conflict. Political ecology theory does not however provide a “single casual theory of violence”.⁴⁷² While the structural scarcity put in place by the MPLA has the potential to create social strife leading to violence, as history has shown to occur around land access issues, the specter of violence and rebellion has so far been largely avoided, though certainly not absent. Discontent is, however, palpable. The absence of a generalized atmosphere of rural revolt or conflict is a major variable in the analysis of this study and created the necessity to combine different theoretical approaches to attempt to properly understand the underlying motivations within rural Angola. The second part of the study will attempt to explain in part this absence through a combination of adept political strategy on the part of the government alongside the construction of various institutions tasked with creating highly managed channels of agency to vent frustrations and channel conflict resolution strategies.

⁴⁷⁰ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 August 2017.

⁴⁷¹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 30.

⁴⁷² Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 22-23.

2.3 Setting the scene for rural political economy

Post World War Two, the Industrial Revolution led Western nations to move their industrial machinery into the countryside where modern industrial agriculture was born. Henry Bernstein identifies this period (1945-1973) as the ‘Second Food Regime’, ultimately characterized as “the emergence of powerful agribusiness corporations, and the ongoing industrialization of farm production they promoted (or imposed), together with Third World dependence on food imports”[.]⁴⁷³ Angola’s colonial structure was able to insert itself into this system through a number of cash crops, notably coffee, cotton, corn, sisal, and sugar. However, the civil war effectively shut the agricultural sector out of the increasingly competitive playing field right at the moment that the globalization of agriculture and production lines were advancing apace.

Alongside globalization, ‘New Agricultural Countries’ (NACs), notably Brazil and Southeast Asian countries, emerged to fill the niche needs of the expanding agricultural commodity trade market, while the United States⁴⁷⁴ and the European Union⁴⁷⁵ doubled down on a mercantilist model of agricultural subsidies to bolster their own competitive advantage.⁴⁷⁶ The entrance of new actors and the consolidation of the commodities market led to calls for the institutionalization of a regulation regime of global commerce. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Uruguay Round of 1986-1993 led to “the signing of the Agreement on Agriculture in the newly founded WTO [World Trade Organization], 1995, and the institutionalization of the corporate food regime”.⁴⁷⁷ Angola became a member of GATT on 8 April 1994 and joined the WTO on 23 November 1996.⁴⁷⁸ While Angola was mired in conflict, global agricultural markets were consolidating, institutionalizing, and corporatizing. Angola would not be able to seriously contemplate developing their agricultural sector until the war finally ended in 2002. By that time, the forces

⁴⁷³ Henry Bernstein, *Agrarian Political Economy and Modern World Capitalism: the Contributions of Food Regime Analysis*, Colloquium Paper, no. 55, The Hague, International Institute of Social Studies, Feb. 2016, 8. https://www.iss.nl/sites/corporate/files/55-ICAS_CP_Bernstein.pdf.

⁴⁷⁴ The U.S. has had a policy of farm subsidies since the New Deal’s Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) of 1933. The policies have evolved and expanded since then.

⁴⁷⁵ The bloc’s farm subsidy is known as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁷⁷ Philip McMichael, “Global Development and the Corporate Food Regime”, in *New Directions in the Sociology of Global Development, Research in Rural Sociology and Development*, (eds), Frederick Buttel & Philip McMichael, (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Ltd., XI, 2005), 278.

⁴⁷⁸ According to the official web page of the World Trade Organization. Available from: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/angola_e.htm (accessed 20 Dec. 2019).

moving the global commodities market were entirely different and rebuilding any resemblance to the export regime Angola once knew would require rebuilding nearly the entire rural political economy.

2.3.1 AN EVOLUTION OF DEVELOPMENT PARADIGMS...

As we have previously established, the unique characteristics of engaging with rural spaces and fostering socio-economic development in such spaces requires its own distinctive formula. In the general context of Sub-Saharan Africa, upon the wave of independence in the 1960s the development paradigm centered on urban-based industrialization policies “viewed as essential in bringing about transformation of agriculturally-based economies”.⁴⁷⁹ However, these policies directed resources where the majority of people were not, as the continent was mostly comprised of rural majority countries at the time. A decade later, the President of the World Bank Robert McNamara proposed moving the focus squarely onto developing the rural spaces where the populations overwhelmingly lived. The World Bank defined rural development at the time as “a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless”.⁴⁸⁰ In developing areas that are at such structural disadvantage to improve socio-economic development, any comprehensive policy must inherently be multi-faceted and multi-scaled “including projects or programs to increase agricultural productivity and production, provide employment, improve health, education and infrastructure, expand communications and improve housing”.⁴⁸¹ Eventually, these comprehensive action plans came to be known as Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP).

⁴⁷⁹ Jonathan Baker & Poul Ove Pedersen, (eds), *The Rural-Urban Interface in Africa, Expansion and Adaptation*, Seminar Proceedings, no. 27, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1992, 12.

⁴⁸⁰ World Bank, *Rural Development*, Sector Policy Paper, Washington D.C., Feb. 1975, 3. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/522641468766236215/pdf/multi0page.pdf>.

⁴⁸¹ Joseph Kwame Baah-Dwomoh, *Integrated Rural Development in Africa*, African Transformation Report 2016, Transforming Africa's Agriculture, Accra, African Center for Economic Transformation/Tokyo, Japan International Cooperation Agency Research Institute, Feb. 2016, 5. <https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/booksandreports/175nbg0000004act-att/175nbg0000004ait.pdf>.

These programs required a serious network of competent actors working in tandem, conditions which were not reality on the ground in many of the rural areas they were to be implemented. New actors were brought in and others were trained to make up for this structural lapse. Since the 1990s, alongside the multiplication of NGOs, CSOs, aid organizations, donors and development banks, this strategy has been updated toward community-driven development (CDD). This approach was conceived “from the recognition that large-scale, bottom-up and demand-driven poverty reduction subprojects can increase the institutional capacity of small communities for self-development”.⁴⁸² Coinciding alongside the second half of the civil war, the CDD model was therefore the most prevalent in the active donor community working within Angola, and its effects continue to play a major service delivery role in the urban-rural relationship across the spectrum of actors active in the sphere of civil society activities. The evolution of rural development models has led to an inclusive approach focusing on both social and economic development:

Current rural development strategy as accepted by most donors makes a commitment in five core areas: fostering an enabling environment for broad-based and sustainable rural growth; enhancing agricultural productivity and competitiveness; fostering nonfarm economic growth; improving social well-being, managing and mitigating risk, and reducing vulnerability; and enhancing the sustainability of natural resource management.⁴⁸³

Rural and peri-urban areas, with their characteristic low demographic density, encompass a decidedly much smaller range of actors present in the area when compared to urban spaces. The diversification of actors in the rural landscape brings with it a broad new array of influences, ideas, and pressures. A rural political economy analysis attempts to map out the relations between political and economic power in the unique geographical space of rural areas. Likewise, it attempts to understand how these two powers are constituted, exercised and contested.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 25.

2.3.2 ... INFORMING ANGOLA'S RURAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

While initial attempts were made at organizing peasants into cooperatives⁴⁸⁴ and taking over Portuguese colonial-era farms by the state⁴⁸⁵ and later by private, well-connected actors,⁴⁸⁶ few if any comprehensive rural political economy policies were carried out during the civil war period. Emerging from the war, the MPLA, under the grandiose nation-building vision of the 'architect of peace' President José Eduardo dos Santos, sought to restart the rural economy through massive public investments in state-run agro-industrial farms, financed in large part by Chinese loans and built by Chinese companies. This aspect of the political economy will be further developed in §6.3.1. The choice of investing heavily in state farms, an echo of the MPLA's failed 'socialist' policies, is perhaps better understood when considering the late stage that Angola finally ended the war.

Industrial-scale production models had become the norm, but Angola lacked the ability to attract significant private investment capital to begin building its own. More

⁴⁸⁴ Pain, "As características", 2008; Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 1991. During the initial organizing initiative, Pain notes: "More than 92,000 farmers had responded to the government's call to form cooperatives. These formations provoked great enthusiasm, but the government never ended up providing any real support." (Pain, "As características", 190). Whatever "great enthusiasm" might have existed initially, the drastic mismanagement of providing goods and services to the cooperative movement likely quickly quelled the rising hopes of the farmers who adhered.

⁴⁸⁵ José Maria Nunes Conceição, *Angola: uma política externa em contexto de crise (1975-1994)*, PhD dissertation, São Paulo, Universidade de São Paulo, 1999; Manuel Ferreira, "Nacionalização e confisco do capital português na indústria transformadora de Angola (1975-1990)", *Análise Social*, 37, no. 162, spring (2002): 47-90. José Maria Nunes Pereira Conceição notes that the state farm model was conceived from Soviet (Bulgarian) advisors, warning against the establishment of peasant cooperatives that were not sufficiently controlled for fear of them becoming a political force (Conceição, *Angola: uma política externa*, 142). Furthermore, consolidating the productive forces of the rural economy in state-run farms assured a direct line from elite social reproduction to the emerging state itself as the weak existence of an endogenous bourgeoisie upon independence allowed for the consolidation of the political bureaucracy into these privileged spaces of social and financial reproduction.

⁴⁸⁶ Péclard, "Les chemins", 2008; Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 2013. Oliveira notes that by 2011 "the area of arable land distributed to regime cronies exceeded the amount of land controlled by Portuguese settlers in 1975" (*Ibid.*, 180). Not only colonial-era farms were up for redistribution. Furthermore, Péclard points out that as the country transitioned to a market economy, not only did many of the military leaders occupy the colonial farms, but they also "invested in the commercial agriculture officially supported by the government" (Péclard, "Les chemins", 15). These Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models have become a central mechanism for investing capital into the countryside. These 'investors' require heavy public subsidies to be convinced to act on their investments. As noted above, subsidizing agriculture is commonplace in the sector and heavily practiced by industrialized countries. The difference here is the subsidies are not distributed alongside an official policy available to any interested investors, but rather politically connected entrepreneurs. Oliveira describes this process of personal enrichment, talking with a well-connected foreign consultant, not as Public-Private Partnerships, but rather Public-to-Private Partnerships (Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 65-66).

importantly, this large-scale production model provided a much more streamlined path to developing the agricultural sector while capturing the rents it provided as they would be obligated to pass through government-run entities. Furthermore, the illiberal nature of the reconstruction project allowed the MPLA to follow the policies it saw fit, with little pushback by the international institutions that would otherwise attempt to assert their influence.

2.3.3 POWER, IDEOLOGY AND DISCOURSE

The ‘socialist’ revolution kicking off independence had a clear discourse of the political will to empower the peasantry, becoming an idolized social class in the eyes of the revolutionaries by embodying the ideal worker to rebuild the new Angola. Article 8 of the 1975 Constitution declared: “The Popular Republic of Angola considers agriculture as a ‘base’ and an industry being a decisive factor for its development”.⁴⁸⁷ The neo-colonial takeover of economic production and support for the agricultural sector in particular therefore reached Constitutional importance. Convinced of the benefits that a ‘Marxist-Leninist’ centralized approach would have on the country and its workers, Angola’s first president Agostinho Neto even declared 1978 as the ‘Year of Agriculture’ in a bid to stimulate growing capacity in order to become self-sufficient in food production.⁴⁸⁸ Achieving self-sufficiency in food production represented a key priority for President Neto in a bid to gin up nationalistic fervor and become fully independent from foreign influence.

Yet the currents of history put the country on a much different path and the revitalization of the rural economy was not to be. The social, geographical, and political fissures fomented by the civil war moved the country’s political economy towards one based on endurance and perseverance in conflict, with a tendency towards a concentration of military influence throughout the stagnant peripheral economy: “Due to the importance of war in Angolan history, the army has always been an important place for the accumulation of political and economic power. In the rural economy, this favoritism meant they were oftentimes well-placed to take over the areas that had once proven to be commercially

⁴⁸⁷ Angola, Lei Constitucional da República Popular de Angola de 1975, Luanda, 1975, 2. <http://cedis.fd.unl.pt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/LEI-CONSTITUCIONAL-de-1975.pdf>.

⁴⁸⁸ Pain, “As características”, 187.

viable.”⁴⁸⁹ Ultimately, the dreams of restoring the agricultural sector to its colonial heights faded further in the fog of war.

Despite all of the official discourse lauding the return of Angola’s agriculture back to prominence and providing resources to its struggling interior, few of these words were backed up by concrete actions. This potentially puts the country’s leaders in a precarious position of political legitimacy for rural Angolans. Theoretically, social grievances are checked when the population believes that the government is willing and able to respond to reasonable demands.⁴⁹⁰ However, it needs to be considered to whom the political discourse of rural development was destined to. It can be assumed radios were rare in rural Angola to transmit the discourses of President Agostinho Neto. Likely, these speeches either went unnoticed or were spread by word of mouth. During the civil war, geographical isolation and generalized insecurity meant that messages of economic diversification again hardly transmitted across the countryside, whether by radio or the arrival of television into areas with little to no electricity. These political discourses were mostly aimed at an urbanizing, national audience, as well as the international community in general, with little capacity to reach the periphery. Instead, the speeches were intended to provide imagery in the national and international conscious of the projection of the MPLA’s power across its territory, not just through the nationalization of the country’s resources, but also through its benevolent political discourse.⁴⁹¹ By the turn of the century, it was assumed that 76% of Luandan residents possessed a radio, while only 28% of the rural populations did.⁴⁹² Claims of political will to occupy peripheral spaces aimed at improving the lives of those living in the interior have so far largely failed to deliver, but the ‘idea’ lives on in verbally constructed imaginations. In reality, agriculture has been chronically underfunded and mismanaged as an economic sector. Words and actions have clearly diverged: “While it deploys a language of inclusive nation-building and public goods provision, the state’s actions in the periphery are instead focused on the achievement of control”.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁹ Péclard, “Les chemins”, 14.

⁴⁹⁰ Percival & Homer-Dixon, “Environmental Scarcity”, 281.

⁴⁹¹ Antonio Reyes, “Strategies of legitimization in political discourse: From words to actions”, *Discourse & Society*, 22, no. 6, (2011): 781-807. 10.1177/0957926511419927.

⁴⁹² World Bank, *Angola Country Economic Memorandum*, 8-9.

⁴⁹³ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 23.

2.3.4 THE STATE OF AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

Economic liberalization has had little practical effect in the social stratification of the rural economy. The various state-led development schemes have kept the country's farmers in a suspended 'peasant', 'semi-proletariat' position, while the infusion of capitalism, both public and private, is attempting to create a new bourgeoisie farmer and entrepreneurial import/export class. The vast majority of peasants still do not legally own their own land (in the modern sense), and resort to traditional, labor intensive modes of production. The culmination of this strategy has led to huge imbalances regarding where the billions of dollars of public investment has gone, and to whom it has benefitted. Given the lack of an official agricultural census, we will next focus on an overall categorization of the social actors animating the agricultural sector.

Agriculture is the principal economic activity in the countryside, making the country's farmers by far the most active economic actors in this geographical space. The sector is nevertheless critical for employment in both rural and urban areas. Agriculture is the main economic activity for 88 percent of rural households among the 9.6 million rural Angolans, compared to only 41 percent of the poorest households in urban areas.⁴⁹⁴ The sector remains the main source of employment in the country (with an estimated 44.9 percent of the total employment) but accounts for only 3 percent of firm employment.⁴⁹⁵ Sixty-three percent of people actively engaged in agriculture are self-employed.⁴⁹⁶ While the self-employment rate is very high, this is driven by subsistence agriculture rather than entrepreneurship.

Smallholders represent over 80 percent of agricultural production and 92 percent of land under cultivation, leaving only 8 percent to medium and large-sized commercial farms. In over a decade of evolution, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development's 2006-2007 report found that family farming made up 99.8% of productive units, leaving only 0.2% for commercial production.⁴⁹⁷ According to the government itself in 2018, this number reaches 95% for family production. These are primarily farms used communally for

⁴⁹⁴ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 39.

⁴⁹⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 45.

⁴⁹⁶ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 40.

⁴⁹⁷ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 246, Luanda, 29 Dec. 2009: 4239-4281.

subsistence farming, producing over 95% of the country's roots, tubers, vegetable farming, oils, and fruit farming; 74% of its grains and 41% of its horticulture.⁴⁹⁸ This group also includes smallholders selling surplus production in the market. Informal commercial channels are estimated to represent about 70 percent of food distribution in Angola,⁴⁹⁹ so knowing who is selling what to whom; understanding the market forces in rural Angola, remains largely unknown. Small- and medium-sized agribusinesses face severe constraints, which explains why so few exist: lack of capital and availability of credit, overvalued national currency, lack of market access due to lack of intermediary connections and transportation capacity, lack of storage and processing capacity, limited use and access of fertilizers, quality seeds, little use of mechanization, and poor technical capacity.⁵⁰⁰ The difficult conditions have pushed many rural Angolans to look elsewhere to assure their livelihoods.

Breaking down the statistics by gender is extremely relevant because women are much more likely to be self-employed (63%) and concentrated in the agricultural sector, than a female wage employee working outside of agriculture (24%). Furthermore, women are paid only 40 percent of what men earn for similar work.⁵⁰¹ This can be explained by the fact that women have less access to commercial farming, representing only 25 percent of commercial farmers compared to 70 percent of subsistence farmers.⁵⁰² Unable to rely on fixed prices or reliable buyers, rural women often live on subsistence farming in conditions of poverty due to social and economic structural disadvantages. Under modern law, there is gender equality in land rights. In practice, it is much different.

Women's lack of knowledge of their rights and the preponderance of customary law means that, in practice, women have less access to land, despite statutory law requiring equality in property and inheritance rights. According to customary law, practiced much more prevalently in the peripheries, men obtain ownership of land through inheritance. Although this varies by ethnic group and region, women are often only able to access land through their husbands or sons, with their rights depending on their reproductive capacity. In marriage, the woman obtains certain rights to land access yet it is restricted to land solely destined for food production.⁵⁰³ Women farmers have less access to extensions services,

⁴⁹⁸ Angola, *Angola is Now*, 106.

⁴⁹⁹ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 64; CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, 104.

⁵⁰⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 46.

⁵⁰¹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 41.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁰³ IFAD, *Republic of Angola Country*, 32.

seeds, and other inputs required for success as entrepreneurs and farmers, as these tend to be delivered through associations and cooperatives in which mostly husbands are members. Customary law further marginalizes women's capacity for land access through the practice of inheritance. When land is not passed on directly to other men in the family, it is transferred to other family members through death of the head male in the family. Women rarely retain access to the land they had worked as a family unit after the death of the head male in the household, with one study finding only 23% of widows retaining access to the lands of their deceased husbands.⁵⁰⁴ Without access and title to land, women often have few options in providing collateral when attempting to access the little credit that is lent for agricultural purposes.⁵⁰⁵

Finally, children also make up an important section of rural workers compared to their urban counterparts: "Rates of child labour among children aged 10-17 were almost four times higher in rural areas than in urban areas and the rural net attendance rate (NAR) in secondary school is one fifth the rate in urban areas".⁵⁰⁶ The lack of education of rural children increases the probability they continue in the agricultural sector or become further statistics in the informal sector moving to the city in hopes of improved opportunities. Structural resource scarcity among sections of the rural populations, particularly women, therefore comes from both modern policies and customary practices. The heavy presence of resource deprivation employed by the MPLA is therefore heavily influenced by a traditional social and economic system that is already structured around these realities. The anthropological origins of the MPLA's modern political strategy of rural resource deprivation deserves further scrutiny.

Ultimately, the MPLA's mission of rebuilding the countryside mostly focused on economic, rather than social, aspects. Setting out this unequal relationship, what support are the farmers and pastoralists in Angola actually receiving? Given that the country's vast network of peasant laborers dominates national production and land cultivated, very little room is left to the production of so-called 'elite' or commercial farmers. The lack of fertile, unoccupied land raises serious questions as to how commercial farms have been established, and who will ultimately own the farms and the land they currently occupy. The culmination

⁵⁰⁴ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 49.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰⁶ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis: Children and Women in Angola*, Luanda, 2015, 19.

of the MPLA's rural development policies has left rural populations living in precarity, further detached from the national narrative. As An Ansoms reminds us in her article on re-engineering rural society in Rwanda: "Rural development is not a purely technical issue. [...] Neither patterns of asset distribution nor institutional conditions in rural areas are accidental. Indeed, they each derive from the broader relationships between politics, economy, and society that drive and undergird the overall patterns of rural development"[.]⁵⁰⁷ While complete integration of Angola's farmers is obviously unrealistic given the enormous complexities the country faces in its rebuilding efforts, their current marginalization and underdevelopment stems as much from political motives as economic, social or financial sources. The MPLA's dualist agenda of urban bias and emphasis on immediate modernization without taking into account the necessary steps to integrate the population along the process has effectively left Angola's farmers on the sidelines during the process of rebuilding a future rural Angola.

2.3.5 THE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE: IN STATISTICS

An overall look at the general statistics of the country reveal the deep urban-rural divide that Angola's history and the MPLA's policies have produced.

⁵⁰⁷ An Ansoms, "Re-engineering Rural Society: The Visions and Ambitions of the Rwandan Elite", *African Affairs*, 108, no. 431, Feb. 2009: 293. DOI: 10.1093/afraf/adp001.

Tableau 8 - An overview of the current rural-urban divide in living standards

	National	Urban	Rural
Poverty	37%	19%	58%
Access to improved water	41%	63%	24%
Access to improved sanitation facilities	39%	62%	21%
Access to electricity	42%	64%	7%
Public health expenditure (as % of GDP)	2.6% (2013) 1.5% (2015)	--	25% of facilities provide pre-natal health checks/delivery services
Population	100%	63%	37%

Source: Vandome, *Mine Action*, 3; World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 2018; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 2019; UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 2015.

Rural populations are three times more likely to live in poverty (58%) than their urban counterparts (19%). Likewise, rural Angolans are three times less likely to have access to improved water sources (24%) or improved sanitation facilities (21%) than their urban counterparts (63%, 62%) respectively. Only 7% of rural Angolans have reliable access to electricity, otherwise requiring the use of expensive diesel generators to provide power during the day and light after nightfall. For the large majority unable to afford this costly alternative, candles are used. These implications are obviously counterproductive to building a competitive agricultural sector, as the exorbitant cost of electricity significantly raises the cost of production, when it is available at all.

Tableau 9 - Other notable rankings

Human Development Index (HDI)	147/189
Judicial favoritism of government officials (WB)	140/144
Logistics Performance Indicator (LPI)	160/167
Customs Indicator Index	157/180
Quality of infrastructure (air, port, rail & road) (World Economic Forum)	139/144
“Undue influence” in judicial independence (WB)	137/144

Source: World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 23; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 77.

Public health expenditures are chronically underfunded across the country, dropping from 2.6% of GDP in 2013 to 1.5% in 2015. In the countryside, only 25% of medical facilities provide pre-natal health checks and delivery services to expecting mothers, putting both the mothers and newborns at serious risk. The government's inability and even unwillingness to invest in its own social infrastructure has left the population in a constant dilapidated state. In 2015, UNICEF's evaluation of the nation's health infrastructure found: "The National Health Service has a total 2,356 health facilities, of which more than one fifth are not functioning and more than half do not have a supply of electricity".⁵⁰⁸ The health sector has been chronically underfunded and mismanaged. Yet even in areas with comparably considerable investment and attention, like the nation's transportation infrastructure, the situation remains bleak. While the country's road network has seen vast improvements, the considerable investment in infrastructure has also been underwhelming in many aspects as the country continues to rank among the world's worst in overall logistics when taking into account air, port, rail and road quality. Staffed schools, health clinics, and local institutions remain the exception, and not the rule, across the periphery.

2.3.6 SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

Essentially, in order to fight off overall discontent with the agricultural policies, and to avoid severe malnutrition, the MPLA has fallen back on the neo-classical solution of substituting foodstuffs through importation to provide for the needs of those who cannot do so themselves through subsistence agriculture. Rural access to these imports faces serious obstacles in itself. Ideally, the country's leaders would prefer to be able to become self-sufficient in food security, but they simultaneously attempt to avoid significant independent capital accumulation in the countryside that is not directly linked to the party-state. The setting up of state farms to begin this transition process has already started, but capacity and production is generally low across the board and is thus far from able to serve the full needs of the population. Relying on the widespread practice of subsistence farming to stave off hunger in the countryside, import substitution will provide for the rest of the country until a new agricultural system can be built, designed for a generalized state capture of agricultural goods. While Angola's strong oil sector, and to a lesser extent the diamond sector, allow the

⁵⁰⁸ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 18.

country's leadership the ability to finance large parts of its agenda, this strategy leaves the country open to the volatilities of the international commodities market⁵⁰⁹ and has impeded taking decisive action on the repeated claims of decentralizing the economy.

Fast forward fifteen years and, according to the measurements of the World Bank,⁵¹⁰ although other countries in the region have been diversifying over time (less product concentration), Angola's level of diversification has been falling. And yet, this is not necessarily for a lack of trying as the rural economy has been stocked with State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) and state-run farms all with this goal in mind. The reach and quality of these investments remain to be seen. However, the party leading the charge of inclusive rural development has never showed itself capable of undertaking such a monumental task and yet chose to go it largely alone regardless. At the moment the MPLA saw itself fit to embark on a national reconstruction project, "Angola's population was amongst the world's most deprived; the state was incapable of performing a host of sovereign functions, and largely uninterested in the governance of the hinterland and the administration of its people".⁵¹¹ We will next examine the evolution of political (dis)interest in the periphery and its effects on producing structural resource scarcities that have culminated in the skewed rural economy that exists today.

⁵⁰⁹ Kahl, *States, Scarcity*, 15.

⁵¹⁰ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 12.

⁵¹¹ Oliveira, "Illiberal peacebuilding", 291.

Part II – Development discord and the (re)organization of the countryside

A major contributor of development disarray in the countryside is the confluence of shallow political ideologies motivating the decision-makers. The waxing and waning ‘socialist’ influence on the political philosophy guiding the country’s initial formation was two-fold, divided between UNITA’s position temporarily inspired by Maoist philosophy yet aligning with Apartheid South Africa later while the MPLA followed its revolutionary ‘Marxist-Leninist’ philosophies purportedly emanating from their Soviet partnerships, yet in function and deed mirrored the authoritarian Salazarist model of Portugal. Importantly, both of these inspirations focus heavily on peasants as the source for economic growth. The country’s farmers should have been ideally positioned as central actors in the political programs of both dominant political parties, but their principal role in these programs was laying the economic foundations for future national prosperity. Rural social development was overshadowed by the preeminent economic priorities. Setting up the peasantry with a central role in the rebuilding of this ‘socialist’ experiment holds ominous precedent given the massive famines recorded in Mao’s China and Stalin’s Soviet Union. Angola’s leadership faced its own test of national rebuilding with the agricultural sector designated as a foundational step, balancing economic and social development. As we will see, however, the destination of socio-economic development would not reside in the peripheries.

Part II of this study will focus on the trajectory of newly-independent Angola and the government’s attempts to find its foothold in establishing itself as the dominant authority across its peripheral spaces. Moving through the trials and tribulations of projecting power in the countryside, it will attempt to show the contradiction of how, upon independence, the MPLA moved to shore up its political presence by projecting its power into the peripheries. The limited resources mobilized in this practice in projection left rural areas void of basic service provision, which were later filled by new actors arriving on the ground, notably NGOs and CSOs. The government then sought to suppress or control these organizations that had attempted to fill the void it had created. This dynamic of power balance playing out in the Angolan countryside will later be exemplified through the history leading up to the

creation and involvement of *Rede Terra* and the ideological battle over the latest Land Law eventually passed in 2004.

Chapter 3 Institutionalizing rural spaces and agriculture production

The following section expands upon §1.3 Rebuilding the Periphery, attempting to trace the institutionalization of Angola's modern state authority in the country's peripheries with a particular focus on how these institutions came to centralize productive resources (both labor & capital) destined for the agricultural sector. Starting with the colonial inheritance encountered upon independence, it will then follow the Salazarist-tinged revolutionary 'Marxist-Leninist' strategies of social and economic organization leading into the transformations towards a partially implemented market-based economy. The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate to what extent and where the modern state, through its newly deployed institutions, established itself as the *de facto* authority in its various forms and ideologies, usurping that of traditional authorities, and setting up its control mechanisms throughout the periphery. The schizophrenic nature of the changes and approaches attest to the extreme conditions that Angola and its populations have endured, holding together the country in piecemeal fashion through decades of intermittent war (1960-2002). Emerging from the wreckage was a dilapidated state apparatus riding the thick waves of a global oil boom that would provide the financial means to set the country back on track, while being ideologically driven to concentrate and centralize the rural economy around its partisan proxies and suppress the few avenues of agency available to the rural populations. By establishing this structure, the MPLA laid the groundwork for its domination of the rural economy and, likewise, the rural populations.

3.1 Agostinho Neto's administration and colonial inheritance

The official independence date of Angola is 11 November 1975, but the transitional government was formed on 31 January 1975⁵¹² through the Alvor Agreement signed on 15 January 1975 between the post-Salazarist Portuguese government and the three political

⁵¹² Angola's transitional government was the last of Portugal's African colonies to set up a transitional government, behind Cape Verde's set up in July 1974 and Mozambique's in September 1974.

groups it officially recognized for eventual power sharing: the MPLA under Agostinho Neto, the FNLA under Holden Roberto and UNITA under Jonas Savimbi. This Agreement was spurred by the *coup d'état* in Portugal on 25 April 1974, later known as the Carnation Revolution. The MPLA, with its political headquarters in Luanda, pushed for *de facto* control amongst its adversaries, eventually leading to the contested presidency of Agostinho Neto.

The administration of Agostinho Neto was brief but vitally important in locking in the country's ideological path⁵¹³ that its independent foundations would be built upon. The 'socialist' revolution⁵¹⁴ he purportedly sought for Angola's transformation was undermined by the *coup d'état* on 27 May 1977 led by Alves Bernardo Batista (more commonly known as Nito Alves) and José Van Dunem, quelled in large part by Cuban forces who had arrived in response to military aggressions by Apartheid South Africa in the Southern region of the country. This quickly descended into a violent purge of factions of MPLA adherents deemed disloyal to the MPLA's main political program. The ideals of the 'socialist' revolution quickly withered away under the increasing adoption of the same authoritarianism tactics of Salazar's Portugal as the MPLA purged its party of the '*Nitistas*' and the influences Nito Alves championed.⁵¹⁵

While this episode was a mostly urban affair, the authoritarian tendencies that sprang from it would consolidate across the territory. In particular, the MPLA moved in 1977 to dismantle the revolutionary 'people's power' organizations that had been established under the Law on People's Power in 1975. Despite the misleading name of the law, its actual purpose was to effectively usurp the public's power of exercising autonomous popular power which had begun to take form upon independence.⁵¹⁶ This law allowed for the organization of elections of various organizations "such as Action Committees, students associations,

⁵¹³ In reference to the notions of Path Dependency Theory, analyzing how a state's institutions are influenced by their historical origins and how these origins influence the institutions' directions and capacity for future change.

⁵¹⁴ The 'socialist' nature of the regime was ratified in October 1976 by the first Congress and was thus not written into the original Constitution of the Republic in 1975. See: Vidal & Andrade, *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento*, 15.

⁵¹⁵ The total death toll of the purge is unknown. Conservative estimates range from 15,000 to 30,000. For a full account of the 27 May 1977 massacre, known by Angolans as "vinte e sete" (twenty-seventh), see: Lara Pawson, *In the Name of the People: Angola's Forgotten Massacre*, (London: IB Tauris, 2014).

⁵¹⁶ Michel Cahen, "Syndicalisme urbain, luttres ouvrières et questions ethniques : Luanda (Angola), 1974-1977/1981", in *Vilas et Cidades : Bourgs et Villes en Afrique lusophone*, (ed), Michel Cahen, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989), 200-279

trade unions, labourers committees and unarmed political parties”.⁵¹⁷ Though these organizations could channel popular sentiment, they remained appendages beholden to the MPLA’s political party structure. Being perceived as complicit in the organization of the *coup d’état*, these organizations were disbanded, with the Law on People’s Power being rescinded as well.⁵¹⁸ It was only shortly after this violent political purge, during the MPLA’s first congress convened the 4th to the 11th of December 1977, that it officially adopted its ‘Marxist-Leninist’ character and its ‘socialist’ production model.⁵¹⁹ The two events colliding in history imbued the MPLA’s ‘Marxism-Leninism’ with the cold authoritarian streak already engrained by the colonial experience. This political crackdown and consolidation in 1977 further cemented the MPLA’s approach to controlling and manipulating popular, grassroots initiatives, whether led by the consolidating civil society or later adopted against emerging CSO and NGO influences.

3.1.1 OVERCOMING ABSENCE

During his short reign in power, a critical component of Neto’s tenure in regard to rebuilding the periphery is that of absence. The new government needed to address both social and economic absences in its peripheries: “[B]esides having to face the task of ‘decolonising’ social relations in peasant societies, the post-colonial state had the immense task of ‘putting in motion’ the whole agricultural production of the country.”⁵²⁰ As previously noted, independence and the ensuing civil war provoked the exodus of nearly all of the Portuguese settlers, taking what they could with them, and even sabotaging what they could not.⁵²¹ This led to the complete disarticulation of the rural economy, abandoning the farms that had produced cash crops for export⁵²² and severely hindering the technical and logistical

⁵¹⁷ Sylvia Croese, “Inside the Government, but Outside the Law: Residents’ Committees, Public Authority and Twilight Governance in Post-War Angola”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 41, no. 2, (2015): 407.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 408.

⁵¹⁹ Manuel Ferreira, “Nacionalização e confisco do capital português na indústria transformadora de Angola (1975-1990)”, *Análise Social*, 37, no. 162, spring (2002): 50. UNITA and the FNLA were integrated into the transitional government until its collapse in August 1975. Despite the typical references to its ‘nativist’, anti-modern ideological bent, their economic programs were in many respects mirror images of that of the MPLA’s ‘socialist’ economy while also integrating a roadmap for liberalization if needed: “FNLA and UNITA declared against nationalization and relied on flying private enterprise and foreign investment to set up the post-colonial economy, and it seems, to solve the crisis. Still, both had nationalization goals into their programmes, an example of nationalist movements rhetoric” (Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 91).

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁵²¹ Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 7.

⁵²² 70% of the crops cultivated were coffee, cotton and sisal (Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 238).

know-how required to pursue its continuation. Under the constant pressure of war, this dismantling created the need to finance foodstuffs, organize a distribution network for goods and services, and rebuild the institutions left idle or crumbling in the wake of independence.

Across the board, deterioration reigned and massive structural difficulties loomed large: Among the most pressing issues was the relationship of the rural communities to the newly-established state in a post-colonial society still devoid of formed notions of a 'nation', defined as "a historical process of crystallization of an identity, rooted in the pre-existence of common social relationships".⁵²³ The widespread weakened links to social commonalities were in large part a result of the geographic marginalization of wide swaths of the country. The political system tasked with taking on these enormous issues was an adopted approach based on a colonial authoritarian heritage mixed within a 'socialist' bureaucracy and run by stalled institutions nation-wide.⁵²⁴ With this system, the MPLA would have to start anew with little to no time for preparation.

3.1.2 FEEDING A HUNGRY NATION

Following Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the first focus for any potential power besides securing its sovereign borders is procuring the basic physiological needs required to achieve stability and prolong one's rule. Achieving food security was a question of national security, front and center among policy goals as the difficulties facing the young country mounted. By August 1976 over 80% of the colonial era plantations were abandoned,⁵²⁵ yet the administration's focus was immediately distracted as South African troops began intruding across the southern border as soon as October 1975.⁵²⁶ Feeding a hungry nation became a top priority to gain legitimacy in the eyes of its people as well as to secure the energy necessary to overcome both foreign invasion and domestic turmoil. Given the extreme social turbulence, however, national food production plummeted.

⁵²³ Michel Cahen, "Anticolonialism & Nationalism: Deconstructing Synonymy, Investigating Historical Processes: Notes on the Heterogeneity of Former African Colonial Portuguese Areas", in *Sure Road? Nations and Nationalisms in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique*, (ed), Éric Morier-Genoud, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012), 17.

⁵²⁴ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 155.

⁵²⁵ Vidal & Andrade, *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento*, 13.

⁵²⁶ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 352.

By 1979 “the agricultural production in the commercial sector controlled by the state satisfied only 12% of consumption needs and around 15% of the raw resources necessary for industry, with obvious effects on the inflation in the emerging parallel markets”.⁵²⁷ With the dwindling food stocks reaching critical levels, a National Supply Committee was established ranging across ministries and supported by Cuban advisors.⁵²⁸ The MPLA resorted to food imports out of necessity⁵²⁹ to keep the population fed and faithful to the cause. As oil sales fueled the importation of foodstuffs to feed the cities, these imports effectively replaced agricultural production.⁵³⁰ Given that peasant communities have historically been self-reliant on subsistence agriculture to meet their food needs, the rural and peri-urban communities were significantly less dependent on the availability of food aid. Imports were therefore designed “to meet urban demand, the needs of the armed forces, and the displaced”.⁵³¹ Providing aid would require a coordinated network of actors and institutions, especially with the strong nationalistic fervor of the new government not wanting to become dependent on foreign entities. The weak transitional government would need a foundational structure in order to achieve the monumental task of not only feeding its population, but running a nascent country. Outside of urban enclaves, the institutionalization of the new Angolan state and the expansion of its authority could be measured alongside the tire tracks of food distribution networks.

3.1.3 REBUILDING FOUNDATIONS: INFRASTRUCTURE, DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS

The distribution and logistics networks for the production of agricultural goods were heavily degraded after independence: “It is estimated that Angola lost by destruction or smuggling 75% of its stock of trucks, which was about 27,000 vehicles”.⁵³² The totality of

⁵²⁷ Vidal & Andrade, *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento*, 22.

⁵²⁸ Jonuel Gonçalves, “The economy of Angola: From independence to the 2008 worldwide crisis”, *Revista Tempo do Mundo*, 2, no. 3, (2010): 76.

⁵²⁹ Bhagavan, M. R., *Angola’s Political Economy*, 24-26.

⁵³⁰ Messiant, “Angola, les voies”, 176.

⁵³¹ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory review (in two volumes) Volume II*, Report n° 7283-ANG, 26 June 1989, 236.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 193

vehicles in 1988 comprised an estimation of “30,000 non-military trucks and 400 buses, 40 locomotives, 11 long distance ships, 10 cabotage vessels, and 21 aircraft...”.⁵³³ The transportation network was in equally dire straits, making the transportation of goods within the countryside prohibitively expensive as trucks carrying food and goods to and from markets and producers came under constant attack by rebel fighters, broke down due to degrading road quality, lacked mechanical services outside of cities, and faced increasing vehicle operating costs as the accumulation of the expenses were passed on to the consumers’ purchasing the transported goods.⁵³⁴ The government attempted to set strict price controls across the board, but economic realities came to bear: “Tariffs in the public sector have not changed since Independence, but few vehicles are available at these prices and their route structure is limited. Private sector vehicles are more numerous (though older in age) and owners base their prices on real resource costs”.⁵³⁵ Both the public and private sector struggled to overcome these heavy burdens.

While the rural infrastructure was left incapacitated by the war, the fierce fighting in the cities left the urban areas similarly devastated after the fighting: “Large cities such as Huambo and Kuito had practically been obliterated. 98 per cent of bridges (amounting to more than 300) were destroyed, as were 80 per cent of factories, 60 per cent of hospitals, 80 per cent of schools and most of the country’s roads”.⁵³⁶ As the war ended “more than 70 percent of the country’s road network was in an advanced state of deterioration. National road density is only 29 km per 1,000 km² and only about 17 percent of classified and urban roads are paved”.⁵³⁷ Despite enormous investment in infrastructure since the end of the civil war, the situation today remains stark wherein “only 20 percent of Angola’s 76,000 kilometers of roads are paved and less than one-third⁵³⁸ of the population has access to electricity”.⁵³⁹ The massive spending in rebuilding the national transportation network⁵⁴⁰ has however provided Angolans their first opportunity to criss-cross their territory and has

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁵³⁴ World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory Economic Review*. Washington D.C., 1991, 263-264. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/589291468768542766/pdf/multi-page.pdf>.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁵³⁶ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 58.

⁵³⁷ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 24.

⁵³⁸ Among the rural population, only 8% has access to electricity (IFC 2019: ix).

⁵³⁹ IFC, *Creating Markets*, ix.

⁵⁴⁰ As Ricardo Soares de Oliveira & Susan Taponier note (“O governo está aqui?”, 174): “The government invested an estimated US\$4.3 billion, or 14% of GDP, every year in ports, railways, roads and power generation.” The period of this unprecedented spending is not clearly laid out, however, and one must assume he means from 2002 until 2011 (the date of the source of the statistics).

undoubtedly helped connect previously marginalized areas of the country. However, given the low population density amid the massive territory, much work remains.

The World Bank ranked the country 156 out of 190 in electricity access⁵⁴¹ as increased capacity has not translated to improved distribution. Inefficiencies in the sector, including under-pricing, improper distribution and lost collection ratios have added up hidden costs equivalent to 400 percent of the entire sector's revenue, "four to eight times higher than in countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique".⁵⁴² Further, these hidden costs leave businesses and households alike dependent on costly generators, increasing the costs of production and spending their scarce private resources on basic services instead of investing in growth.

Besides physical difficulties, serious bureaucratic hurdles were added to the burden of transporting farm products. In 1977, any truck driver carrying agricultural goods had to acquire an "interprovincial travel permit" acquired through the Ministry of Internal Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture. Not possessing this specialized permit was deemed by authorities as "economic sabotage" and warranted serious sanctions, including prison time, until its repeal in 1982.⁵⁴³ Similar restrictions existed for the cattle sector whereas "private cattle ranchers could not sell, transport or abate cattle" without a specific permit from the Ministry of Planning. Failure to possess the permit would lead to the confiscation of the animals or meat.⁵⁴⁴ The heavily regulated permit system was established to ensure that the government controlled the pricing, sales, and distribution of all foodstuffs amid internal fears of black market trading⁵⁴⁵ that would undermine the ideals of the socialist revolution. The final selling point of the regulated goods was in equally heavily regulated state-owned shops (*lojas*), "which sell severely restricted amounts of basic foodstuffs at low controlled prices".⁵⁴⁶ The little surplus production that subsistence farmers were able to produce was sold to

⁵⁴¹ World Bank, *Doing Business in 2020: Economy Profile Angola*. Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies, Washington D.C., 2020, 4. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/825201574747808904/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies-Economy-Profile-of-Angola.pdf>.

⁵⁴² Søren Kirk Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure Ambitions Through Booms and Busts*, Africa Programme, London, Chatham House, Sept. 2018, 11. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-09-14-angola-infrastructure-ambitions-kirk-jensen.pdf>.

⁵⁴³ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 224.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴⁵ For an example of the differences in prices of goods sold through PEs and the parallel market, see: Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 62.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

private traders with their own logistical and transportation capacity, selling the goods on the parallel market in peri-urban and urban areas at highly inflated prices due to the lack of supply and significant demand. Feeding the parallel market, both literally and figuratively, drew the ire of government officials to those subsistence farmers seen as undermining the ‘socialist’ project underway across the country.

In many aspects this highly complex regulation strategy was the government’s substitute system to that of the aforementioned colonial-era bush traders ‘*os comerciantes do mato*’⁵⁴⁷ as well as the Portuguese ‘*muceque*’ merchants who dominated “almost all the distribution of staples and other essential commodities” in the African residential areas.⁵⁴⁸ The accumulative effect of these absences, compounded with bureaucratic restrictions, led to the disarticulation of the rural trading system and its commercial production.⁵⁴⁹ Furthermore, “agencies also established restrictions on the timing of marketing and movement of goods, the latter strongly damaging the intensity of exchanges between towns and peasant societies.”⁵⁵⁰ This led to structural bottlenecks within the distribution network, which ultimately “failed on three levels - production, transport and retail”.⁵⁵¹ The unstable prices, the dearth of equipment and competent officials, as well as the inevitable inefficiencies created by rebuilding a new bureaucracy essentially by scratch, seriously impeded the commercialization of those agricultural goods that were still able to be produced, weakening a sector that depends on timing and stability.

3.1.4 THE STATE TAKEOVER OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

The institutional framework of the new state began to take concrete form after the resolution on economic policy passed by the Central Committee of the Party in October 1976.⁵⁵² The *ad hoc* system was led through the “National Restructuring Commissions (NRCs)

⁵⁴⁷ See §1.1.3 for a review of their crucial role in the colonial economy.

⁵⁴⁸ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory review*, 189-109.

⁵⁴⁹ Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 1996, 222.

⁵⁵⁰ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 224.

⁵⁵¹ Vidal & Andrade, *Economia Política*, 20.

⁵⁵² M. R. Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects for Socialist Industrialisation*, Research report, no. 57, Uppsala, The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1980, 5. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:274875/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

[...] used from 1976 to 1977 by the Ministry of Industry to manage abandoned firms”.⁵⁵³ The Law of State Intervention (law n° 17 of 1977) led the government to begin setting up the nationalized state enterprises, referred to in this study as either State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) or Public Enterprises (PEs) depending on the terminology used by the source, allowing for the nationalization and confiscation of private property including “banks, insurance companies, internal transportation and distribution networks, and foreign trade, as well as of all those enterprises (agricultural, industrial, mining and trading) which were abandoned by their former Portuguese owners”.⁵⁵⁴ Many of these takeovers were later formed into monopolistic companies dominant in specific sectors of the economy, representing a feature and not a bug in the ‘socialist’ system: “As monopolies were seen as an expression of socialism and also legitimated the exercise of economic power by state bureaucracies, some PEs were granted a monopoly *de jure*”.⁵⁵⁵ The principal public companies involved in the rural economy follow below.

⁵⁵³ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 169.

⁵⁵⁴ Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects*, 18.

⁵⁵⁵ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 178.

Tableau 10 - Principle public companies involved in rural economy

Name	Year established/nationalized	Mandate
CADA (Angolan Agricultural Company/ <i>Companhia Angolana de Agricultura</i>)	Nationalized in June 1976	Based in Cuanza Sul, was the biggest coffee producer in colonial Angola with 18 plantations.
Companhia do Açúcar de Angola (Angolan Sugar Company)	Nationalized in May 1976	Focused on the production of sugar.
COTONANG (General Company of Angolan Cotton/ <i>Companhia Geral dos Algodões de Angola</i>)	Formed by the <i>Société Générale de Belgique</i> in 1926, nationalized in 1978.	During colonial times, controlled 70% of cotton production without engaging in direct production. Transformed into a state industrial enterprise dedicated to the production of cotton textiles.
DINAMA (National Supplier of Agriculture Inputs)	Closed down through Decree n° 88 of 3 June 2005	Import and distribution of agricultural chemicals (pesticides) and fertilizers
Dinaprope (National Distributor of Livestock/ <i>Distribuição Nacional de Produtos Pecuários</i>)	Established through decree n° 100 of 1978	Initially charged with controlling the marketing of different food products, later specialized in meat-based products; vegetables were later left to Frescangol (1986).
EMPA (Public Product Supply Company/ <i>Empresa Pública de Abastecimento</i>)	Established in 1975, closed in 1977.	Monopolized the marketing of various consumer goods in wholesale and retail, prohibiting their sale by producers themselves. Closed in 1977 after being accused of mismanagement, speculation, sabotage, corruption and embezzlement of goods.
ENCODIPA (National Distribution Company for Agricultural Products/ <i>Empresa Nacional de Comercialização e Distribuição de Produtos Agrícolas</i>)	Established through decree n° 105 of 1978; moved from MINAGRI to Ministry of Internal Trade through decree n° 15 of 1982	The central marketing agency for agricultural produce in charge of commercializing and distributing consumable goods to rural areas in exchange for agricultural products.
Mecanang	Established in 1981	State trade organization set up to import agricultural and construction machinery, tools and spare parts.
Sociedade Agrícola de Cassequel	Created in 1927 under a British-Portuguese venture. Nationalized in 1976.	Based in Catambela (Benguela province). Alongside the Portuguese <i>Companhia de Açúcar de Angola</i> , they together assured 90% of the national sugar production.
Sociedade Açucareira do Bom Jesus	Nationalized May 1976	Focused on the sugar industry.
Sociedade Angolana de Teçidos	Nationalized May 1976	Focused on the textiles industry.
TEXTANG (Empresa de Tecidos de Angola) is a state industrial enterprise	Nationalized May 1976	Focused on the production of textiles; began partial privatization in mid-2003.

Source: Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects*, 28-29; CRISP “L'enjeu économique”, 8, 15-16; de Grassi, *Provisional Reconstruction: Geo-Histories of Infrastructure and Agrarian Configuration in Malanje, Angola*. PhD Dissertation, Berkeley, University of California, 2015, 264; Hughes, “Economy”, 64; Konczacki, Parpart & Shaw, *The Economic History*, 59; *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 66, 5 June 2005: 1209.

Among the agricultural sector, the principal state-run monopolies included: Ango-Sementes⁵⁵⁶ (seed supplier), Dinama⁵⁵⁷ (Enterprise of Material Supply, providing in-puts and fertilizers), Dinaprope (marketing of food products), Enama⁵⁵⁸ (Enterprise of Agricultural Mechanization), and Encodipa⁵⁵⁹ (National Distribution Company for Agricultural Products). While not directly a part of the rural economy but playing a key role in its substitution, Importang also deserves a mention here. Created in 1976, it monopolized the importation of nearly all of the commercial goods flowing into the country. While it was later divided into specialized units, it maintained a state monopoly on imports until 1990.⁵⁶⁰ While the separate companies were set up to control each node of the rural economy, the difference between theoretical preparedness and the reality on the ground was night and day.

According to Nuno Vidal: “In theory, the entire Agriculture State sector was precisely structured and ready to work in full, but in practice it was an almost absolute failure, be it in administrative or economic terms.”⁵⁶¹ The claim that the sector was “precisely structured” appears to be an exaggeration given that it was in a transitory phase of reconstruction at the time. The status of being “ready to work in full” also clashes with the lack of human, financial, and material resources required as explained in §3.2.3. Nevertheless, the contrast between capacity and production was “an almost absolute failure”. Despite the determined appeal to restoring agricultural production to colonial levels, the lofty policy goals conflicted with the realities of the systemic shortcomings of the sector “given the state of ignorance, fear, blind obedience and total dependency into which they had been conditioned by the

⁵⁵⁶ According to an assessment by the World Bank: “Foreign exchange limitations, the cumbersome process of import approval and problems with transport often delay the arrival of seeds in time for planting” (World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 63. Ango-Sementes was closed in Sept. 2007 via decree n° 587 of 2007 in *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 114, 21 Sept. 2007: 1712.

⁵⁵⁷ According to an assessment by the World Bank: “[E]ven when fertilizer and other inputs are available, transportation is a major constraint. Seventy percent of the transport fleet of DINAMA is out of commission” (World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 63).

⁵⁵⁸ According to an assessment by the World Bank: “In 1986, less than 2% of the work force of ENAMA was classified as technical and more than 70% of its tractor fleet was inoperative due to lack of spare parts and maintenance problems” (*Ibidem*).

⁵⁵⁹ According to an assessment by the World Bank: Operating “under the Ministry of Internal Commerce, is responsible for providing consumer goods to rural areas in exchange for agricultural products...ENCODIPA’s stores in the countryside are almost empty” (*Ibidem*). The goods exchanged with the rural populations included inputs, farming tools and clothing (Norberto Carlos, “O caminho difícil do PAPAGRO”, *Expansão*, Luanda, 25 Nov. 2013. <http://expansao.co.ao/artigo/24053/o-caminho-dificil-do-papagro?seccao=7>).

In 1986, a mere four years after its establishment, the public company was estimated to have run a deficit of around 100 million kwanzas (World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 247).

⁵⁶⁰ Gonçalves, “The economy of Angola”, 79.

⁵⁶¹ Nuno Vidal, *Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa: the Genesis and Development of the Angolan Political System, 1961-1987*, PhD dissertation, King’s College, London, University of London, 2002, 204.

settlers and the colonial regime”.⁵⁶² Furthermore, the few resources conjured up for the sector were hardly destined for the peasants themselves.⁵⁶³

The mismanagement of the monopolistic public enterprises had serious negative impacts in supplying the inputs needed for the economy to run, becoming “often incapable of achieving the purchases or the resale to domestic customers” as well as creating competition between the public enterprises themselves, while “some PEs, instead of satisfying needs, were actually watching potential competitors, including PEs, which they even prevented from supplying goods or services covered by their monopolies”.⁵⁶⁴ This seemingly petty competition is in reality a revealing glimpse of the emergence of the clientelist and patrimonial methods that would come to dominate the MPLA’s governing model. Inefficiencies, mismanagement, lack of technical expertise, and even in some cases sabotage all plagued the public sector. Add to these fundamental difficulties the omnipresent instability of the war and foreign invasion by South African forces across the southern border,⁵⁶⁵ the culmination of the nascent institutional structures set up to revamp the rural economy back to its 1973 glory days were entirely unprepared for the task.

The nationalization process was deemed a priority to get the economy back on track, but the speed of the takeover was debatable. M R. Bhagavan’s study on the ‘socialist’ economy published in 1980 found that by mid 1977 “more than 85 per cent of the enterprises were under state control”.⁵⁶⁶ This statistic was sourced to a communication by historian Basil Davidson given in 1977. However, a UNDP and World Bank review of the national economy nine years later found that the implementation process was slowed given the “severe technical, human resource, and administrative deficiencies”.⁵⁶⁷ Furthermore, a 1991 report from the World Bank goes on to meticulously note⁵⁶⁸ that in 1980, the first year that State-

⁵⁶² Bhagavan, *Angola’s Political Economy*, 19.

⁵⁶³ Messiant, “Angola, les voies”, 176.

⁵⁶⁴ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 178-179.

⁵⁶⁵ Along the southern border provinces of Namibe, Cunene, and Cuando Cubango “the state was entirely absent” (Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 171).

⁵⁶⁶ Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects*, 19.

⁵⁶⁷ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory review*, 222.

⁵⁶⁸ Solival Menezes’s book *Mamma Angola: sociedade e economia de um país nascente* (2000) interestingly notes this same information from the previously referenced UNDP/World Bank 1991 report with a literal word for word translation from English to Portuguese, without citing the source. See: Solival Silva e Menezes, *Mamma Angola: sociedade e economia de um país nascente*, (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade São Paulo, 2000), 262-263, 267. In his thesis, the author cites the statistics sourced to Angola’s Ministry of Industry. According to this source, in April 1984 there were 65 public and 14 private enterprises (79 total) in the agricultural sector alone (Solival Silva e Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição de uma Economia Dependente Colonial para Economia Centralmente Planejada e sua*

owned enterprises were recorded, only 41 out of 1,900 registered companies had been converted into SOEs (around 2%), though as of 1984 that number rose to 401 as the total number of registered companies lowered to 687 (representing approximately 60%) due to liquidations, mergers and consolidations, with 19 enterprises listed as PPP ventures.⁵⁶⁹ Given the overall realities of absence and bureaucratic weakness previously described, the 1991 World Bank study appears much more plausible, especially considering the time perspective of publishing in 1991 rather than 1980 when the transformations were in full swing.

3.1.5 'MARXISM-LENINISM' AND THE IDOLIZATION OF THE PEASANTRY

This nationalization process of the country's resources post-independence gave omnipresent power to the governing party, which was now in charge of remaking the entire political economy in its image with little, if any, opposition: "The motivations for this vast enterprise, which has been compared with the Portuguese 'effective occupation' a century ago, were the party-state's own, i.e., consolidating its hegemony through territorial occupation, the cooptation of local elites and the subjection of the majority".⁵⁷⁰ Critically aware of the marginalization of the rural populations after the war for independence and the disappearance of the aforementioned economic actors, President Neto saw the development of the country's existing farmers as one of his government's central roles and policy objectives to restart the national economy with the rural economy playing a key role.

The policy of nationalizations had a profound effect on the agricultural sector, one of the few areas that had been invested in and considerably developed during the colonial period, especially considering the huge majority of the population linked to the sector.

Inflexão Recente para Económica de Mercado. PhD dissertation, São Paulo, Universidade de São Paulo, 1996, 258-259, 391).

⁵⁶⁹ World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 22-23, 25.

⁵⁷⁰ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 173.

Tableau 11 - Rural labor composition (1973)

	Total population (%)
Rural population	84
Rural population as % of total labor force	80
% of total labor force as subsistence peasants	72
% of farm wage labor hired by Portuguese	8

Source: Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 10.

Confronting these challenges, the new government attempted to rebuild its rural economy upon the colonial-era industrial infrastructure, wherein “the structuring of the State industrial sector through confiscations, nationalizations and the creation of Groups of Production Units⁵⁷¹ marked the beginnings of the First Republic”.⁵⁷² Within the rural economy, a number of companies were created or nationalized in order to centralize the productive means into carefully managed and supervised channels. The organization of the rural economy followed the centralizing social and productive forces through the ideals of ‘Marxism-Leninism’, upholding the farmer as an idealized symbol of the hardworking masses. This idolization is featured prominently on the national flag adopted upon independence, symbolized prominently by the principal tool of the peasantry, the machete, in effect sharpening the gears of the imminent industrialization of the country.

The strategy was two-fold: (1) nationalize and reactivate the colonial-era farms and (2) organize peasants into associations and cooperatives, all overseen and directed by the government. The MPLA’s desires for a state-led centralized agricultural system would have to be nearly completely rebuilt, but its strategy would be based on its colonial heritage. Nationalizing the colonial farms permitted the party to keep key productive resources under its strict control, while the associative and cooperative movements gave the government oversight and control over the country’s most productive rural economic actors. Measures of total control of the rural economy, notably its productive economic agents, were the order of the day.

⁵⁷¹ In Portuguese: *Agrupamentos de Unidades de Produção*.

⁵⁷² Pain, “As características”, 184.

Apart from building the institutional framework of the state to provide for the rural economy, Agostinho Neto sought to centralize the rural productive forces by promoting cooperative and associative practices in the countryside, making a national appeal for their creation. In this vein, “farming cooperativism became the main objective of agricultural policy, involving a growing administrative and governmental control at all levels: prices, quantities, investments, commercialization, distribution, exportation and importation”.⁵⁷³ This appeal represented an enormous challenge before the new government as it attempted to organize social and economic forces across massive peripheral spaces they had little contact with and direct knowledge of, aimed at mobilizing the large majority of the national population. During Neto’s time in power, the country was approximately 80-85% rural. The civil war eventually reduced this number considerably, especially in the 1990s with its intensification. Between 1990 and 2000, nearly a quarter of the country fled to urbanized areas.

Tableau 12 - Evolution of rural population as percentage of total (1950-2020)

Year	Rural Population (%)
1950	94%
1960	89%
1970	85%
1980	76%
1990	63%
2000	40%
2010	34%
2020	33.2%

Source: Maliana Serrano, *Strengthening institutions or institutionalizing weaknesses? Interactions between aid and local institutions in Huíla Province, Angola*. PhD dissertation, Wageningen, Wageningen University, 2012, 115; CIA Factbook (2020).

In a first attempt to transform the disparate actors of the rural economy into organized blocs, Neto’s transitional government first created the *Comissão de Apoio e Dinamização de Cooperativas* (CADCO, Commission on Support and Dynamism of Cooperatives)⁵⁷⁴ in August 1975 in order to provide official support for the creation of cooperatives. This commission only lasted a matter of months due to mismanagement, but its pioneering work would be the first of many ill-conceived attempts at institution-building

⁵⁷³ Vidal & Andrade, *Economia Política*, 18-19.

⁵⁷⁴ For information on the evolutions of CADCO, DNACA and UNACA, see: Rodrigo de Souza Pain, “As características”, 191-194.

with the goal of stimulating cooperative and associative practices among rural workers.⁵⁷⁵ Despite the major social and economic structural weaknesses the government faced, “the farming co-operatives movement is an area where the efforts of some of the best, at least in terms of commitment, cadres of MPLA, the post-colonial state and churches were concentrated”.⁵⁷⁶ Attempting to fix the structural failings of CADCO, the Ministry of Agriculture created in 1979 the *Direcção Nacional de Cooperativização Agrícola e Apoio aos Camponeses Individuais* (DNACA, National Direction for Agricultural Cooperatives and Support of the Peasantry),⁵⁷⁷ which in turn created the *Estações de Desenvolvimento Agrícola* (EDA, Agricultural Development Stations) in the mid 1980s⁵⁷⁸ to create a link between the state companies and the peasant associations and cooperatives. Through its nationwide network, EDAs were mandated with the coordination and promotion of smallholder farmers.⁵⁷⁹ Their actions would increase and decrease alongside its limited allocated resources.

To further strengthen the cooperative sector, in 1980 the government created the *União Nacional dos Camponeses Angolanos* (UNACA, Angolan Peasants Association)⁵⁸⁰, originally set up in the provinces of Malanje, Cuanza Sul, Uíge, and Huíla, though its actions remained mere paper exercises in each area outside of Uíge.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁵ Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 11.

⁵⁷⁶ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 250.

⁵⁷⁷ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 99, Luanda, 26 April 1979: 233.

⁵⁷⁸ World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 64.

⁵⁷⁹ IFAD, *Republic of Angola*, 18.

⁵⁸⁰ Over time, UNACA began to be referred to as the *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola) while maintaining the same acronym.

⁵⁸¹ Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 14.

Image 5 - Original statute of UNACA [1980]



Source: Development Workshop library, Luanda.

In 1986 the *Comissão Nacional de Apoio à Cooperativização* (CNAC, National Commission for Cooperative Support) was established to better coordinate UNACA's actions and delineate a clearer policy of support to the country's cooperatives in order to strengthen their organization and consolidation, which "aimed for a wider participation of peasants in political and economic activities".⁵⁸² Purportedly the main vehicle of the MPLA's influence for organizing rural economic activity, UNACA's impact is debatable. Besides trumpeting raw numbers of adherents and organizations, concrete numbers of production and investments remain elusive to track down. UNACA's origins are notably important in the history of the government's attempt to dominate and control the productive agents of the rural economy given that in studying Angola "the historical genesis of institutions is key to making sense of their subsequent trajectory. Once established, institutions gain a life of their own and are extremely difficult to bypass".⁵⁸³ The fact that so many administrative hurdles were deployed in my attempts to research UNACA could be interpreted as a 'business-as-usual' stonewalling of an administration opposed to transparency. Moreover, it is interpreted as a sign that the trail of information being sought falls under the umbrella of opacity that

⁵⁸² Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 20-21. In my interview in the main office of the president of UNACA, Albano da Silva Lussati, he went over the history of the founding and evolution of UNACA. In doing so, he claimed that the CNAC also had commissions at the provincial level (*Comissão Provincial de Apoio à Cooperativização* - CPAC) and the *município* level (*Comissão Municipal de Apoio à Cooperativização* - CMAC), though I have been unable to verify this. It is also important to note that he made a point to proclaim that he was the first UNACA president to have actually come from the agricultural sector, having professional experience, rather than a purely political appointee. (Personal interview, 14 July 2017, Luanda).

⁵⁸³ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 47.

characterizes much of Angola's government in the areas that it specifically wants to keep shielded from scrutiny.

The first statistics of independent Angola's agricultural production began to be compiled in 1977, propelled by Law 17 of 1977,⁵⁸⁴ though the numbers should be regarded with skepticism given the overall chaotic environment they began to be compiled and the lack of technical expertise in amassing the data. The data describes domestic production sold through official government channels in officially designated shops. It is unclear if cooperative production is included here. Any products sold in the parallel private market are not included, so unless the government had a working network to purchase and transport foodstuffs produced by peasant associations and cooperatives, it is likely much of that production would not be included here. Given that this type of systematic network still does not exist today, it is doubtful it would have been well established in the late 1970s.

Tableau 13 - Evolution in production of select crops for domestic consumption

Crops	1977			1979			1981		
	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%	Planned	Actual	%
Wheat	5,600	3,450	61	11,590	1,261	10	t.n.s. ^a	210	--
Rice	3,640	3,410	93	14,360	2,075	14	9,738	1,242	12
Mandioca	120,000	1,141	.01	51,900	7,502	14	35,706	19,027	53
Cotton	6,000	1,423	23	21,320	1,633	7	10,470	1,046	10
Coffee	80,000	68,350	85	30,000	18,704	62	63,807	23,877	37
Maize	50,500	36,788	73	161,660	19,692	12	92,078	23,649	25
Beans	6,700	1,002	15	17,140	868	5	4,419	1,069	24

^a t.n.s. = target not set. Percentages are mine.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, as cited in Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 61.

Given however that nearly two-thirds of farmers participated in the subsistence economy, this production was not included into the initial production statistics given that this segment of farmers had practically no contact with the market either to sell their own goods or acquire the goods and services that they needed (Menezes 1996: 274).⁵⁸⁵

Overall, farmers could be organized on two levels: on an affiliation level between subsistence farmers and cooperative/association members (commercial farming being essentially nil) and between farming methods and size, divided into three different categories:

⁵⁸⁴ Pain, "As características", 187.

⁵⁸⁵ Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 274.

the traditional peasantry, smallholders,⁵⁸⁶ and medium-sized farmers. While the notion of ‘family agriculture’ often comes up in reference to cases of developing countries such as Angola, its practice has a variety of characteristics. Oftentimes correlated with subsistence production in the traditional typology, family agriculture can also be categorized in the smallholder or medium-sized categories and can include both formal and informal employment of family members but also non-family members.⁵⁸⁷

Tableau 14 - Farmer Typology and Practices

Traditional Peasantry	Smallholder	Medium-size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsistence production • No technology • Manual tools • Ungraded seeds • Family labor • Need assistance • Very low productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little surplus production • Sparse use of technology • Manual tools & animal traction • Graded or ungraded seed • Low productivity • May use additional inputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces surplus • Use of different technologies • Use of animal traction & simple mechanization • Adequate planting density & productivity • Family & paid labor • Uses additional inputs

Source: NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume I of VI National Medium Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)*, TCP/ANG/2908 (I), Dec. 2005, 8. <http://www.fao.org/3/ae583e/ae583e00.pdf>.

The typology identified by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) study has remained mostly static through the years. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development’s (IFAD) latest statistics, the first two typologies comprise 90% of farmers, though they also point out the difference in smallholders between the approximately 50% that are “food insecure” and the others that are strategically well-placed in rain-fed or irrigated areas capable of producing potential surpluses in diversified crops.⁵⁸⁸ In 1989, based on self-sufficiency and lack of commercial production, on average a “typical peasant family cultivates 1.5 to 2.5 ha with subsistence crops”.⁵⁸⁹ Today, the 90% of smallholders in the agricultural sector still cultivate less than two hectares of land on

⁵⁸⁶ Coelho identifies another level for the smallholders between “permanent and non-permanent working class” in their purely economic role, while they become ‘agrarians’ “characterized as a rural and trading ‘petty-bourgeoisie’” when their ideological components were activated (Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 95-97).

⁵⁸⁷ Garcia Neves Quitari, “Agricultura familiar em Angola: as armadilhas conceituais da classificação dicotômica”, *Mulemba: Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais*, 5, no. 10, (2015): 233-260.

⁵⁸⁸ IFAD, *Republic of Angola*, 33.

⁵⁸⁹ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory review*, 235.

average.⁵⁹⁰ The principal means of socially organizing these rural economic actors was within the associative and cooperative framework.

Back in 1989, the *Direção Nacional de Organização da Produção* (DNOP, National Direction of the Organization of Production), under the guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture, produced the first rough statistics on the state of the organization of cooperatives in twelve of the eighteen provinces as formed upon independence.

Tableau 15 - Situation of rural cooperative organization per province in 1977

Province	Grade 1		Grade 2		Total	
	Nº	Participants	Nº	Participants	Nº	Participants
Bengo	N/A ^a	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Benguela	15	1,136	N/A	N/A	15	1,136
Bié	13	42,115	5	--	18	42,115
Cabinda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cunene	9	713	--	--	9	713
Huambo	52	9,860	10	2,535	62	12,395
Huíla	136	15,164	--	--	136	15,164
Kuando	12	827	--	--	12	827
Kubango						
Kwanza	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Norte						
Kwanza Sul	158	15,717	31	2,480	189	15,197
Luanda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lunda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Norte						
Lunda Sul	3	--	10	--	13	--
Malanje	43	4,385	35	2,340	78	6,725
Moxico	31	--	3	--	34	--
Namibe	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Uíge	78	9,516	15	1,858	93	11,374
Zaire	9	1,500	--	--	9	1,500
TOTAL	559	58,819	109	9,213	668	68,032

^a N/A signifies “not available” as the province was not included in the study. “--” signifies that data were unavailable despite the province being included in the study.

Source: Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 13,18.

Cooperatives were first classified into two different grades. According to Morais and Pacheco,⁵⁹¹ grade one (1) was composed of cooperatives or peasant associations based on organizing services and inputs among each other while grade two (2) was composed of

⁵⁹⁰ IFAD, *Republic of Angola*, 33.

⁵⁹¹ Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 11-12.

cooperatives that collectively worked farms and plantations abandoned by the European colonizers under a Soviet-inspired *kolkhoze* system. The category of ‘peasant associations’ is described as being “agglomerations of peasant households making their own production decisions. Their presumed advantage is priority to government services and inputs”.⁵⁹² Peasant associations act differently from cooperatives in that they do not work or produce collectively.

The various agencies and entities tasked with providing assistance to these peasant organizations were unprepared and understaffed, bureaucratically overburdened, and heavily centralized through the Ministry of Agriculture. In its modern-day form, UNACA remains the main government arm of the cooperative and associative movement, claiming to assist 8,662 associations and 2,115 cooperatives, comprising nearly one million members⁵⁹³. However, the percentage of these organizations that are active and their productive capacity is unknown. Furthermore, UNACA is clearly associated with the MPLA, despite article three of its charter declaring it administratively and financially “autonomous”.⁵⁹⁴ Adherence to UNACA has been historically perceived by some peasants as an implicit support to the party, and vice versa. Shortly after independence “peasants even identified the ‘co-operative’ as a state organ where they should work if they wanted the support they needed so badly, and sometimes they ‘created’ the ‘co-operative’ or collective land with these goals”.⁵⁹⁵ Similarly, refusing to adhere to UNACA could be seen as an implicit rebuke to the MPLA itself.⁵⁹⁶ These suspicions cast on those not willingly aligning themselves to the government appear to extend from the roots of the seed firmly planted during the Neto administration.

⁵⁹² World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 61.

⁵⁹³ According to the *Organização Cooperativista dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (The Cooperativist Organization of Portuguese-Speaking Countries) website: <https://www.portolocplp.org/organizacoes/unaca> (accessed 21 Nov. 2019).

⁵⁹⁴ Angola, *Estatuto da União Nacional dos Camponeses Angolanos (UNACA) Ante-Projecto*, Luanda, [n.d.], 1.

The giant picture of then-President José Eduardo dos Santos looking down on the room behind the desk of the President of UNACA made the notion of political “autonomy” hard to believe. Instead, it represented an overbearing physical embodiment of the institution moving from nominal autonomy to “taking a life of its own” as quoted by Ricardo Soares de Oliveira.

⁵⁹⁵ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 252.

⁵⁹⁶ Personal interview with agronomist and NGO worker, 4 Aug. 2017, Lubango. The interviewee asked to remain anonymous for fear of retribution and to speak candidly.

3.1.6 SOWING SEEDS OF MISTRUST

One of the main reasons that Neto's administration failed in providing significant material or financial support directly to these rural organizations, beyond the difficult socio-economic context, was a seed of distrust of his people. The mistrust was fomented by the intervening assistance of his Soviet allies who had come to assist⁵⁹⁷ in setting up their centralized agricultural farming models, known as *kolkhozy*⁵⁹⁸ and *sovkhozy*. The vice chairman of the Bulgarian Political Bureau, Peko Takov, visited Angola and met with President Agostinho Neto in June 1978 to deepen bilateral relations and witness the progress in the Bulgarian-Angolan commission, particularly in the sector of agriculture.⁵⁹⁹ The partnership looked to promote "the development of a large state-owned sector of the economy and a cooperative form of agriculture, while preserving at the same time the petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie in towns and villages".⁶⁰⁰ One year previous Angola had approved the Economic and Scientific-Technical Agreement between the two countries via decree n° 70 of September 1977.⁶⁰¹ Evidence of the ideas founding the cooperation agreement in the agricultural sector is found in the document dug up in the archives of ADRA in Luanda.

⁵⁹⁷ The Vietnamese also sent six technicians, specialists in rice cultivation, to help in developing the agricultural sector. See: United States, *Translations on Sub-Saharan Africa, Issues 1968-1977*, Arlington, Joint Publications Research Service, 1978, 31. https://books.google.fr/books?id=AFpEAQAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbbs_ge_summary_r&ad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

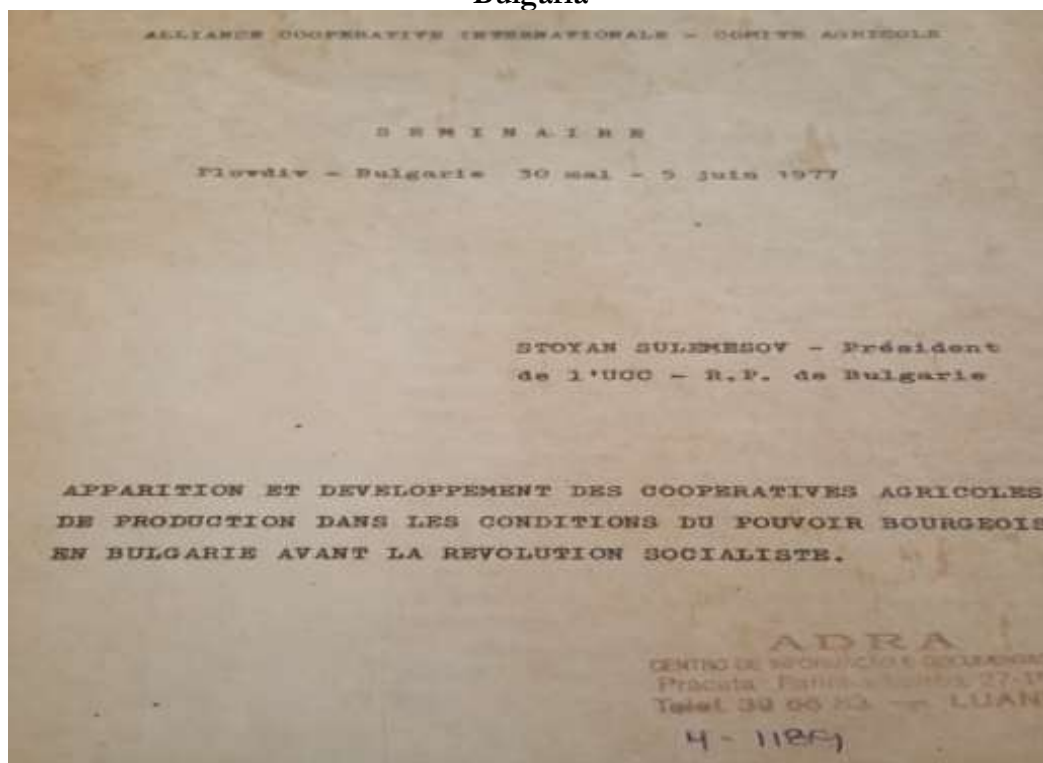
⁵⁹⁸ Soviet Union *kolkhozy*-style collective production remains an important topic in debate even today, as demonstrated by the TV channel Arte's recent documentary *Goulag, une histoire soviétique* by Patrick Rotman, aired on 1 January 2020.

⁵⁹⁹ United States, *Translations*, 31.

⁶⁰⁰ Woodrow Wilson Center, "Policy Statement on the Bulgarian Relations with Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique and PDR of Yemen," 1 October 1978, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 378-B, Record 1, File 488, 2. Obtained By the Bulgarian Cold War Research Group. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113582>.

⁶⁰¹ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 221, Luanda, 17 Sept. 1977: 605.

Image 6 - 1977 seminar on cooperative agriculture in times of socialist revolution in Bulgaria



Source: Personal photograph, ADRA library, Luanda, July 2017.

Neto's original support of the spontaneous formation of these rural organizations seems to have been a point of disagreement between his Soviet assistants:

The cooperative option was initially Angolan, but later, the (Bulgarian) consultants changed it in favor of state farms...For them, the farming cooperatives provoked suspicion by keeping the commercialization process in the hands of the farmers...who would become not only an economic, but also a political force.⁶⁰²

The same Bulgarian advisors who influenced Agostinho Neto to take a stronger stance towards the country's peasants were joined by Cuban advisors "who had experience in running state farms in their own countries" to mount a campaign to revive around "a couple of hundred state farms to produce essential foodstuffs".⁶⁰³ Agostinho Neto later fully embraced this vision for developing the rural economy fully based on state-led organizations.

⁶⁰² Conceição, *Angola: uma política*, 142.

⁶⁰³ Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 39.

The cooperative movement in Angola, while seemingly envisioned, at least nominally, as an organic, populist initiative, was quickly taken over by political interests within the MPLA. Regardless of the influence of the Cuban and Eastern European advisors, the actual autonomy afforded to these rural economic groups by the MPLA is doubtful. We have already seen how the Law on People's Power was in reality a tool to reduce the autonomous spaces of the population and guide them into controlled and supervised groups better aimed at furthering MPLA power and influence. The peasant associative and cooperative movement appears to be the rural version of this strategy. It allowed the urban-based Creole government a means to corral the peasantry into manageable units and place them firmly under state dependence, which provided the elites with a modicum of control in peripheral spaces where their physical presence was limited. All the while, this funneled rural production would aliment the population and the national economy as the MPLA steered the nascent country toward the future.

With rural social and economic organization getting underway, ulterior motives quickly became a political concern for the 'Marxist-Leninist' governance model being put into place. After initially lauding the farmer as an essential actor to the Angolan nation, Neto later expressed his misgivings of their true intentions, revealing his true elitist, authoritarian paternalism in the process as he was once quoted as saying: "The farmer has in himself, a capitalist seed. What is the dream of a farmer? It's to have a big property...to make lots of money. And his profits increase the costs of the workers that he hired. Farmers are exploiters".⁶⁰⁴ Not only was the 'socialist' system a pretext for control over social organization and economic development, it was used as a political system to usurp agency and autonomy from the rural populations. The marginalization of the peasantry from the political arena had been established since the MPLA party's 1977 Congress where peasants represented only 1.9% of the party's official members due to selection criteria that discriminated against them.⁶⁰⁵ The seed of mistrust was further anchored in the party's formation as new recruits hailing from the working class underwent a one year observation period before becoming full-fledged members, while peasants had their interim period

⁶⁰⁴ This discourse assumes that the laborers hired by the owner would have to pay the owner more to work the land as his or her estate grows, a gross misunderstanding of African economic practices at the time, according to Manuel Ferreira, *A indústria em tempo de guerra (Angola 1975-1991)*, (Lisbon: Ed. Cosmos/Instituto de Defesa Nacional, 1999), 24, as cited in Pain, "As características", 190.

⁶⁰⁵ Nuno Vidal, "The genesis and development of the Angolan political and administrative system from 1975 to the present", in *Lusophone Africa: Intersections between social sciences*, Steve Kyle, (Ithaca: Cornell Institute for African Development, 2003), 4-5.

doubled to two years.⁶⁰⁶ The social hierarchy of the new Angola was established from the beginning, with a clear favoritism towards urban bias. The rural workers were being positioned as mere cogs in the economic machine.

The agricultural sector would need to reestablish a complex network of economic actors if it were to be revived. Yet Neto's questioning of the peasants' motives took the sector's main economic actors and laid the foundations of their relegation to secondary status in future policy-making decisions, tying the success or failure of the rural economy directly to the MPLA and its capacity to govern and develop its peripheral spaces. Despite the supposedly 'socialist' nature of empowering the workers, the MPLA's authoritarian tendencies transformed the economy into an immense hierarchy where decision-making was progressively concentrated in the higher levels of the political system.⁶⁰⁷ This position of executive dominance set the course for the MPLA's future neglect and the legitimate question of legitimacy that continue to follow the party until today.

Neto appears to have placed rural peasants into a different category than the investment class, suspecting them above all other economic agents of harboring not just desires of personal wealth but also that this wealth would then be used to exploit their fellow workers. In a closed regime where the power of resource distribution is closely guarded and where resource ownership is directly linked to the practice of wielding political influence, by becoming potential job creators farmers could then theoretically transform their growing economic clout into political power in a geographic space where the urban-based MPLA's political influence had yet to be firmly established. That this mentality reigned in the country's peripheral spaces reveals the MPLA's acknowledgement of their lack of authority and control as opposed to urbanized areas where their presence was more solidified, setting a precedence for mutual mistrust across the countryside.

Autonomous capital accumulation and social organizing represented an unacceptable political risk, particularly with the civil war breaking out, unleashing political forces that resigned the rural populations to a position of exclusion politically, socially, economically, institutionally, and even symbolically.⁶⁰⁸ The urban/rural divide of the conflict, with UNITA's strongholds spread throughout the countryside, represented a major obstacle to

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁰⁷ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 199.

⁶⁰⁸ Pain, "As características", 186.

implementing any coherent rural policies. The death of President Agostinho Neto on 10 September 1979 led to the takeover of José Eduardo dos Santos who would remain in power until 26 September 2017. He would inherit this legacy of absence, mistrust, urban bias, and a dilapidated party-state fighting for survival.

3.2 José Eduardo dos Santos' administration amid civil war

Working out of the capital Luanda, both Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos eventually moved from loosely held dogmatic beliefs to pragmatic positions, focusing their attention on the war and maintaining semblances of stability among the populations of their rapidly growing urban strongholds during the costly civil war.⁶⁰⁹ As Ferreira notes: “Impressive resources were taken from the budget to finance the war: officially, more than a quarter in the second half of the 1970’s and sometimes more than 40 percent in the 1980’s. This amounted to 14 percent of GDP in 1978, 28 percent in 1986, and 20 percent in the early 1990’s.”⁶¹⁰ As the civil war heated up, priorities were given to the war front to the detriment of other sectors.

As soon as 1985, oil was officially recognized as the main source of financing for the country and therefore became the focus and priority of the government.⁶¹¹ Oil profits financed the war machine as it absorbed nearly half of the government’s total expenditure in the late 1980s and further increased with the heightening of hostilities post-1992.⁶¹² In the 1990s alone, the government spent nearly four times the amount on military expenditures as that allocated for the health and education sector combined.⁶¹³ This neglect would grow to become another central feature of MPLA’s governance model more generally, as peacetime spending levels remained inferior to regional averages despite the oil wealth and the established peacetime character. The chart below dismantles the excuses of officials claiming that the civil war was what ultimately impeded the government to properly invest in the

⁶⁰⁹ Philippe Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000”, *African Affairs*, 100, (2001): 58. DOI: 10.1093/afaf/100.398.55.

⁶¹⁰ Manuel Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development, 1961-2002”, *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 1, no. 1, (2006): 26-27.

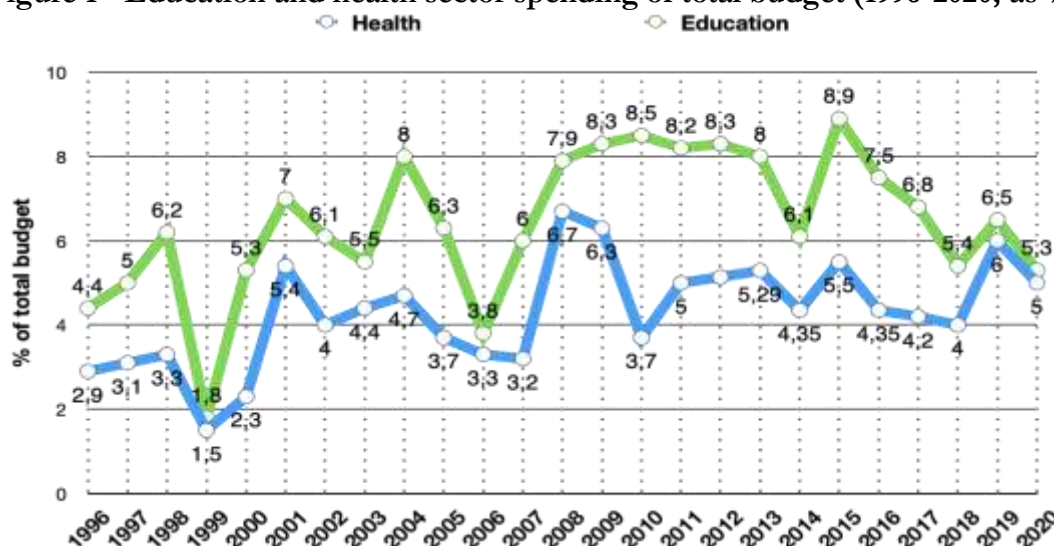
⁶¹¹ Ferreira, “La reconversion économique”, 11.

⁶¹² Hughes, “Economy”, 47.

⁶¹³ Pereira, “The Neglected Tragedy”, 10.

health and education sectors. If that were the case, these sectors would have seen significant increases as a percentage of total national spending. This is clearly not the case, as the health sector never reached more than 7% and education never obtained 9%.

Figure 1 - Education and health sector spending of total budget (1996-2020, as %)



Source: CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola* 2012, 37; *Relatório social de Angola* 2016, 83, 111; Francisco Miguel Paulo, *Quão Importante é Agricultura para o Governo Angolano?*, CEIC-UCAN, Luanda, 2018, 1; Isabel Dala, “ADRA e Unicef constata no OGE baixo investimento para desenvolvimento da criança”, *O País*, Talatona, 2017. <https://opais.co.ao/index.php/2018/01/30/adra-e-unicef-constatam-no-oge-baixo-investimento-para-desenvolvimento-da-crianca/>; UNICEF & ADRA, *Investimento na criança e nas famílias: Análise da proposta de orçamento geral do estado 2019*, Luanda, 2019, 6. <https://www.unicef.org/angola/sites/unicef.org.angola/files/2018-12/Analise%20OGE%202019%20v1.pdf>.

In Garcia Neves Quitari’s research focusing on how to define family agriculture in Angola, he proposes that the decade of the 1980s and 1990s effectively represented a “hiatus” in terms of agricultural development, besides token efforts by ENCODIPA and UNACA for example.⁶¹⁴ This seems appropriate, but the influence of these difficult decades should not be overlooked when attempting to properly analyze policies eventually implemented once the civil war finally ended. The factors for this “hiatus” are two-fold: Firstly, the effects of war destroyed necessary infrastructure, pushing people off their lands and into poverty in a massive dislocation of labor, as well as the destruction of transportation and storage facilities.⁶¹⁵ Secondly, “an equally important contributory factor has been the failure of agricultural policy and government intervention to provide producers with

⁶¹⁴ Quitari, “Agricultura familiar”, 243-244.

⁶¹⁵ Bhagavan, *Angola: Prospects*, 17

adequate incentives and the necessary support services”.⁶¹⁶ We will now take a closer look at how this “hiatus” unfolded.

3.2.1 THE MPLA’S RELUCTANCE TO RECOGNIZE PRIVATE INTERESTS IN RURAL ANGOLA

In 1987, the government approved the *Saneamento Económico e Financeiro* (SEF, Program of Economic and Financial Restructuring), an economic liberalization program formulated under the auspices of the UNDP and the World Bank.⁶¹⁷ This reform was slow to be implemented for various reasons including the political reality that the “reluctance to abandon its ideological dogmas stood in the way of urgent reforms, perceived as necessary even by certain more realistically-inclined segments of the governing party”.⁶¹⁸ Between 1987 and 2000

it is striking in retrospect to see how the reform process has been punctuated by frequent changes in direction, resulting in alternating periods of reform, policy reversal and drift. [...] During this thirteen-year period, there were no less than nine different economic programmes, some lasting barely a year – and in one case only a few weeks.⁶¹⁹

According to Manuel Ferreira, these proposals to restructure the state-owned sector never “came into force”.⁶²⁰

Aharon de Grassi and Jesse Ovadia “underscore” that this liberalization of the economy “was only reluctantly and partially accepted after being required by coordinated international creditors after the American- and South African-backed war deliberately destroyed Angola’s economy and socialist efforts”.⁶²¹ This analysis makes several broad-based assumptions: First, that the MPLA would have otherwise continued into the

⁶¹⁶ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 240; UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 222.

⁶¹⁷ Quitari, “Agricultura familiar”, 22; Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 342-343.

See UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 1989 for their institutional review of the SEF policy change.

⁶¹⁸ Gonçalves, “The economy”, 78.

⁶¹⁹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 102.

⁶²⁰ Ferreira, “Angola: conflict”, 25. The section in chapter six on the mass construction state farms financed in large part by Chinese oil-backed loans further confirms this analysis.

⁶²¹ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories” 119.

foreseeable future with its ‘socialist’, centralized economy despite its obvious structural deficiencies, especially in the agricultural sector, or otherwise assumes the government would have implemented policy changes to make the ‘socialist’ system more sustainable. Secondly, it attributes enormous influence and ultimately culpability to the United States and South Africa in single-handedly ‘destroying’ Angola’s economy, ignoring the deep endogenous roots of the civil war as noted in §4.1.1 and apparently minimizing UNITA’s entire war effort as being a pseudo arm of these two foreign benefactors. Finally, the vague reference to “deliberately destroying” Angola’s “socialist efforts” is an amorphous critique as the MPLA’s “socialist efforts” have been shown in §1.3.2 and will be further revealed in the following section to be selectively ‘socialist’ at best. In the same article de Grassi and Ovardia concede that the war’s effects “had rendered unsustainable the state subsidies for coffee sector revival” and by July 1991 the MPLA-led government “started privatization processes for 33 mostly degraded and unprofitable coffee plantations”.⁶²² This analysis appears to put all of the blame of the poorly performing coffee sector on the outside forces of the foreign enablers of the civil war, without attributing any of the “degraded and unprofitable” state of the sector to the government’s mismanagement and underfunding as explained in §3.2.3.

Nevertheless, this schizophrenic economic transition and policy-making created a logjam of development programs and policies aimed at the rural economy, piled one on top of the other, at times doubling up other programs that were tasked with similar mandates, while underdelivering at the local level. This had especially nefarious effects on the development of the peasantry:

The emerging attention to the neglected peasantry is mistakenly perceived as requiring the creation of another layer of costly official institutions. The recently introduced agricultural development stations (EDAs), for instance, are already burdened with Departments of Planning, Finance, Human Resources, Technology, Supply, etc., another cumbersome bureaucracy.⁶²³

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 119.

⁶²³ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 236.

Inefficiencies abounded to the detriment of the agricultural sector, whether top-down through redundant or unsound design and implementation, or bottom-up through the local incapacity to fully realize programs that were approved.

To make matters worse, “administrative decisions in the Angolan economy are almost always characterized by extreme centralization, by a certain grade of authoritarianism, by ‘political’ decisions and by total lack of consideration of the role of markets”.⁶²⁴ In fact, across the agricultural sector, all of the institutions shared structural inefficiencies due to “a lack of training, an excessive centralization, and a lack of resources”.⁶²⁵ Despite the clear necessities of foreign aid and market-based expertise, the heavy-handed MPLA continued to look upon certain private interests as inherently dangerous to their political agenda.

3.2.2 ‘PROTECTING THE REVOLUTION’: CONSOLIDATING STATE POWER OVER THE RURAL ECONOMY

In 1980, President Dos Santos declared that the development and consolidation of the private sector constituted an imminent danger to the revolution, though in practice these claims were contradictory (private property and investment, as long as it served the common good, were protected by the Constitution), paradoxical (the government should have been prioritizing means of improving efficiency in the ailing state-run national economy) and even absurd (the Law on Foreign Investment had already been published in 1979, aimed at attracting private foreign investment),⁶²⁶ despite the government overtly welcoming private investment in certain sectors.⁶²⁷

In the years leading up to independence, the agricultural sector itself had around 6,500 companies occupying around 4.5 million hectares of land, each with an average of 770 hectares and as a whole focused 70% of their production on the cultivation of three crops: coffee, cotton and sisal.⁶²⁸

⁶²⁴ Menezes, *Mamma Angola*, 281.

⁶²⁵ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 238.

⁶²⁶ Ferreira, “Nacionalização”, 4.

⁶²⁷ See §1.3.2.

⁶²⁸ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 238.

Tableau 16 - Status of agricultural enterprises (1984)

Sector	State-owned enterprises		Private enterprises		PPP		Total	
	C	W	C	W	C	W	C	W
Agriculture	65	63,610	14	3,319	0	0	81	66,929

C: companies, W: workers.

Source: UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 356-357.

With the exodus of the farmers running these companies and in the face of daunting challenges, private investment capital and expertise were badly needed, especially in the agricultural sector as “the agricultural mercantile production in 1979 was 7% that of 1973”⁶²⁹. That said, private companies and capital were still present across the country despite the alarmist rhetoric of the President. In 1984, in the agricultural sector alone, 65 State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) and 14 private companies existed.⁶³⁰ Their nearly 67,000 workers made up about one-fourth of the total formal workforce.⁶³¹

While significant money and effort went into setting up a centralized, ‘socialist’ rural economy, the eventual move towards a market economy had already been established within the first years of independence,⁶³² as the difficulties of managing a state-run economy quickly became apparent:

The system was led by the Ministry of Planning, established the same year (decree 8/82) from the previous National Planning Commission, set up shortly after independence. The Ministry of Planning lost its supremacy in 1988, by virtue of law 12/88, following a review of the institutional functions of economic management that began after the second congress of the MPLA-PT in 1985 and accompanied the first steps towards a market-based economy.⁶³³

Attempting to consolidate the national economy into SOEs and national agencies faced the same problems of deterioration as that of the Agostinho Neto administration, but the raging civil war intensified the difficulties exponentially. The MPLA moved to set up an institutional framework that would connect, serve, and support the state-run farms and peasant producers. The table below summarizes the key institutions organizing the economic and

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, 240. Thirty four years later, little had changed: “The total value of Angola’s agricultural in 2013 was only 8.5 percent of the value of its exports in 1974 (World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 26).

⁶³⁰ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 356-357.

⁶³¹ Menezes, *Mamma Angola*, 267.

⁶³² See also Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 304-333.

⁶³³ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 109-110.

social activity throughout the periphery. The Ministry of Agriculture, one of the centralizing forces behind the rural economy, is expanded upon in a separate table further below.

Tableau 17 - Key Institutions Governing Rural Spaces

Institution	Date created	Mandate
MINCO - Ministry of Internal Commerce/ <i>Ministério de Comércio Interno</i>	Established in 1970	Responsible for the supply and distribution of goods in both rural and urban areas, though meat distribution is controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture.
MINFAMU - Ministry of Family & Promotion of Women/ <i>Ministério da Família de Promoção da Mulher</i>	Established in 1997	Focused on family issues, violence and women's development, mostly health-oriented.
MINPLAN - Ministry of Planning/ <i>Ministério do Planeamento</i>	Established by decree n° 8 of 1982. Lost influence through decree n° 12 of 1988.	Guided centralized planning on economy; lost power during economic liberalization.
UNACA - The Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola/ <i>Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola</i>	Established in 1990	Focused on the interests on peasants' economic production through organizing and providing public services.
INCER - National Institute of Cereals/ <i>Instituto Nacional de Cereais</i>	Established by decree n° 50 of 20 July 2004	Focused on supporting the coordination and execution of policies across the production of cereals.
IDA - Institute of Agrarian Development/ <i>Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário</i>	Established by decree n° 42 of 22 July 1989	Focused on support, coordination and execution of policies & strategies in agrarian and rural development.

Source: *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 106, Luanda, 10 June 2009: 2022, Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 110; Aline Pereira, *Desenvolvimento de políticas públicas para a inserção da mulher angolana no Mercado de trabalho*, Communication presented at the 11th General Assembly of COEDSRIA, Conselho para o Desenvolvimento da Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais em África, Maputo, 2005, 9; Lucas A. Queiroz Pires, *et al.* "Regulamentação do comércio internacional em Angola", *Relatório de pesquisa Angola e Brasil: um primeiro mapeamento regulatório de suas relações econômicas*, Porto Alegre, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 2015, 72. <https://www.ufrgs.br/cebrafrica/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RelatorioPesquisa1.pdf>.

3.2.3 PUBLIC-PRIVATE (DIS)INCENTIVES: ACQUIESCING TO ECONOMIC REALITIES

Resources were scarce, the bureaucracy disorganized, and logistics hampered. Furthermore, the plethora of newly established governmental entities had hardly any qualified staff to manage them. Tasked with rebuilding the rural economy, a mere “1 percent of the labor force under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture is classified as technical and most agricultural schools are closed. Under the Ministry of Agriculture alone, there are more than one hundred public enterprises and agencies”.⁶³⁴ Without resources for training and education and only one percent of the personnel trained, the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture to enact complex programs was made nearly impossible without outside assistance and expertise. Yet as outlined above, the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos was sending mixed signals internally and abroad, sparking fears of shadowy private interests out to undermine the socialist revolution while putting up real and rhetorical obstacles to those tasked with finding the means to rebuild.

The government’s position of hostility towards private investment in the rural economy, coupled with decades of development disorganization and disfunction, set a precedent that would endure throughout the regime of then-President José Eduardo dos Santos, prolonging the same dichotomy of absence and deterioration even after the civil war when the return to social and political stability began to attract outside investors. Foreign direct investment (FDI) extended overwhelmingly into the preeminent oil sector: “82 percent of total investment flows between 2003 and 2017 were concentrated in oil and natural gas, while agribusiness totaled a mere 6 percent during that period”.⁶³⁵ Though modest, the trend has been relatively more positive in the agricultural, livestock and fisheries sector. Foreign direct investment (FDI) has steadily increased since 1988, when it stood at 1.4% of total foreign investment, to approximately US\$700 million in 2015 representing 20% of the total.⁶³⁶ This is a considerable sum given the extremely low budgetary allocation to the

⁶³⁴ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 223.

⁶³⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 6.

⁶³⁶ World Bank, *Options for Increased Private Sector Participation in Resilience Investment: Focus on Agriculture*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2017, 168. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/969921521805628254/pdf/Options-for-increased-private-sector-participation-in-resilience-investment-focus-on-agriculture.pdf>.

Ministry of Agriculture, representing only US\$205 million in 2015 for example.⁶³⁷ Aside from the FDI, available credit from the national banking sector destined for agricultural development represents less than five percent of all credit.⁶³⁸ The decapitalization of the peasantry will be a common theme throughout this analysis.

Despite these profound structural weaknesses, the agricultural sector was entirely beholden to the state: “The central government institutions dealing with agriculture, have since formally administered prices, production, investment, marketing, distribution, exports, imports and all other aspects of the sector”.⁶³⁹ Nearly all of the government’s attempts fell short as State-Owned Enterprises and cooperatives “had to face all kinds of shortages: labour, fuels, herbicides, fertilizers, seeds (and also their poor quality), food for workers, and transports to market production”.⁶⁴⁰ The government clearly lacked the means to rebuild the agricultural sector funneled through a weakened state apparatus, but the secondary (primary?) goal of dominating the productive, commercial and distributive flows of the sector was achieved. However, taking complete control of a complex economic sector such as agricultural wholly bereft of the means to properly manage it is a recipe for dissolution.

The overall effect of these state-led policies ultimately led to the disincentivization of entrepreneurship across the sector: “Central planning, price controls and other macro-economic distortions, together with the neglect of the peasant sector, which was the major producer of food, eliminated incentives”.⁶⁴¹ Not only did these policies eliminate incentives for local producers to attempt to commercialize their production, the larger scale State farms “depend on the Government for financial support and almost without exception, they have incurred substantial losses”.⁶⁴² However, the government’s financial support for these state farms was in fact minimal, as the chart below attests. It describes the cumulative losses incurred through the state farms, coffee producers, and public companies involved in food distribution and marketing, as well as the costs incurred to subsidize the financial losses. The dire financial output described below comes at the moment when the government had built up its most robust system, relatively speaking, to deliver the goods and services provided through government services. Their clear disfunction and economic inefficiencies were a

⁶³⁷ See §3.3.2 below for a breakdown of the Ministry of Agriculture’s budget.

⁶³⁸ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 47.

⁶³⁹ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 222.

⁶⁴⁰ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 242.

⁶⁴¹ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 222.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, 234.

major impetus to implementing the economic reform plan opening up the economy to market forces, despite the reluctance and foot-dragging as described above.

Tableau 18 - Losses of State-owned enterprises in agricultural sector (in kwanzas, '000)

	1983	1984	1985	1986
State farms	1,259,957	714,000	399,073	476,590
Agrarian enterprises & local companies	849,084	738,100	456,843	449,816
Coffee companies	396,537	725,600	1,178,771	951,519
State subsidies	3,430	--	--	1,816
Total	2,509,008	2,177,700	2,034,687	1,879,741

Source: UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 329; World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 247.

The acquiescence to private interests began by opening up solutions, particularly in the distribution of goods. Facing war-time instability and hit-and-run attacks on major thoroughfares across the country, getting goods transported became a matter of life and death, both for the drivers and those awaiting deliveries for assistance. The need for food aid assistance rose as budgetary constraints accumulated: "Food aid requested for 1987/88 amounted to 200,000 tons of cereals, three times morer [*sic*] than the 68,000 tons requested in 1983/84. The ability of government to finance commercial food imports diminished from 238,000 tons in 1983/84 to 94,700 in 1986/87."⁶⁴³ Between 1989 and 1992, Congolese, Brazilian, Portuguese and Angolan businessmen stepped into the commercial space permitted by the release of the stranglehold held by the state, though commercializing the distributed goods through official structures remained burdensome.⁶⁴⁴ The need for massive food aid was due to falling revenues as well as the lack of stable farm lands, with only an estimated 20% of the territory viable for agricultural production located on the coastal strip encompassing around three million people, or 38% of the total population, concentrated around the urban centers of Luanda, Lobito, Benguela, Lubango and Namibe.⁶⁴⁵ These demographically important areas also received the majority of major donor aid as they

⁶⁴³ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 222.

⁶⁴⁴ Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 252-253.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 223.

attempted to provide assistance in the most efficient manner. While the government nominally coordinated and distributed aid, the reality was different:

Emergency and development aid is formally coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Reintegration (MINARS) and the Ministry of Planning respectively, but the responsibility is in reality vested with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).⁶⁴⁶

Food security had become such a pressing issue that foreign and international donors poured resources into the country as the government was wholly incapable of providing it.

In the mid-1990s, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Angola was its biggest operation in the world.⁶⁴⁷ In 2001, the WFP and the FAO estimated that the country was food secure in some staples such as beans and cassava, but that it would need to import 50% of its national requirements in cereals, as only 581,000 tons were produced nationally. This situation would require the importation of 405,000 tons and the rest rounded up through food aid packages.⁶⁴⁸ A 2003 USAID report and an OXFAM country study also found that Angola was only able to meet half of its food needs.⁶⁴⁹ In 2002, the WFP's \$124 million met 80% of the United Nations' appeal for emergency food assistance, while donors and NGOs worked separately to mobilize their own resources.⁶⁵⁰ Overall, due to the systematic decline of the economy at the end of the war, the country imported "almost all its consumer goods (except some food)" as mentioned above, with a ratio of imports to GDP reaching 65% from 1997 to 2001, "more than double the average for Sub-Saharan Africa (31% in 1999) or for the world as a whole (25%)".⁶⁵¹ Outside of these areas where food aid could be delivered, where production was possible, subsistence agriculture remained the foundation of rural food security. Getting food aid to the most precarious rural populations, "agencies such as WFP, the EU and USAID signed contracts with NGOs (mainly the large

⁶⁴⁶ Inge Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 21.

⁶⁴⁷ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78.

⁶⁴⁸ UNDP, *Angola: The Post-War Challenges, Common Country Assessment 2002*, United Nations System in Angola, Luanda, 2002, 35.
http://www.undp.org/content/dam/angola/docs/legalframework/UNDP_AO_CCA_2002.pdf.

⁶⁴⁹ Allen, et al. *A Framework for Transitioning to Rural Economic Growth in Angola*. Washington D.C., USAID, Dec. 2003, 5. https://sarpn.org/documents/d0001150/P1269-PNADB799_Angola_Dec2003.pdf; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 124.

⁶⁵⁰ Nina Bowen & Douglas Steinberg, *Food Security Challenges in Post-Conflict Angola*, Food Security in Southern Africa, Causes and Responses from the Region, Pretoria, Human Sciences Research Council, March 2003: 84. <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00793066/document>.

⁶⁵¹ UNDP, *Angola: The Post-War*, 62.

international NGOs) for local food distribution in different parts of the country”.⁶⁵² Government agencies lacked the capacity to fulfill these responsibilities, so Non-State Actors (NSAs) filled the void.

The few NSAs working among the rural populations at the time attempted “to gather groups of rural people and former peasants and these groups have been the first nuclei of associate agricultural activities and cooperatives”.⁶⁵³ Many of these quasi-organized nuclei would later be candidates to integrate UNACA activities post-war. For the rest of the country, the government attempted to adapt its approach to food security by transferring the *Gabinete de Segurança Alimentar* (GSA, Cabinet of Food Security) from the Ministry of Commerce and Tourism to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development through decree n° 76 of 10 Sept. 1993.⁶⁵⁴ This change represented the will to get domestic agricultural production back on track, though in reality the purchase of food aid would continue to comprise a significant percentage of food consumption.

3.2.4 A PERIPHERAL MODEL EMERGES: DOMINATION THROUGH DELEGATION

While the 1980s were characterized by chaotic policy swings and rudderless institutions, the decade of the 1990s would prove disastrous for the fledgling agricultural sector and the minor corrections that had been put in place since independence. By the mid-1980s, the state-run rural economic system was paralyzed while consuming precious resources. Facing these accumulating failures, the state farms and public trading companies “were abandoned entirely after the second congress of the MPLA-PT in 1985”.⁶⁵⁵ This failed desire to rebuild a modernized farm sector deepened the divide between the government and the rural populations wholly dependent on its assistance. Across the agricultural sector, “efforts to turn colonial estates into state farms rather than give support to smallholders, collapsed for lack of managerial skills, distrust of (Ovimbundu) labour, and inadequate

⁶⁵² Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78-79.

⁶⁵³ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation Angola*, Final Report, vol. 2, Annexes, Brussels, Sept. 2009, 165. <https://www.oecd.org/derec/ec/44650402.pdf>.

⁶⁵⁴ *Diário da República*, Series I, nos. 36 & 76, Luanda, 10 Sept. 1993.

⁶⁵⁵ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 31.

inputs, thus leaving rural populations more vulnerable and distrustful of the government”.⁶⁵⁶ The strategy of investing in state farms rather than farmers revealed the true motivations of rebuilding the rural economy with the rural population viewed by the urban elites principally as a resource to be exploited through labor.

The insistence on modernization however fundamentally modifies the approach to rural labor. While the MPLA-led government sought to rebuild the colonial agricultural model, its insistence on modernized and mechanized agricultural production actually represented a key break from the past. During the development of the colonial era agricultural sector “the peasantry was an object of exploitation, rather than elimination, as in the modernist scenario”.⁶⁵⁷ If the modernization of the agricultural sector is to be achieved, rural farm workers will inevitably become redundant to the commercial sector. This follows the structural economic development plans of the government touting rural economic policies that create a rural economy engaging with a selective amount of loyal workers, thereby abandoning the peasantry to market forces.

Given the perspective of Tony Hodges having published his work in 2001, his notion of “abandoning” state farms and state companies is particularly illuminating as to *why* they were abandoned. In his work it is explained by the government being incapable of managing the ‘socialist’ agricultural system through centralized control, particularly given the burdens of war. In reality, it now appears that the war was the main reason the government’s agricultural model was abandoned, but *not* because of its inefficiencies. As evidence, post-civil war the regime moved right back into a pseudo-‘socialist’, state-run model, this time allowing more leeway for private capital and investment as long as it linked with party interests through SOE or public-private partnerships (PPP). This provokes questions as to how sincere the 1987 economic transition really was concerning the agricultural sector, and how far the MPLA would have taken their control over the rural economy, despite the systemic failures, if the civil war had not obliged them to distract their focus.

⁶⁵⁶ Philippe Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000”, *African Affairs*, 100, (2001): 61. 10.1093/afraf/100.398.55.

⁶⁵⁷ Philip McMichael, “Peasants Make Their Own History, But Not Just as They Please...”, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 8, nos. 2 & 3, (2008): 209.

In the return to war in 1992,⁶⁵⁸ “[t]he ensuing two years of warfare led to more devastation than had occurred throughout three decades of the independence struggle and Cold War conflict, as the bush war turned into battles for the control of the cities”.⁶⁵⁹ For the Angolan population, more people died between October 1992 and November 1994 than in the previous sixteen years of conflict.⁶⁶⁰ The intensifying battle moving from the countryside to the cities destroyed what remained of the economy.⁶⁶¹ This led to a further rural exodus of the countryside, but this time pushing populations fleeing from war into urban warfare. By late 1998⁶⁶² these destructive forces resulted in “crops being left unharvested and in a widespread failure to replant. Furthermore, severe food shortages following a period of drought in late 2000 worsened in 2001”.⁶⁶³ Alternative solutions needed to be found in order to find some semblance of economic stability. The emergence of PPP began to gain momentum, mixing private interests and public funds.

The first peace process in 1991, known as the Bicesse Accords, sped up the abandonment of the ‘Marxist-Leninist’ character of the MPLA’s governing philosophy. In the early 1990s PPP joint-ventures began to emerge more strongly, combining foreign capital, government officials (current and/or former) and public companies, consolidating a new “emerging class” of Angolans that were able to access and accumulate capital through their connections and demark themselves further from the population at large.⁶⁶⁴ The tendency of centralizing all of the decision-making through a labyrinth of party interests began to consolidate itself into a pattern of generalized corruption and clientelism as resources became increasingly rare:

With the collapse of state services in the late 1980s, notably in education, health, water, sewerage, garbage, electricity, and transport, the M.P.L.A. leaders turned to providing solutions for individuals and/or groups that were either privileged or considered to be strategically

⁶⁵⁸ While the Angolan civil war is often understood as essentially lasting from 1975-2002, it did have momentary lapses of fragile ceasefires. Tony Hodges describes the timeline as an “oscillation between periods of peace (1991-1992), war (1992-1994), peace (1994-1998) and war” from 1998 until 2002. (Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 18).

⁶⁵⁹ Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy”, 59.

⁶⁶⁰ Sean Cleary, “Angola: A Case Study of Private Military Involvement”, in *Peace Profit or Plunder*, (eds), Jakkie Cilliers & Peggy Mason, (Pretoria: The Institute for Security Studies, 1999), 146.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁶² The fighting in 1998 was also disrupted by a substantial fall in oil prices, leading to financial difficulties to finance operations (Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy”, 64).

⁶⁶³ Hughes, “Economy”, 48.

⁶⁶⁴ Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 354.

important. People's access to dollars, commodities, foreign travel, and jobs depended on their proximity to a party *nomenklatura* which became progressively more corrupt.⁶⁶⁵

Despite the nominal 'transition' to a market economy, the MPLA would maintain a heavy hand in the rural economy post-civil war through public enterprises, while moving toward support of large-scale development projects through PPP joint-ventures. While the MPLA had thus far been reluctant to invite private capital and interests into developing the countryside, the 1990s and 2000s began to change this perspective, though with the caveat that any significant private interests would need to remain loyal to the MPLA party.⁶⁶⁶

In the peripheries, productive land is the most important commodity to be exploited. Through an opaque process with very little documentation that accompanied it, the MPLA went about dividing up the country's land between the well-connected and the peasant organizations overseen by the Ministry of Agriculture. As Jesse Ovadia points out in her study on the reinvention of elite accumulation during the economic transition, "many army officers and state officials acquired farms and other businesses as political favours, often for nominal sums or no payment at all, under a large land privatization programme⁶⁶⁷ that began in the early 1990s".⁶⁶⁸ While categorized as fiction, this "reinvention of elite accumulation" is described in vivid, creative detail through the novel *Predadores* (Predators) by Artur "Pepetela" Carlos Maurício Pestana dos Santos, incarnated by his central character Vladimir Caposso.⁶⁶⁹

Despite the raging civil war, the government found itself capable of distributing millions of hectares of land: "By 1999, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development had conceded more than two million hectares of land, almost half of what the commercial sector possessed before 1975"[.]⁶⁷⁰ It is unclear to whom precisely this land was allocated, but it should be remembered the detrimental historical precedent of land distribution

⁶⁶⁵ Pereira, "The Neglected Tragedy", 11.

⁶⁶⁶ David Sogge, *Angola: Reinventing Pasts and Futures*, Transnational Institute, 7 June 2010. <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/angola-reinventing-pasts-and-futures>.

⁶⁶⁷ For an in-depth look at how the party-state orchestrated these privatizations, see: Manuel Ferreira, "La reconversion économique de la nomenklatura pétrolière", *Politique africaine*, no. 57, 1995: 18-26.

⁶⁶⁸ Jesse Salah Ovadia, "The Reinvention of Elite Accumulation in the Angolan Oil Sector: Emergent capitalism in a rentier economy", *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, (2013): 37. <https://journals.openedition.org/cea/839>.

⁶⁶⁹ Artur Carlos Maurício Pestana dos Santos, *Predadores*, (Luanda: Pepetela e Texto Editores, 2014).

⁶⁷⁰ Fernando Pacheco, *A questão da terra para fins agrícolas*, FAO, Luanda, January 2002, III; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 125.

experienced by the rural populations. Over the last decade of Portuguese colonization: “About one million rural families saw the average land area they occupied reduced from a little more than 9 hectares per family in the mid-1960s to about 4 hectares in 1973, whilst 6,000 commercial farmers had an average of 700 hectares of which only 10 per cent was actually cultivated.”⁶⁷¹ While the Europeans’ flight from Angola opened the possibility of these families to recover their lands, it is unknown to what extent that process was allowed to carry out as the civil war broke out shortly after and the slow march of rural flight began to accelerate. Given the chaotic circumstances that MINADER would be distributing land amid the war, it is likely the traditional occupants were once again, and perhaps definitively, cut off from their land. During war time, the value of land is undervalued as social, economic and political stability are necessary prerequisites to exploiting it in any long-term vision. With the end of the war in 2002, the increasing value of land would lead the MPLA to divvy up more productive areas under various development schemes, some claiming public interest principles, others simply taking over *comuna* lands for private gain.

3.3 José Eduardo dos Santos administration post civil war

With the end of the civil war in 2002, the MPLA quickly began consolidating its power across the territory in order to guarantee its political dominance nationwide and head off any future potential challenges, particularly in the rural areas that had been physically out of reach during the civil war. The ‘Marxist-Leninist’ character of the MPLA had been cast aside in the mid 1980s⁶⁷² and the rising oil prices allowed José Eduardo dos Santos to consolidate political power by translating its revenue into political dominance. Rebuilding the country in his image quickly moved to priority number one to consolidate this dominance. A massive investment strategy in the country’s infrastructure would be enacted in three phases: 2002-05 spending US\$4.2 billion (US\$1.1 billion per annum); 2006-09 spending US\$26.9 billion (US\$6.7 billion per annum); and 2010-15, worth US\$56.3 billion

⁶⁷¹ Fernando Pacheco, “The land issue in the context of peacebuilding: development or conflict?”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 45.

⁶⁷² The economic transition was enacted through the Program for Economic and Financial Restructuring begun in 1987 (Ferreira, “Angola: conflict”, 26).

(US\$9.4 billion per annum).⁶⁷³ A combination of massive spending and modernizing the country's administrative profile were seen as key factors in expanding this influence.

3.3.1 DECISION TIME: DIVERSIFY OR DOUBLE DOWN

Entering the 21st century, one of the main vehicles of transforming rural Africa and improving the livelihoods of some of the most vulnerable populations was the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), established by the African Union in 2001, committed to a four pillar strategy: (1) land management and reliable water control systems; (2) rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for improved market access; (3) increasing food supply and reducing hunger; (4) Agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption.⁶⁷⁴ This initiative was spurred by a cratering in official development assistance (ODA) across the world at the turn of the century: "Between 1983-1987 and 1998-2000, the annual average allocations of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for agriculture in the least- developed and other low-income countries fell by 57 percent from USD 5.14 billion (2002 prices) to USD 2.22 billion".⁶⁷⁵ The combination of this reduction of ODA, low public investment in agriculture, and the rise of "Asia's Green Revolution" pushed African countries to craft a continental-wide initiative to respond to this difficult historical conjuncture.⁶⁷⁶ Crafting national strategies to protect the agricultural sector thus took on special importance across Africa as delegates from 45 countries across the continent converged on Cairo, Egypt on 8 February 2002 to discuss, among other issues, repositioning their respective countries further into the global market, fomenting job creation and improving resiliency among rural populations.

⁶⁷³ Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure*, 7.

⁶⁷⁴ NEPAD, *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)*, ISBN 0-620-30700-5, Midrand (South Africa), July 2003, v, 12-17. <http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/sirte2008/NEPAD-CAADP%202003.pdf>.

⁶⁷⁵ Gustavo Anriquez & Kostas Stamoulis, "Rural development and poverty reduction: Is agriculture still the key?", *Journal of Agricultural and Development Economics*, Rome, FAO, 4, no. 1, (2007): 1. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ah885e.pdf>.

⁶⁷⁶ Mogues, *et al.*, "The impacts of public investment in and for agriculture: Synthesis of the existing evidence", ESA Working paper n° 12-07, Rome, FAO, Oct. 2012, 1. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ap108e.pdf>.

The occasion gave rise to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) resolution, which later in 2003 committed each participating country to invest at least ten percent of their national budget into their agricultural sectors within five years, in the hope of obtaining at least 10% gross domestic product (GDP) from the agricultural sector. This program sought to revive agricultural systems, supporting farmers indirectly with investments spread out across the sector according to the needs of the respective countries, including infrastructure, development programs, machines, tools, inputs, training programs, etc.:

This is a high-profile investment programme that requires government's full operational commitment and funding support. The government is expected to provide funding along the lines of the NEPAD commitment, i.e. 10 percent of its budgetary resources to be spent on the agricultural and rural development sectors by the end of this decennium (2004-2013).⁶⁷⁷

A decade later, only 13 out of 42 (as of November 2016) countries met or surpassed the 10% investment threshold.⁶⁷⁸ Despite this, the initiative was reinforced in June 2014 by the African Union Malabo Declaration.

Angola initially feigned interest by sending a delegation but ultimately decided to go it alone, eventually pulling out. NEPAD did however offer an initial assessment of Angola's agricultural sector, its deficiencies and a plan for improvement, reminding the government of its obligations if it was serious about recuperating a functional rural economy. The fact that Angola decided not to join the NEPAD initiative was a clear sign it did not intend to allow oversight of its decisions regarding the recommendations proposed to the Angolan authorities. The fact that they showed initial interest, allowing the FAO, the European Union, USAID, among other donor and cooperation agencies, to coordinate with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) with NEPAD officials in the country to analyze the situation and provide a diagnostic on what it would take to turn the sector around proves that the MPLA were cognizant that the rural economy required serious attention.

⁶⁷⁷ NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume III of VI. Bankable Investment Project Profile: Rehabilitation of Rural Marketing and Agro-processing Infrastructures*, TCP/ANG/2908 (I), December 2005c, 30. <http://www.fao.org/3/af320e/af320e00.pdf>.

⁶⁷⁸ The list includes Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Togo (Landry Signé, *The quest for food security and agricultural transformation in Africa: Is the CAADP the answer?*, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution, 16 Oct. 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2017/10/16/the-quest-for-food-security-and-agricultural-transformation-in-africa-is-the-caadp-the-answer/>).

With this assessment in hand since December 2005, Angolan officials could no longer claim to not have a clear roadmap of what actions needed to be taken.

For Angola's NEPAD project intitled "Rehabilitation of Rural Marketing and Agro-processing Infrastructures", the five year program carried an estimated cost of \$200 million, half of which should have been paid for by the government, with the other half being financial institutions (25%) and the private sector (25%).⁶⁷⁹ This would require a public investment of \$20 million per year for five years. The assessment of Angola's rural economy infrastructure revealed its dilapidated state and thus the dire need for rehabilitation required for future commercialization. For example, a 2005 review of the main⁶⁸⁰ storage warehouses and silos for storing production administered by "local representations of nation-wide producer growers associations and cooperatives" such as Epungu⁶⁸¹ and UNACA showed that only one of the country's six silos was in "good" condition, and of the twenty-six warehouses throughout the country, twelve were considered "reasonable", twelve were deemed to be in "bad" condition, and two were "unfinished".⁶⁸² In 2003 the overall potential area for irrigation was 6.7 million hectares, with 3.7 million hectares presiding in areas of small-scale and lowland irrigation schemes. Of these areas, only 64,750 hectares were found to have some type of irrigation system in place, though only 39,750 of those hectares were partly/fully operational.⁶⁸³ These areas were then broken down by scale.

Regarding the large and medium-scale irrigation infrastructure created for the colonial commercial production, in 2005 it was assessed as encompassing "around 100,000 ha of land irrigated by large to medium systems of which roughly 9,750 ha are reported to be operational in 2004", representing a 90.25% decrease compared to colonial times.⁶⁸⁴ For small-holder irrigation using pump or small-scale gravity water systems built during colonial times, "as much as 320,000 ha were irrigated this way until 1974. Recent figures show a sharp

⁶⁷⁹ NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume III of VI*, i.

⁶⁸⁰ Excluding only the "few warehouses of small capacity owned by private municipal traders" [.] (*Ibid.*, 14).

⁶⁸¹ Epungu, named after the Mbundu word for maize, is a farmer association with members across the country. The group "is officially recognized by the government and is the recipient of government funds though it does not appear to be run directly by the government. It is the owner of much of the marketing infrastructure (mainly warehouses) along the main transport routes between the Planalto and demand centers on the coast and elsewhere" (Allen, *et al.*, *A Framework*, 25).

⁶⁸² NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume III of VI*, 14.

⁶⁸³ NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume II of VI Bankable Investment Project Profile: Irrigation Rehabilitation and Sustainable Water Resources Management*, TCP/ANG/2908 (I), December 2005b, 3. <http://www.fao.org/3/af319e/af319e00.pdf>.

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibidem*.

decline to nearly 15,000-25,000 ha”, signifying a 92.18% decrease⁶⁸⁵ compared to colonial times.⁶⁸⁶ A third, more rudimentary system of canals was used by the rural communities across the central and eastern areas of Angola in rain-fed lowlands and depressions to better deviate water across areas of productive land.

Based on subsistence agriculture, the peasants would work two different fields according to the climatic cycles and the seed sowing seasons. One field (known as a “*nava*”) would be located at the foot of hills or mountains, fed by rainfall during the wet season, while the other field (known as a “*lavra*”) would be sown in nearby river beds during the dry season. This rain-fed agriculture system comprised approximately 850,000 hectares until 1974.⁶⁸⁷ The situation today is unknown as the government has not done a technical assessment of the country’s small-holder production on a national scale. The need to rebuild the infrastructure of the rural economy was nevertheless laid bare through the NEPAD report in 2005, coming only three years after the end of the war. It gave a clear diagnostic of the problems facing the rural economy and a technocratic strategy to approach its rehabilitation. The MPLA decided against entering into the NEPAD program, but not for a lack of funds. They instead preferred to go about the reconstruction on its own.

3.3.2 GOING IT ALONE: EMERGING PARTNERSHIPS PRESENT NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The MPLA embraced its political dominance entering into the 21st century at a moment when the tectonic plates of the international community began a definitive shift East. As part of a budding economic relationship between Angola and China developing the rural economy, in 2004 Angola signed a contract worth US\$22,368,090,⁶⁸⁸ financed by China, to purchase agricultural equipment, machines and tools from China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) for the *Empresa Nacional de Mecanização Agrícola* (Mecanagro, National Agricultural Machinery Company) and the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute

⁶⁸⁵ The statistic is calculated based on the more favorable 25,000 ha number. Otherwise, using the 15,000 ha statistic it would represent a 95.3% decrease.

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁸⁸ The loans were a portion of a much larger US\$2 billion credit line committed the same year.

of Agrarian Development).⁶⁸⁹ Mekanagro is a public company founded in 2001 tasked with preparing the groundwork (both figuratively and literally) for Public Private Partnerships in the agricultural sector. The tractors arrived for the 2006-2007 agricultural season, without replacement parts and without those parts being available on the market.⁶⁹⁰ Mekanagro had been “practically totally absent” for decades in the rural zones due to difficulties in repair and maintenance of their tractor fleet.⁶⁹¹ Mekanagro has been headed by Carlos Alberto Jaime Pinto, known as “Calabeto”, a close confidant and ally of the President.

“Calabeto” is a key actor in the rural economy and will be discussed in further detail in the following section. His central role in running key public companies means he will be referenced in various sections of this study. Due to its historical inefficiencies, Mekanagro is now being shut down⁶⁹². The issue of mechanization in the countryside has been a habitual problem in the agricultural sector. For example, in 1986, “[m]ore than 70% of its tractor fleet was inoperative due to lack of spare parts and maintenance problems”, worsened by each donor trying to promote their own brands.⁶⁹³ China’s Eximbank reportedly provided another loan of US\$40 million in 2012 to Mekanagro to rehabilitate the country’s infrastructure,⁶⁹⁴ which did not translate into introducing machinery into the agricultural sector.

A report by the *Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica* (CEIC, Center of Studies and Scientific Research) of the Catholic University of Angola in 2015 found that 90% of smallholder agriculture was practiced manually.⁶⁹⁵ Instead of improving, the then-Minister of Agriculture Marcos Alexandre Nhunga himself admitted in 2017 that 98% of the agricultural production is still done by hand.⁶⁹⁶ A report from the *Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas* (MINAGRIF, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) on the 2018-2019 agricultural season found a more favorable 72% of land was prepared manually (3,740,784 hectares), 25%

⁶⁸⁹ Dreher, *et al.*, *Aid, China*, 2017.

⁶⁹⁰ Ana Paula Nogueira, “Nota sobre a prestação de serviços de mecanização de terras, pela Mekanagro-EP e por operadores privados, na comuna de Cota, município de Kaladula”, *Projecto de apoio ao programa de desenvolvimento agrícola e rural de Angola PAPDAR*, Lisbon, Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário, Oct. 2009, 3. http://www.centrop.org/images/publicacoes/PAPDAR/8.%20Serviços%20de%20mecanização_Cota.pdf.

⁶⁹¹ World Bank, *Angola Country Economic*, 111.

⁶⁹² IFC, *Creating Markets*, xxiii. For a more in-depth look at the wave of privatizations and closure of SOE, see §7.3.3 on the changes enacted under João Lourenço.

⁶⁹³ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 236-237.

⁶⁹⁴ Angop, “Financiamento da China à companhia Mekanagro”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 21 Jan. 2012. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/investimentos/financiamento_da_china_a_companhia_mekanagro.

⁶⁹⁵ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 103.

⁶⁹⁶ Lusa, “Agricultura ainda é feita à mão em 98% dos terrenos de cultivo em Angola”, *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 11 May 2017. <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/agricultura-ainda-e-feita-a-mao-em-98-dos-terrenos-de-cultivo-em-angola-8467768.html>.

through animal traction (1,298,883 hectares), and only 3% (155,866 hectares) was mechanized.⁶⁹⁷ Fernando Pacheco put the area cultivated by family agriculture at 63%, noting the common practice of using hoes and machetes.⁶⁹⁸ It is not sure however how Pacheco came to these favorable statistics, as it does not align with the multiple government reports. His long history advocating for rural development should be taken into account however when considering a desire to present a potentially rosier picture than reality on the ground. If the government reports are to be believed, they demonstrate a severe inefficiency in bringing any semblance of ‘modernization’ to the country’s peasant farmers, despite the enormous investments. It further reveals that the mission for modernization was neither directed nor destined for the peasantry.

Rather than monetary issues, the MPLA’s ideological bent and authoritarian tendencies appear to be the impetus as to why Angola chose to pursue its rural development plans independently and not become boxed in and potentially held ‘accountable’ by outsider oversight. A review of the effective budget spending on rural economic development, notably agriculture, demonstrates how far from the ambitious goals the MPLA remained, despite it entering into a period of immense oil wealth during this specific time period. Overall, there are five different streams of financing that support the agricultural sector: (1) The annual national budget, including public investment programs using Treasury funds, bilateral commercial credit lines via China for example, and institutional loans from IFAD or the World Bank, (2) Donor funds coming from Japan or the European Commission for example, (3) Commercial bank credit, (4) Microcredit programs loaned by banks or NGOs, (5) Private investment.⁶⁹⁹ As will be discussed in §7.1.1, official development assistance (ODA) from major donors has nearly halved between 2000 and 2018 in dollar terms. Commercial loans for agricultural purposes represent 5% of all bank loans⁷⁰⁰ while micro-credit programs have proven ineffective.⁷⁰¹ In both cases, loans and (micro) credit are destined for medium and large-scale producers. In 2018, only 2 percent of farmers were found to have used an agricultural credit program, but they had “not yet reached the

⁶⁹⁷ MINAGRIF, Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatísticas, *Relatório de resultados da campanha agrícola 2018/2019*, Luanda, July 2019, 11. https://assets.website-files.com/5a8e71e3c7881c000130ff13/5ef9a5fa04117d2577e30184_RELATORIO_DA_CAMPANHA%20AGRICOLA%202018-2019.pdf (accessed 14 Sept. 2020).

⁶⁹⁸ Francisco Miguel Paulo, *Quão Importante é Agricultura para o Governo Angolano?*, CEIC-UCAN, Luanda, 2018, 1.

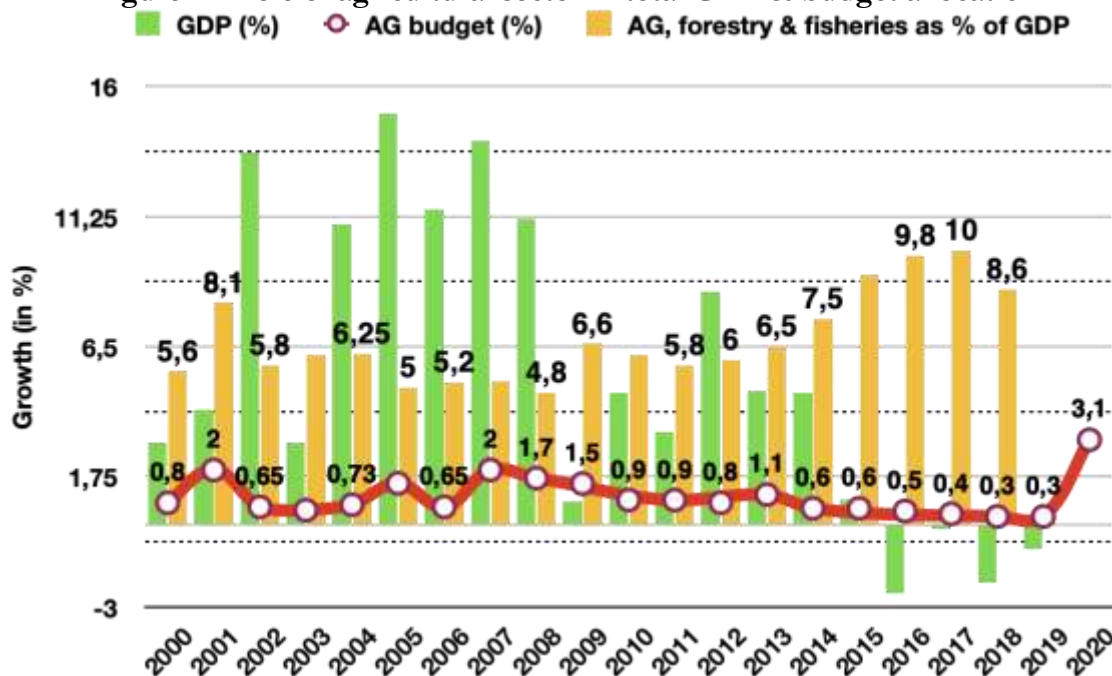
⁶⁹⁹ CEIC, *Relatório económico anual 2007*, 71.

⁷⁰⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 47.

⁷⁰¹ IFAD, *Republic of Angola Country*, 2, 16-17.

smallholder segment”.⁷⁰² Regarding private investment, as discussed in §3.2.3, between 2003 and 2017, only 6% of all Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) went to the sector. Given the enormous costs to finance agricultural development projects, FDI and private investment are both heavily concentrated in commercial production. The following statistics leave the sources for financing the production and development of the peasantry, outside of program-specific NGO or FAO projects for example, dependent on national spending. This dependency of the peasantry comes in the post-war context where “the vast majority of rural people [...] have virtually no assets of any kind, apart from customary land rights” (UNDP 2002: 55).⁷⁰³

Figure 2 - Role of agricultural sector in total GDP & budget allocation



Source: Manuel José Alves de Rocha, “OGE 2019 revisto à medida das exigências do Fundo Monetário Internacional”, *Expansão*, no. 525, Luanda, 27 May 2019. <http://www.expansao.co.ao/artigo/113234/oge-2019-revisto-a-medida-das-exig-ncias-do-fundo-monetario-internacional?seccao=7>; Belarmino Jelembi, *Cooperativismo agropecuário e o desenvolvimento económico – social em Angola*, Conferência sobre o cooperativismo, O cooperativismo como modelo empresarial sustentável e rentável e o seu impacto no fortalecimento da economia angolana, Luanda, 5 June 2016, 9; NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume I of VI*, 26; Paulo, *Quão Importante*, 1; Vera Daves de Sousa, “OGE 2020: Entre apertos e suspiros”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 9 Dec. 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/reportagem/oge-2020-entre-apertos-e-suspiros>; UNDP, *Economic Report on Angola in 2002-2004: “Defusing the Remnants of War”*, Luanda, May 2005, 44. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/angola/docs/documents/UNDP_AO_Economic-Report_2002-2004.pdf; World Bank database.

⁷⁰² World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 26.

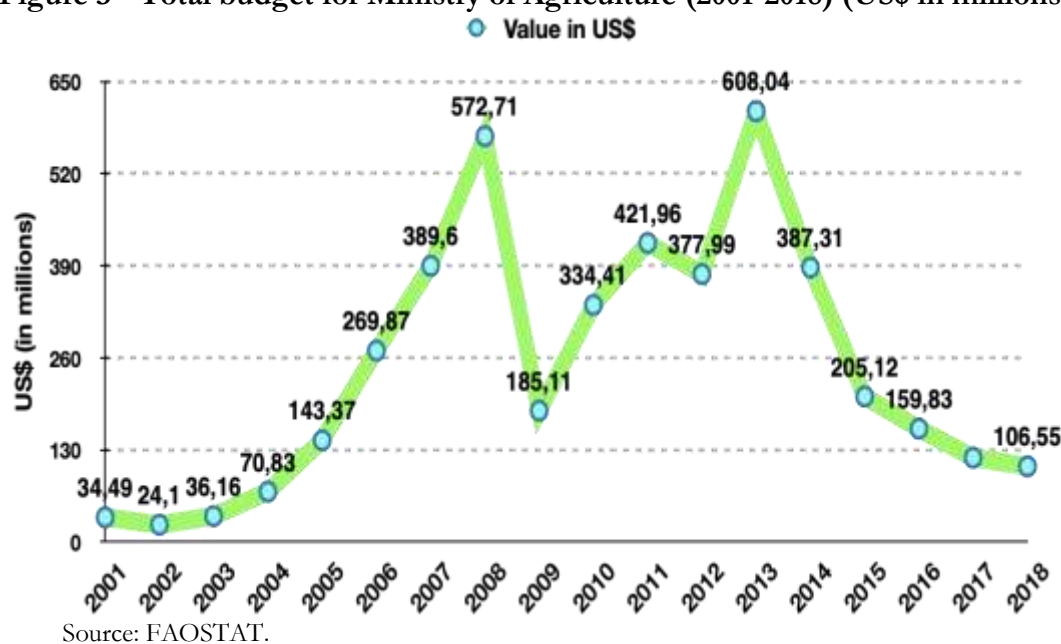
⁷⁰³ UNDP, *Angola: The Post-War Challenges, Common Country Assessment 2002*, United Nations System in Angola, Luanda, 2002, 55.

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/angola/docs/legalframework/UNDP_AO_CCA_2002.pdf.

Given that reliable statistics are sparse in Angola, the graph above was created by sourcing the numbers through institutional sources to the greatest extent possible. The agricultural budgetary numbers are sourced from the UNDP (2000-2004), the FAO (2005-2006) and the *Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica* (CEIC, Center of Studies and Scientific Research) from the Catholic University of Angola from 2007-2018. The last two years were cross-referenced in national media sources. The GDP numbers were sourced from the World bank database.

The erratic nature of extreme oil dependence means that the numbers attributed to the agricultural sector are heavily dependent on global demand. For example, the two percent dedicated to the budget in 2001 is vastly inferior to the two percent allocated during the boom years in 2007. Examining below a decade of uneven growth reveals the significant differences in allocation.

Figure 3 - Total budget for Ministry of Agriculture (2001-2018) (US\$ in millions)

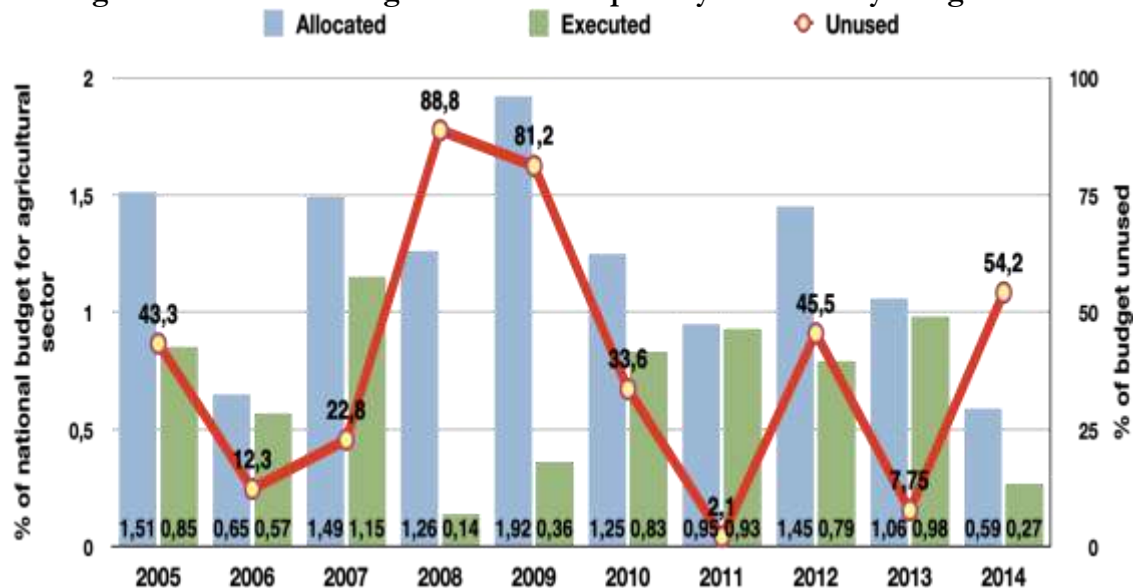


As can be seen from the chart above, even if the total percentage allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture did not exceed two percent between 2001-2019, the totals attributed varied considerably alongside the expansion and retraction of the national economy itself. These figures representing the financial resources of the Ministry of Agriculture are misleading, however, for two reasons. To be clear, this budget was destined for implementing agricultural

programs, but it also included a significant amount destined to paying the salaries of workers of the Ministry and its different agencies, as well as administrative and bureaucratic costs.

Furthermore, just because a ministry is allocated money does not mean that the money is actually spent on intended purposes.

Figure 4 - National budget allocated & spent by the Ministry of Agriculture



Source: FAO, as cited by Jelembi, *Cooperativismo agropecuário*, 9. Unused budget calculations are mine.

Note the differences in the percentage of the overall budget allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture here using numbers from the FAO compared to the chart above, relying on CEIC statistics. While some of the numbers vary slightly, the differences are not overly significant and both follow the same trends. Neither source has the allocated budget surpassing 2% at any time. Finding definitive statistics is notoriously difficult within Angola and should always be regarded with healthy skepticism as to their scientific nature.

This last chart reveals serious mismanagement and disarray within the Ministry regarding its ability to deliver on its policies. After discussing how low the budget of the Ministry is, especially in the context of NEPAD's 10% yearly target that should have been reached by 2008, the fact that the meager budget allocated still was not spent goes a long way in explaining the underperformance and underinvestment in the agricultural sector. Of the ten years listed, in five of those years over 40% of the allocated budget went unused. Between 2008 and 2009, the number reached 80%! The Ministry effectively took a two-year absence from governing the sector, leaving all of the economic actors dependent on its assistance in

limbo. In June 2009 there was an institutional shakeup with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER) replaced with the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), which could explain in part the apparent freeze in the institution's actions.⁷⁰⁴ The more likely culprit to these two disastrous years was the takeover of the Ministry by Afonso Pedro Canga in 2007, with the worst years occurring after the handover from the departing Gilberto Buta Lutacuta who had served in the position since 1999. The combination of restructuring the Ministry with a brand new leadership brought its work to a standstill. A look at the timeline of the different Ministers of Agriculture will be detailed in the following section.

Returning to figure two, the ability of the agricultural sector to persistently increase its share of the national GDP from 2011 on appears surprising given the overall performance of the economy, but this has a threefold explication: (1) at its base, these numbers represent the accumulative momentum of the decades spent trying to rebuild and revitalize the agricultural sector through billions of kwanzas invested and numerous policies and programs conceived and some enacted; (2) the overall weakening of the national GDP figures is directly linked with the decline of the oil sector which ceded ground to other sectors, thereby amplifying agriculture's modest growth (3) more importantly, the major investments in state-run agro-industrial complexes supported by oil-backed Chinese loans began construction between 2011-2014, coming on line and, despite systemic inefficiencies, ramped up production shortly thereafter. Built through loans made through the *Ministério da Agricultura* (MINAGRI, Ministry of Agriculture) and the Ministry of Finance, the cost of the farms (approximately US\$600 million initially invested, with multiple rounds of capital injection afterwards through the *Fundo Soberano de Angola* (FSDEA, Sovereign Wealth Fund of Angola) are not included in the government's agricultural budget.⁷⁰⁵

The numbers contained within the portfolio of MINAGRI are therefore not representative of the entire public expenditure in the agricultural sector. The differences between budget allocation and budget execution is similarly stark and puts the extremely low investment in the agricultural sector into an even greater contrast. The heavily-centralized and erratic nature of the policy-making process, spanning the Executive, various ministries and their agencies, along with the dearth of officials at the *município* and *comuna* levels to

⁷⁰⁴ The institutional instability experienced by the Ministry of Agriculture will be discussed in the following §3.3.4.

⁷⁰⁵ See §6.3.1 for more information on the industrial farms built through oil-backed Chinese loans.

execute the program has created a structural bottleneck within the Ministry between formulating policy and the capacity of the government to then enact these programs at the local level.

3.3.3 INVESTING SELECTIVELY

Taking these structural deficiencies into account, we will next review some of the major investments that were made to boost the agricultural sector during this time period. A majority of these investments were destined to revitalize, rebuild, and maintain infrastructure. Irrigation, as identified in the NEPAD assessment, was a pivotal piece of the infrastructural puzzle in this effort. In 2005, the same year NEPAD finished its study, the government created the public enterprise *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento dos Perímetros Irrigados* (SOPIR, Development of Irrigated Perimeters in Angola), seeking to rehabilitate the irrigation capacity of new and existing fields, as well as prepare against irregular climatic events. The company lacked both experience and a regulated process of testing before moving directly into the field and ultimately ran into similar problems affecting all of the institutions tasked with rebuilding the rural economy, namely financial difficulties as well as incoherent policies and investments. In 2008, it was estimated that 40% of the colonial irrigation systems were operational, totaling around 100,000 hectares.⁷⁰⁶

After five years and \$110 million, SOPIR projects had been enacted across ten provinces⁷⁰⁷ and assessments found that almost every project underperformed.⁷⁰⁸ Overall, the irrigated perimeters were unable to sufficiently support agricultural production due to a combination of (a) lack of productive capacity of land chosen for irrigation, (b) poor choice of location to irrigate and (c) lack of basic infrastructure to accompany irrigation projects, namely electricity.⁷⁰⁹ The \$110 million corresponded to more money than envisioned under

⁷⁰⁶ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 125. This is a surprisingly high number given that NEPAD found only around 35,000 hectares to have their colonial irrigation systems intact. According to OXFAM's numbers, the remaining 65,000 would likely come from the small-holder canal irrigation systems encompassing 850,000 hectares in 1974. In the NEPAD report, it was not specified how many of these hectares remained with their irrigation systems intact.

⁷⁰⁷ Matumbo (Bié), Caixto (Bengo), Missombo (Cuando Cubango), Calueque (Cunene), Matala, Humpata, and Ganjelas (Huila), Caála (Huambo), Waku Kungo (Kuanza Sul), Quiminha (Luanda), Kapuepua (Luanda Sul) and Luena (Moxico).

⁷⁰⁸ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2010*, 105.

⁷⁰⁹ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 71.

the NEPAD project proposal “Irrigation Rehabilitation and Sustainable Water Resources Management” estimated to cost US\$315 million over five years, with the government contributing 30% of this total, or US\$94.3 million.⁷¹⁰ The government attempted to follow some of the NEPAD recommendations, but sought to go it alone in order to exert full control over the process. This decision was both more expensive and ultimately led to mediocre results.⁷¹¹

A further point of control of the agricultural sector established by Angolan authorities was the creation of an expansive network of markets selling retail goods across the country, sourced from small producers to bulk sales from commercial farms. Established through the budget of the Ministry of Commerce, the government created the *Programa de Reestruturação do Sistema de Logística e de Distribuição de Produtos Essenciais à População* (PRESILD, Program of Restructuring of the System of Logistics and Distribution of Essential Products to the Population) in 2006. The program’s “main objective was to improve market access for small and large scale farmers and to organize and modernize commercial activity in Angola”.⁷¹² Its initial launch cost US\$600 million in the first two years,⁷¹³ with a total cost approaching US\$1 billion.⁷¹⁴ PRESILD sought to rebuild the commercial network of agricultural goods across the country, including (super)markets,⁷¹⁵ storage depots, and training schools. However, as with many other government programs, it collapsed after four or five years.⁷¹⁶

The main supermarket chains emerging from this program were “Nosso Super” with 31 supermarkets nationwide, as well as a network of smaller neighborhood shops branded “Poupa Lá”,⁷¹⁷ all directly owned and (mis)managed by the government. After an initial period of movement, the program’s supposed main mandate of logistics and distribution of

⁷¹⁰ NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume II of VI*, iv.

⁷¹¹ See §6.2.4 for further information explaining SOPIR’s underperformance.

⁷¹² Jover, *et al.*, *Angola Private Sector: Country Profile*, African Development Bank, September 2012, 81. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Evaluation-Reports-_Shared-With-OPEV_/Angola%20-%20Private%20Sector%20Country%20Profile.pdf.

⁷¹³ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 70.

⁷¹⁴ João Dias, “Presild concretiza metade dos projectos em plena crise”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 31 Dec. 2009. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/presild_concretiza_metade_dos_projectos_em_plena_crise.

⁷¹⁵ For a summary of the origins of the different supermarkets operating in the retail sector, see: Jover, *Angola Private Sector*, 80-82; Agrix, *Dutch Agrifood Private Sector Involvement in Angola: Developing Angolan-Dutch private sector cooperation*, commissioned by The Netherlands Embassy in Luanda, Jan. 2015, 60-65.

⁷¹⁶ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2011*, 98.

⁷¹⁷ Jover, *et al.*, *Angola Private Sector*, 81.

foodstuffs quickly disintegrated and markets shelves emptied.⁷¹⁸ Five years after the creation of the “Nosso Super” chain, the government “transferred management to Brazil’s Odebrecht (which had built them in the first place) in 2011”⁷¹⁹ in partnership with a private Angolan company NRSA.⁷²⁰ Shortly afterwards, the Ministry of Commerce sought to build on this experience and correct its failure with the announcement of the *Nova Rede de Supermercados de Angola* (NRSA, New Network of Angola Supermarkets) with “an investment estimated at over US\$50 million to recapitalize and recover the supermarket chain”.⁷²¹ The chain remains under ownership of the government, but privately managed by NRSA.

While these various programs and investments aimed at rebuilding the retail sector and building the distribution network across the country, it retains a historical urban bias, while “markets remain empty or even non-existent in remote location”.⁷²² Beyond the supermarket chains, three storage units were built and equipped in productive agricultural regions (Gabela in Cuanza Sul, Chinguar in Bié, and Calenga in Huambo), but were never put to use because of difficulties in nominating management teams.⁷²³

Each program, even those that fail, offer the government opportunities to learn from mistakes and correct the errors. The unfortunate legacy of the PRESILD program appears to be the continuing negligence of a horizontal logistics system supporting small and medium sized farms in favor of a vertically integrated large-scale industrial model, largely inspired by the Brazilian experience⁷²⁴ (Odebrecht built the entire “Nosso Super” chain as described above). Rather than focusing on smallholder support, most of the produce sold within Nosso Super’s distribution network came from large-scale, more “reliable” producers.⁷²⁵ Instead of

⁷¹⁸ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 70; CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2010*, 108.

⁷¹⁹ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 122.

⁷²⁰ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 70.

⁷²¹ Jover, *et al.*, *Angola Private Sector*, 81.

⁷²² Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 70.

⁷²³ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2010*, 108.

⁷²⁴ Another program based on the Brazilian experience is the “Merenda Escolar” launched in 2013 in partnership with the FAO, based on the “Zero Hunger” program began under Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2003. The program aims to provide school meals to children, with the menus coming from food production of small and medium-sized farms. The program was designed to be a principal mechanism of non-monetary resource transfer (foodstuffs), though it was not included in the National Development Plan (PND) 2013-2017, revealing further disarticulation between pro-poor policies and their proper design and implementation (UNICEF & ADRA, *Orçamento Geral do Estado 2018: Protecção social*, Luanda, 2018, 12). Under João Lourenço, the “Merenda Escolar” program restarted and was officially financed by the national budget of 2019 (5.2 billion kwanzas) and increased under the proposed budget of 2020 (8.8 billion kwanzas) (UNICEF & ADRA, *Investimento na criança e na família: Análise rápida da proposta de orçamento geral do estado 2020*, Angola, 2020, 15. https://www.unicef.org/angola/sites/unicef.org.angola/files/2020-01/Analise_OGE2020WEB.pdf).

⁷²⁵ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 70-71.

reinforcing the logistics network for all of Angola's farmers, PRESILD appears to have strengthened a model where the largest supermarket chains set up their own production chains or enter into contracts with larger commercial farms.

The major retailers in the country “like Pomobel, Maxi and Kero set up their own vegetable farms or work on an exclusive contract with large producers”.⁷²⁶ Maxi, for example, has become a major player in the retail market, owned by the Portuguese Teixeira Duarte group. In order to assure its production, quality control and distribution, it has created partnerships with 33 farms in eleven provinces, producing up to 15,000 tons of produce⁷²⁷. In 2017, however, the commercial partnerships came under financial strain amid the national economic downturn with 13 farms, representing almost half of the farmers, pulling out of the contracts for lack of foreign currency to import the needed fertilizers in order to maintain production that stocked one third of the stores' fruits and vegetables.⁷²⁸ The precarity of the distribution network is laid bare for even the most well-resourced farmers, with problems amplified the farther down one looks at the production scale.

As the PRESILD model clearly advantaged large-scale commercial farms, the government created the *Programa de Aquisição de Produtos Agrícolas* (PAPAGRO, Program for Acquiring Agricultural Products) in 2013 in an attempt to bring smallholders into the distribution network through a new retail chain “Paparoca”, while reinforcing many of the same goals of PRESILD. PAPAGRO had five main axes: (1) building infrastructure for food storage, processing and commercialization of agricultural products; (2) reinforcing and diversifying production of agriculture and cattle-raising; (3) reinforcing supply and commercialization chains; (4) supporting cooperatives and associations with technical and scientific support throughout the chain of production; (5) rehabilitating secondary and tertiary roads.⁷²⁹ Specifically regarding peasants' produce, this program was modelled to buy “agricultural produce from small holders in the province at relatively high fixed prices, ship the products to Luanda, sort, pack and then supply supermarkets”, though the initial production lacked the quality to sell in most supermarkets.⁷³⁰ This latest program was closed

⁷²⁶ Agrix, *Dutch Agrifood*, 57.

⁷²⁷ Data according to its company website: <https://www.maxi.co.ao/sustentabilidade/producao-nacional/> (accessed 3 May 2020).

⁷²⁸ José Zangui, “Fazenda Maxi' perde metade dos agricultores”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 16 Oct. 2017. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/fazenda-maxi-perde-metade-dos-agricultores>.

⁷²⁹ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2014*, 356.

⁷³⁰ Agrix, *Dutch Agrifood*, 63.

down in May 2018 due to gross mismanagement.⁷³¹ A replacement program is planned but will likely face difficulties in the new political environment of privatizations and the withdrawal of the state in commercial activities.

These three examples have been provided to dispel the notion that the government has been unable to rebuild the agricultural sector due to a general lack of financial means. Instead, they demonstrate that finding financing was not the issue. Partly due to the disruptions of war, partly due to serious institutional instability, and partly due to the government's authoritarian centralizing tendencies, "the government has never had a long-term economic and social development strategy, identifying key public expenditure priorities".⁷³² Rather than lack of funds, the main issue has historically remained the mismanagement, incompetence, and inability to lay out a clear road map and allow the full assistance of international expertise to assist in the overall rural rebuilding project.

Furthermore, the lingering question of corruption in the mismanagement of programs and their funds is omnipresent when dealing with government contracts, though its shadowy nature hides concrete proof of its presence. In the case of PRESILD, however, the Spanish company Mercasa Incatema (a PPP venture with 50% public capital) was found to have paid US\$20 million in bribes to Angolan officials in exchange for contracts totaling €533 million to build a market in Luanda, as part of PRESILD, which ended up in disuse.⁷³³ Ultimately, Mercasa was found to have paid bribes and commissions in exchange for contracts in Angola from 2006 to 2016.⁷³⁴ This case came to light because of the use of public funds in Spain for private self-dealing. The consistent mismanagement of funds, poor implementation and low-quality works that hallmark Angola's programs described in this study are all affected, to various degrees, by this endemic problem. Furthermore, with the 'Angolan Mode' of doing business, cutting out protocols for systemic program evaluation by dictating favorable terms via oil-backed loans, the government produced a governance system that provided little to no accountability as long as they could make payments and

⁷³¹ Paulo, *Quão Importante*, 2018.

⁷³² Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 136.

⁷³³ Belén Carreño & José Precado, "El pelotazo de 533 millones de Mercasa en Angola costó 20 millones en comisiones", *El Diálogo*, Madrid, 24 April 2017. https://www.eldiario.es/economia/pelotazo-millones-publica-Mercasa-Angola_0_636587031.html.

⁷³⁴ Elena Sevillano, "El juez pide juzgar a la empresa pública Mercasa y a 20 directivos por pagar mordidas en Angola", *El Diálogo*, Madrid, 25 Nov. 2019. https://elpais.com/economia/2019/11/25/actualidad/1574694985_629537.html.

provide enough consistent economic growth to fuel hopes for improved livelihoods to everyday Angolans. Those disillusioned and willing to speak out were repressed. The economic struggles over the past years are putting serious stress on this model.

The performance of the oil sector provided the flexibility to begin implementing the NEPAD recommendations on the government's own terms. The habitual underperformance of selective investments can be attributed to a toxic combination of structural deficiencies: (1) the weak administrative apparatus, from the local to the ministerial levels, to realize such complex programs (2) the exercise in messianic political hubris of José Eduardo dos Santos who was determined to singlehandedly transform his role from the 'architect of peace' to the 'architect of reconstruction', and (3) a strategic lack of political will, engaging with international actors and organizations more of a means of 'window-dressing'⁷³⁵ the MPLA's intentions to the country and beyond, rather than sincere engagement with the international community's concerns about reversing systemic structural deficiencies impeding Angola's social development. Regardless of motive, the failure of the MPLA's economic diversification policies have become clear, crystallized by the words of the president himself in December 2015.⁷³⁶

Having compounded years of development discord and a stagnating agricultural sector, Angola signed the *Programa de Desenvolvimento da Agricultura de África* (CAADP, Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program) on 5 August 2014, more than a decade after initially rebuffing the program.⁷³⁷ Given the hostile environment of "Doing Business in Angola", ranked 177 overall out of 190 countries in the 2020 report including 147 out of 190 in protecting minority investors,⁷³⁸ the main obstacle to inviting foreign investment into the agricultural sector today is the legacy of the government's past. Rebuilding the infrastructure was a primordial first step and the weak private investment would not match the size of the country's needs.

⁷³⁵ *Para os ingleses ver*, as they say in Portuguese.

⁷³⁶ As mentioned in §i.ii: "We spoke a lot about diversifying the economy, we did very little. Even so, it's better to start late than never" (CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 193).

⁷³⁷ African Union Development Agency, CAADP program, Angola. See: <https://www.nepad.org/nepad-oncontinent/comprehensive-africa-agriculture-development-programme-caadp-angola> (accessed 7 Sept. 2020).

⁷³⁸ World Bank, *Doing Business in 2020: Economy Profile Angola*. Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies, Washington D.C., 2020, 4, 34. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/825201574747808904/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies-Economy-Profile-of-Angola.pdf>.

While the official budget for the agricultural sector continues a stagnating trend, this does not mean that the government has not invested the equivalent of billions of American dollars in its rural economy. The strategy of attempting to modernize the sector on an industrial scale carries with it political risks, whether by provoking local land conflicts or through continued mismanagement of the rural economy where 9.6 million people still reside.⁷³⁹ These major industrial investments are not designed for significant impact on rural farmers apart from the limited employment opportunities dependent on the farms' competent management. Likewise, their structural weaknesses appear to have resigned them, at least for now, to focusing more on improving domestic food security while reducing dependence on food imports, than reviving the agricultural export machine that once dominated the MPLA's motivations of rebuilding the agricultural sector.

3.3.4 THE MANY MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE

One clear indicator as to why the economic diversification towards the agricultural sector never emerged was the constant state of flux of the country's main governing bodies, notably the Ministry of Agriculture. This process of change is not unique to Angola, or studies of state institutions more generally, as these "are never definitively formed, but that a constant process of formation takes place".⁷⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the agricultural sector of Angola has undergone a remarkably constant process of transformation. Attempting to manage the rural economy post-civil war, the Ministry of Agriculture has taken on six different structures until today. This persistent institutional 'renewal' has been described as a known multi-use tool of José Eduardo dos Santos' hold on power while destabilizing the other actors tasked with the administration of the state's machinery.

Through this governance approach, "in addition to working through a multiplicity of structures, the president sustains his grip over the system by keeping everything and everyone on the move, allowing no one to consolidate their hold over a crucial policy area and no politician of any standing to become cosy in his or her seat".⁷⁴¹ The many Ministries of

⁷³⁹ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 45.

⁷⁴⁰ Lund, "Twilight Institutions", 686.

⁷⁴¹ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 45.

Agriculture are a testament to this tactic: both to the importance that the elite afforded to the agricultural sector as well as providing one of the many reasons why the sector lack clear and cohesive policy and programs. The aforementioned budgetary inconsistencies are a product of this political power play, to the detriment of the agricultural sector overall. As the institutional framework evolved, particularly with the Constitution of 2010, power relations evolved and became increasingly concentrated within the executive branch.

For the rural economy, this power transfer began occurring with the *Ministério de Agricultura, Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas* (MINADERP, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries)⁷⁴² (July 2010-December 2012) as it “was no longer responsible for policy and for the sector more generally, passing instead to a support role for the head of the executive in these areas”.⁷⁴³ This change in power sharing and institutional shakeups more broadly brought constant periods of uncertainty across the institutions tasked with bringing development to the periphery.

⁷⁴² MINADERP came to include the fisheries sector through a restructuring in 2009 after the elections of 2008. Previously it had been known as MINADER (CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2011*, 77). This portfolio change only lasted a few months, as MINADER later transformed to MINGARI so it was not included in the table below.

⁷⁴³ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2010*, 98.

Tableau 19 - Evolution of the Ministry of Agriculture

Date of operation	Official Name	Establishing/Revocation Decrees
4 October 1991- ^a	MINADER: <i>Ministério da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural</i> / Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Established by Decree n°56 of 4 Oct. 1991, revoking decree n° 11 of 28 May 1988.
17 June 2003 – 10 June 2009	MINADER: <i>Ministério da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural</i> /Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Established by Decree n° 8 of 17 June 2003. Revoked by Decree n° 13 of 17 June 2009.
10 June 2009 – 4 June 2010	MINAGRI: <i>Ministério da Agricultura</i> /Ministry of Agriculture	Established by Decree n° 13 of 10 June 2009. Revoked by Decree n° 92 of 4 June 2010.
4 June 2010 – 3 December 2012	MINADERP: <i>Ministério de Agricultura, Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas</i> /Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries	Approved by Decree n° 92 of 4 June 2010. Revoked by Decree n° 228 of 3 December 2012.
3 December 2012 – 9 May 2014	MINAGRI: <i>Ministério da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural</i> /Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Established by Decree n° 228 of 3 December 2012. Revoked by article 2 of Decree n° 100 of 9 May 2014.
9 May 2014 – 25 January 2018	MINAGRI: <i>Ministério da Agricultura</i> /Ministry of Agriculture	Established by Decree n°100 of 9 May 2014. Revoked by Decree n° 15 of 25 January 2018.
25 January 2018 – 23 June 2020	MINAGRIF: <i>Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas</i> /Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	Established by Decree n°15 of 25 January 2018. Revoked by Decree n° 177 of 23 June 2020.
23 June 2020 - Present	MINAGRIF: <i>Ministério da Agricultura e Pescas</i> /Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Established by Decree n° 177 of 23 June 2020.

^a Official information concerning the Ministry of Agriculture between 1975 and 2003 version is extremely sparse.

Source: *Diário da República* (17 June 2003: 895-907, 10 June 2009: 222, 7 April 2011: 2519, 3 December 2012: 5902, 9 May 2014: 2181-2182, 25 January 2018: 117-118).

The Ministry of Agriculture is nominally put in charge of the rural economy while playing an implementation role subservient to the executive. However, the role of “rural development” was moved from MINAGRI to the *Ministério da Família e Promoção da Mulher* (MINFAMU, Ministry of Family and the Promotion of Women)⁷⁴⁴ in 2012⁷⁴⁵, justified as an attempt to put more emphasis on the development of rural women and family agriculture.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴⁴ The Ministry was first established in 1997, transformed from the State Secretary for the Promotion and Development of Women created in 1991 (Pereira, *Desenvolvimento de políticas*, 9).

⁷⁴⁵ The designation of “rural development” is highlighted in the first paragraph of the presidential decree n° 138 of 20 June 2012. See: *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 117, Luanda, 20 June 2012: 2735.

⁷⁴⁶ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2012*, 64; CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2014*, 86.

This would be a significant policy change, as a decade earlier MINFAMU was found to have “little to say about rural women” and instead looked at women’s development as becoming beneficiaries of policies and programs rather than as primary producers,⁷⁴⁷ despite agriculture being their primary source of (self) employment.

Before receiving the portfolio of “rural development”, MINFAMU’s biggest role in rural areas was leading its micro credit program in 2002, which was ultimately limited in its reach due to a chronic lack of resources.⁷⁴⁸ Nevertheless, this policy choice seems extremely significant. The breadth and depth of this transfer is not entirely clear, yet relatively little information exists to explain its consequences. However, only months earlier in April 2011 the government established the *Direção Nacional de Desenvolvimento Rural* (DNDR, National Direction of Rural Development), in service to MINADERP, with the role of “defining policies and strategies as well as the realization of actions towards the development of communities and rural areas”.⁷⁴⁹ As the official name changes suggest by omitting “rural development” in their official titles post-2014, the subsequent Ministries of Agriculture were not uniquely charged with this particular responsibility. The subsequent mutations of the institutional structures tasked with tackling “rural development” will be developed in §7.2.3 with the changes instilled by the administration of João Lourenço.

Adding another layer to the web of institutional complexities governing the rural spaces is the mystery hiding behind the personnel at the top of the decision-making circles. Unsurprisingly in times of war, institutions are going to undergo instability. This can be seen through the cycle of Agricultural Ministers from 1976 to 1991 when a mandate averaged around 3 years. Interestingly, according to the official website of the Ministry of Agriculture, in 1991 three separate ministers were appointed (Fernando Faustino Muteka, Isaac Francisco Maria dos Anjos & Carlos António Fernandes). Stability came throughout the following decades, with the mandates averaging eight years until 2016 right before the presidential transition. This stability over the last few decades is however overshadowed by a debate on who is actually in charge of policy regarding the rural economy beyond the executive, both institutionally and personnel-wise. There are rumors of a “*ministro sombra da Agricultura*”

⁷⁴⁷ Kajsa Pehrsson, *Towards Gender Equality in Angola*, Stockholm, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, April 2000, 43. https://www.sida.se/contentassets/e1a96dfb3f944587a60dd948b2e8a062/towards-gender-equality-in-angola_2690.pdf.

⁷⁴⁸ Pereira, *Desenvolvimento de políticas*, 9.

⁷⁴⁹ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 65, anexos, Luanda, 7 April 2011: 2520.

(shadow Minister of Agriculture) who has been directing agricultural policy without the actual working title. Given the ‘shadow’ cloaking this individual, it is difficult to verify what power dynamics are truly going on behind the scenes in the Ministry of Agriculture.

To further confuse the situation, the individual identified as the “shadow minister” depends on the source of the information. According to Rafael Marques de Morais, an Angolan journalist who has won multiple awards for his investigative journalism, the ‘shadow minister’ of Angola’s rural political economy is Joaquim Duarte José Gomes who officially occupied the position of Director of the *Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatística* (GEPE, Cabinet for Studies, Planning and Statistics) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, first installed in this position within MINADER in September 2007⁷⁵⁰ until being removed by executive decree n° 3121 of 4 November 2016.⁷⁵¹ While this was his official position, “unofficially he had been known to Angolans as the shadow minister – the real power behind the scenes at the Ministry – for more than two decades”.⁷⁵² This timeline does fit perfectly with the tenure of then-Minister of Agriculture Afonso Pedro Canga (2007–2016). However, according to reports from Club-K, this “shadow minister” is in fact Carlos Alberto Jaime, known as “Calabeto”.⁷⁵³

Trained in mechanized agriculture in Cuba and at times referred to as the ‘cousin’ of the President, “Calabeto” has held various titles linked to the rural economy, notably as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gesterra since its founding in 2001, which is directly linked with the powerful business arm of the MPLA via the *Sociedade de Gestão e Participações Financeiras* (GEFI, Management and Business Participation Company). GEFI “is reported to have invested wide-ranging interests in banking, aviation, hotels, breweries, media and telecoms, agribusiness, and industry”.⁷⁵⁴ The company was set up on 21 Sept 1992 one week before the general elections,⁷⁵⁵ likely as an insurance policy to ensure the MPLA’s hold on

⁷⁵⁰ Angop, “Ministério da Agricultura empossa novos directores”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 4 Sept. 2007. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2007/8/36/Ministerio-Agricultura-empossa-novos-directores,f321053d-56a4-4b52-aaac-27920c71f6ce.html.

⁷⁵¹ Joaquim Duarte José Gomes was replaced by Altemiro Jorge de Ceita Diogo through decree n° 1174 of 10 April 2018.

⁷⁵² Ricardo Marques de Morais, “Angola’s ‘Money Pit’ Currency Museum”, MakaAngola, Luanda, 1 Nov. 2018. <https://www.makaangola.org/2018/11/angolas-money-pit-currency-museum/>.

⁷⁵³ Club-K, “Director da agricultura irrita Jaime ‘Calabeto’”, Luanda, 25 Feb. 2013, Club-K.net. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14421:director-da-agricultura-irrita-calabeto&catid=8&Itemid=1071&lang=pt.

⁷⁵⁴ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 126.

⁷⁵⁵ Rafael Marques de Morais, *MPLA, Sociedade Anónima*, MakaAngola, Luanda, 2012, 7.

access to certain levers of government power regardless of the results of the election that they ultimately won.⁷⁵⁶

Another Club-K report from 2014 describes how “Calabeto” turned down the offer of José Eduardo dos Santos to fill the role as the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development after he had been tasked by the President in April 2010 to do a full study on the state of agriculture in the country at the time. “Calabeto” turned down the official position and instead took on the management of nineteen separate projects involved in rural development.⁷⁵⁷ Furthermore, Club-K also published a report in February 2013 on conflicts within the Ministry of Agriculture between Joaquim Duarte José Gomes and Carlos Alberto Jaime “Calabeto” as then-director of Gesterra. Joaquim Duarte José Gomes, as director of the GEPE, is in charge of the overall operations of Gesterra, but “Calabeto” had been cutting him out of requests for approving Gesterra programs by speaking directly with the then-Minister of Agriculture Pedro Canga.⁷⁵⁸ Judging by the detailed documentation accrued of “Calabeto” playing key strategic roles within the Ministry of Agriculture without holding specific ministerial titles, it appears that it is indeed “Calabeto” who is the described “shadow minister” of Agriculture “for more than two decades”.⁷⁵⁹ However, as per the shadowy nature of this claim and these actions, little is publicly known about the power struggles between these men and Minister Afonso Pedro Canga. These relationships need to be better understood in order to understand the true influences and direction behind the Ministry of Agriculture. The role of “Calabeto” in the administration of José Eduardo dos Santos will be further discussed in §6.2.4 and his status in the administration of President João Lourenço will be discussed in §7.2.2.

⁷⁵⁶ For a comprehensive look on the vast business portfolio of GEFI, see: Morais, *MPLA, Sociedade Anónima*, 2012.

⁷⁵⁷ Club-K, “‘Calabeto’ reconsidera convite para dirigir agricultura”, Luanda, 19 March 2014, Club-K.net. https://club-k.net/~clubknet/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=17705:calabeto-pondera-convite&catid=8&Itemid=1071&lang=pt.

⁷⁵⁸ Club-K, “Director da agricultura irrita Jaime ‘Calabeto’”, Luanda, 25 Feb. 2013, Club-K.net. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14421:director-da-agricultura-irrita-calabeto&catid=8&Itemid=1071&lang=pt.

⁷⁵⁹ Morais, “Angola’s ‘Money Pit’”, 2018.

Tableau 20 - Evolution of Ministers of Agriculture

Name	Mandate
Carlos António Fernandes	1976-1978
Manuel Pedro Pacavira	1978-1981
Artur Vidal Gomes	1981-1983
Evaristo Domingos Kimba	1983-1987
Fernando Faustino Muteka	1987-1991
Isaac Francisco Maria dos Anjos	1991-1999
Carlos António Fernandes	1997-1999
Gilberto Buta Lutucuta	1999-2007
Afonso Pedro Canga	2007-2016
Marcos Alexandre Nhunga	2016-2019
António Francisco de Assis	2019-present

Source: Website of MINAGRIF: <http://www.minagrif.gov.ao/Institucionais/Historico.aspx> (accessed 20 Feb. 2020).

Beyond the Ministry, adding to the multiplication of institutional missions for rural development was the revitalization of the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute of Agrarian Development). Two years after “rural development” had been moved to MINFAMU, the government revamped the mandate of the IDA through presidential decree n° 58 of 2014. Initially created by decree n° 42 of 22 July 1989, it was mostly shuttered during the war, but was given new life through article 23 of decree n° 8 of 2003.⁷⁶⁰ Shortly afterwards in 2004, this decree moved into action as IDA declared that they needed to hire a chief director, a head agronomist, five agronomists, two administrators, an assistant and a qualified worker for each of their 77 *Estações de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (EDA, Agricultural Development Stations), totaling 847 workers.⁷⁶¹ Working through the tutelage of the Ministry of Agriculture, IDA was mandated “to assure the development, coordination and execution of the policies and strategies in the area of agricultural and livestock farming as well as technology transfer, particularly in the promotion of family agriculture and in support of rural communities”.⁷⁶² Under this framework, family agricultural policy, i.e. “rural development” would be run from the Ministry of Agriculture through the IDA in connection with its counterparts at the *município* level, the EDAs.⁷⁶³ According to the World Bank, the

⁷⁶⁰ Angola, Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário, Ministério da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural, *Programa de Extensão e Desenvolvimento Rural: Sumário Executivo*, Projecto portal do governo, 37. [n.d.]a.

⁷⁶¹ Angop, “Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário necessita de 847 funcionários”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 11 Aug. 2004. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2004/7/33/Instituto-Desenvolvimento-Agrario-necessita-847-funcionarios,84be8690-0927-4b10-9692-663c72a80fd4.html.

⁷⁶² *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 42, Luanda, 3 March 2014: 1301. <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/ang132007.pdf>.

⁷⁶³ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 198.

At the local level, EDAs were tasked with being the facilitator between State-Owned Enterprises such as Dinama and Agrosegmentos and the peasantry, tasked with supporting “peasant associations by helping with organization, technical, financial, and marketing services. The intention is to transform the state farms into peasant associations. Unlike state farms peasant associations do not collectivize production”.⁷⁶⁸ While peasant associations were initially intended to be transformed into cooperatives, they ultimately became loose networks of peasant households capable of making productive decisions independently. Through the IDA, the EDAs were designed

to receive supplies and deliver them to the peasant associations through lower level *Centros de Desenvolvimento Agrícola* (CDAs). The CDAs in turn direct the activities of the *dinamizadores rurais*⁷⁶⁹...[who] face the same problems as all institutions set up to serve agriculture, notably a lack of training, an excessive centralization, and a lack of resources.⁷⁷⁰

Where available, the CDAs formed the most direct and lowest level link between peasant associations and public assistance. In an increasingly bureaucratized institutional framework, the IDA worked through the EDAs and the CDAs, though as resources stretched thin the roles of the EDA and CDA often merged.

In order for this complex setup to work, *município* administrations would have to be empowered with a higher capacity of coordination and planning in order to reconcile the various interests and powers involved.⁷⁷¹ Given that the provincial governments retain the major power centers outside of Luanda, this empowerment has not come to pass. In 2004, there were 77 EDAs distributed throughout fourteen provinces, including eleven in Malanje, nine in Cuanza-Norte, Huambo and Huíla, seven in Benguela and Cuanza-Sul, five in Uíje, four in Cabinda and Bengo, three in Bié, two in Luanda, Namibe and Cuando Cubango, and one in Cunene.⁷⁷² Five of these stations became inoperable, while “the 72 functional EDAs

⁷⁶⁸ UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory*, 238.

⁷⁶⁹ *Dinamizadores rurais*, or extension agents, were tasked with expanding production through the introduction of new farming tools or techniques. The training programs for these agents are weak, with about a third of them having any formal training in agriculture, oftentimes consisting of three to six months. See: UNDP & World Bank, *Angola: An introductory review (in two volumes) Volume II*, Report n° 7283-ANG, 26 June 1989, 237-238.

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁷⁷¹ CEIC, *Relatório económico anual 2007*, 65.

⁷⁷² Angop, “Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário reabilita dezoito Estações Agrícolas”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 6 July 2004. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2004/6/28/Instituto-Desenvolvimento-Agrario-reabilita-dezoito-Estacoes-Agricolas,3de37b3d-bf77-4cc1-853f-96973437116e.html.

are badly equipped, not just in desks and other means of work, but also in transportation means for the technical workers alongside the rural communities”.⁷⁷³ Taking into consideration the extensive institutional network necessary for rural policy to be enacted between the Ministry of Agriculture, the IDA working to coordinate it, the EDAs organizing it and the CDAs tasked with delivering it, added onto the “rural development” mandate of MINFAMU, it is little wonder why rural development policies have proven to be historically scattershot, inconsistent, and underperforming.

The confounding result of these transformations seems to be the apparent gap in policy and discourse through the consolidation of the executive in the overall direction of the agricultural sector, alongside the broad delegation and diffusion of responsibilities in analyzing, executing and managing the programs eventually decided upon. More importantly, this split between the “rural development” policies between the Ministry of Agriculture and MINFAMU calls into question the government’s definition of the concept of ‘development’ and its social and economic links, given the stagnating socio-economic advances among the populations in the peripheries.

3.3.5 THE OVERBEARING WEIGHT OF THE STATE

The MPLA’s decades of rural development dysfunction and disorganization has ultimately strangled out private investment incentives while constructing a network where farmers, whether individuals, peasant associations, cooperatives or companies, are required to pass through public enterprises or agencies to acquire the resources and services necessary to operate successfully. As we have seen in documenting its institutional structure, the state is both omnipresent in the rural economy, yet its presence is weak, ineffectual, and arguably detrimental⁷⁷⁴ despite its serious efforts.

⁷⁷³ Angola, Ministério da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural & Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário, *Programa de Extensão e Desenvolvimento Rural (PEDR)*, Luanda, 1 Jan. 2004, 9. <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/ang163441.pdf>.

⁷⁷⁴ The current broad push for divesting the state from the rural economy is testament to the changing opinions among government officials as to the benefits or hindrances its presence has caused for the agriculture sector. See chapter seven for a broad discussion on this topic.

This domination of the state over the rural economy is a symptom that expands across the economy as a whole: “Taken together, SOE [State-owned enterprises] assets still represent 78 percent of the country’s GDP today, despite several waves of privatization since the 1990s, *about five times the SSA average*”.⁷⁷⁵ While this statistic is heavily skewed due to the weight of Sonangol, SOEs are spread throughout Angola’s economy. Their presence will be further revealed in chapter seven of this study as the new President João Lourenço has taken the decision to offload nearly 200 public companies. Ricardo Soares de Oliveira summarizes the MPLA’s rural strategy likewise: “In order to create and consolidate this rural footprint, the party-state has pursued three major strategies: ‘decentralisation’, cooptation of traditional authorities,⁷⁷⁶ and the discharge of state responsibilities to non-state entities”.⁷⁷⁷ While this three-prong strategy mostly corresponds to this study’s analysis, the last point is much more nuanced.

It is true that the state has chronically underfunded sectors that require basic service delivery, as clearly pointed out by Pavignani & Colombo⁷⁷⁸ in their description of the health care sector and humanitarian assistance more generally towards the end of the civil war; a practice that has been practiced afterwards. In this circumstance, the role of the non-state entities taking up these responsibilities traditionally assigned to the state is made clear, especially in its role for providing foodstuffs, “the largest single component of relief aid, account for 70% of total humanitarian aid in 2002, 60% in 2003 and 57% in 2004”.⁷⁷⁹ Yet the fact that SOEs are five times more prevalent in the country’s economy than Sub-Saharan Africa’s average shows that the party-state has actually sought to consolidate its rural footprint specifically in the economic sectors by inserting itself into strategic areas best positioned to control the rents produced by the agricultural sector.

While discharging these fundamental responsibilities of basic services, the party-state of the MPLA has doubled down on meddling in other more economically-centered services that would traditionally be left to private enterprise to fill these spaces. This MPLA

⁷⁷⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 8, emphasis mine.

⁷⁷⁶ See §1.3.3 and §1.3.4 for the discussion of the MPLA’s effects on traditional authority (embodied in the *soba*).

⁷⁷⁷ Oliveira, & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 176.

⁷⁷⁸ Pavignani & Colombo, *Providing health*, 2001.

⁷⁷⁹ UNDP, *Economic Report on Angola in 2002-2004: “Defusing the Remnants of War”*, Luanda, May 2005, 53. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/angola/docs/documents/UNDP_AO_Economic-Report_2002-2004.pdf

omnipresence across the economy was always somewhat present, but the quantity and size of its tentacles has only recently been revealed with the arrival of João Lourenço to the presidency and his decision to privatize underperforming state companies. By creating such a broad range of public enterprises, the state is *de facto* taking on new responsibilities, and oftentimes in areas of the economy that states are not traditionally active, rather than passive, participants. Its footprint is still clearly visible in the everyday lives of rural communities, but in ways that are more akin to a socialist economy where the state plays an omnipresent centralizing role. The lingering role of the state in the economy, after the supposed transition to a market economy, is an extremely important point to keep in mind when analyzing the ‘economic diversification’ strategy of the José Eduardo dos Santos regime that poured hundreds of millions of US dollars into programs big and small, from contracting tractors for Mekanagro or SOPIR digging irrigation canals, to constructing a string of massive state-run agricultural complexes, despite the former failure of similar policy led by the same party-state.

3.4 UNITA’s peripheral shadow

Another important socio-cultural aspect reigning across the countryside, lying dormant deep inside the minds of Angolans having lived through the civil war or learned about its realities, is the enduring power and presence of the role that UNITA and, to a lesser extent, the FNLA, played in the war. UNITA was originally composed of former members of the FNLA who claimed to represent ethnic groups not integrated in FNLA or MPLA programs, later consolidating around the Ovimbundu peoples and setting itself up as a complete contrast to the MPLA.⁷⁸⁰ Today, UNITA remains an understudied aspect of Angolan Studies due to the considerable constraints faced by researchers, though the political environment in the country seems to be opening up to more freedom of expression after the transfer of power to President João Lourenço. Given the fierce fighting and the groups’ peripheral territorial strongholds, reliable statistics and documentation are even more rare for UNITA’s short reign in the countryside than with the MPLA.

However, the Overton Window model, analyzing how once controversial ideas in society change over time until the right historical moment aligns the idea with the larger

⁷⁸⁰ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 78-79.

political will to make it policy, appears to be aligning for researchers on UNITA and rural dynamics to fulfill important fieldwork that has been heretofore stifled by fear, mistrust and political interests. A deep analysis of UNITA is not within the scope of this work, but an understanding of how its legacy has affected the relationship with the current government and the rural population is an underlying interest of this study and remains a keen subject of future scholarship on the question. The clear urban-rural divide created through the civil war, politically, culturally, socially, and economically, makes a better understanding of UNITA's legacy on rural Angola a fundamental area for modern Angolan Studies going forward.

3.4.1 SHAPE-SHIFTING 'STATES'

Until relatively recently, the main narrative lines weaving together UNITA's historical narrative have been distilled into a two stage evolution between its 1980s conventional Cold War character, morphing in the 1990s into a destructive resource war of attrition, wherein UNITA controlled "up to 80% of the national territory and its diamond mining areas".⁷⁸¹ The notion of 'control' is relative, however, as the loss and gain of territory was in constant flux in bordering areas. This notion extends to the populations that lived near or under UNITA operations as weak territorial control translates to a weakened capacity to impose any durable sense of authority and adhesion to a common political cause.⁷⁸²

Upon independence, when the MPLA declared the People's Republic of Angola in Luanda, UNITA and the FNLA similarly declared their own Democratic People's Republic (DPRA) in Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa), at the time the country's second largest city, though it was never officially recognized.⁷⁸³ Even in spaces under *de facto* UNITA control its lack of overall resources, organizational capacity and its difficulties in setting up reliable supply chains made its ability to secure and institutionalize a permanent presence extremely difficult. Furthermore, this territorial instability was a part of UNITA's military strategy itself,

⁷⁸¹ Didier Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars and State Formation. Violence and the Politics of Legitimacy in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire and South Sudan*, Working paper, Geneva, Université de Genève, July 2019, 12, 14. https://www.swisspeace.ch/assets/publications/downloads/69e83133d2/2016_Peclard_Working-Paper.pdf.

⁷⁸² Messiant, "Angola, les voies", 180.

⁷⁸³ Marek Garzdecki, "Recent History", in *Africa South of the Sahara 2004*, (London: Europa Publications, Psychology Press, 2003), 40.

upending the livelihoods of certain populations to cause more logistical problems for the MPLA receiving them, thereby making migration a *de facto* “instrument of war”.⁷⁸⁴

Much of UNITA’s nation-building project was implemented to varying degrees⁷⁸⁵ depending on the geographical location of the spaces, the infrastructural heritage of the urban areas occupied in the 1990s and their relative connections with their limited supply chains and logistics capacities. It is therefore little surprise that among the 80% of the national territory it temporarily controlled, it was “[i]n the South of the country, where it established its main military bases and built its ‘bush capital’ Jamba⁷⁸⁶ [that] UNITA tried to put into practice its alternative view of the nation”.⁷⁸⁷ The strategic alliance with the apartheid Republic of South Africa (RSA) along the southern border provided a much-improved transportation, distribution, and logistics network, making the area a natural headquarters for the factional group. The end of the 1990s saw the MPLA overtake UNITA’s stronghold in the central highlands and by the end of the century multiple bases along the Zambian border were also captured, straining UNITA’s safe territory to resupply its dwindling resources.⁷⁸⁸ After beating back the South African troops and securing the international borders, omnipresent fragility of territorial control has remained a constant marker within Angola’s countryside.

Given these flexible ‘borders’, limited options existed for establishing a functional economy. Diamonds became the “lifeblood” of UNITA, particularly after “the withdrawal of US and South African support in the early 1990s”.⁷⁸⁹ The defeat of South African forces to Cuban-backed troops at the famous Battle of Cuito-Cuanavale in January/February of

⁷⁸⁴ Personal interview, Allan Cain, founder and director of DW, 27 July 2017.

⁷⁸⁵ Gilson Lázaro specifically notes the fluid nature of UNITA’s territorial and ideological control in the northern provinces of Uíge and Zaire, replacing the fading FNLA forces in the form of a ‘brother movement’, as well as its tenuous territorial hold within the Lobito-Bocoio corridor (Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars and State Formation*, 13). The Lobito corridor runs along the commercially vital colonial railway that connects the port of Lobito (Benguela province) to Tenke (Katana province) in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia’s copper mines, running through the provinces of Benguela, Huambo, Bié and Moxico.

⁷⁸⁶ The period that Jamba remained UNITA’s *de facto* capital is not entirely clear according to the literature. In reading Justin Pearce’s PhD dissertation, he notes that UNITA left Huambo in February 1976, setting up various temporary bases until settling in Jamba in December 1979 (*Control, ideology and identity in civil war: The Angolan Central Highlands 1965-2002*, PhD dissertation, Oxford, University of Oxford, 2011, 166, 200). However, in his 2008 article translated into French, it is noted that UNITA was forced from Huambo in 1993 (assuming for the second time, though it is not clear from the article) and headed to Jamba where it would stay “until the beginnings of 1990s”, which is nonsensical time-wise, likely meaning to note ‘until the 2000s’ (Justin Pearce, “L’UNITA à la recherche de « son peuple »”, *Politique Africaine*, 2, no. 110, (2008): 49.

⁷⁸⁷ Didier Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars and State Formation*, 13.

⁷⁸⁸ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 16.

⁷⁸⁹ Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy”, 68.

1988 marked a definitive turning point for UNITA's foreign alliances.⁷⁹⁰ South Africa began its retreat and the United States saw the writing on the wall and began to mend its diplomatic fences with the MPLA. The territory UNITA controlled came under further strain after the fall of the Soviet Union as communism was seen (rightly so) as losing its capacity of international influence and the United States no longer saw strategic interest in supporting the guerrilla group.⁷⁹¹ The diamond trade and rudimentary mining in general became vital contributors to the rural economy, beyond its foundations of agriculture and cattle-raising. However, the vertical nature of mining's production and distribution networks makes it difficult to methodologically discern their socio-economic impacts on the local populations. With the selective liberalization of the economy, the development of the mining sector in particular will be a rich area of interest to continue understanding the dynamics of how economic development translates to social development.

3.4.2 DEEPENING THE URBAN-RURAL SOCIAL DIVIDE

As a guerrilla movement, UNITA was established by Jonas Savimbi on 15 March 1966 as an organization that claimed to represent first and foremost “the majority rural African populations against white colonial domination and positioned itself as a direct opposite to the mulatto-dominated, urban-based MPLA”.⁷⁹² While its identity was established with its rural roots in the central highlands, its ideological belief structure was much more pragmatic than fundamentalist. Its ‘anti-colonial’ message was a rhetorical political tool, but it did not stop it from partnering with Apartheid South Africans violating the country's territorial sovereignty or from accepting CIA assistance from the United States.

Instead, Savimbi constructed a ‘nativist’ nationalist discourse to project a self-crafted image of himself in order to position himself as a political counterpower to champion the “marginalized people from the interior of the country”.⁷⁹³ Marginalization was chiefly identified as the distance from the social hierarchy established through the legacy of colonial

⁷⁹⁰ For an in-depth review of how the Battle of Cuito-Cuanavale played out, with the Cubans at the heart of the narrative, see: Edward George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965-1999. From Che Guevara to Cuito Cuanavale*, (Oxon-New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 214-235.

⁷⁹¹ Menezes, *Dinâmica da Transição*, 209.

⁷⁹² Assis Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers: Violence in Post-Colonial Angola* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007), 66-67.

⁷⁹³ Didier Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars and State Formation*, 13.

rule, though pragmatism pushed him to accept certain rural social groups that found themselves once part of or connected to the colonial regime, yet cut off post-independence. By partnering with the Portuguese to fight against the MPLA or working in tandem with the South Africans, UNITA demonstrated how *realpolitik* trumped any core ideology beyond the pure pursuit of power to install an Afro-centrist nationalist power structure opposing rural indigenous culture over the supposedly imported urbanized model projected by the MPLA.

3.4.3 SYSTEMIC SABOTAGE AND THE WEAPONIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

As part of leveraging its political power during the transitional period, UNITA engaged in a campaign of infrastructural sabotage in an attempt to have its demands recognized and apply maximum political pressure, a strategy first learned from its complicated relationship battling against the MPLA firstly in alliance with the Portuguese until switching positions and fighting against them. With interests and alliances fundamentally changing between the war for independence and the growing civil war, the economic sabotage campaign created significant new risks in its goal to demarcate itself as the forebearer of rural Angola. The Lobito corridor being essentially held hostage by UNITA is a perfect example, given its importance of being a key transportation route for both national and international interests.⁷⁹⁴ UNITA forces first began damaging the rail lines on Christmas Eve 1966 during the colonial war, with successive attacks ultimately closing the line in August 1975.⁷⁹⁵ This in turn sabotaged the economic interests along the route, including key cash crop producers from the central plateau between Nova Lisboa (Huambo) and Silva Porto (Kuito).

Despite being scheduled to reopen in August 1976, UNITA guerrillas assured that any maintenance in one area would lead to destruction in another, with Savimbi declaring that the route “would remain closed until a political settlement was reached between UNITA

⁷⁹⁴ See §1.1.6 for a review of the railway’s importance. It was also key to natural resource exports for Zaire, Zambia, and Northern Rhodesia, leveraging international interests for national ambitions.

⁷⁹⁵ Ana Duarte, Regina Santos, & Elling Tjonneland, *Angola’s Lobito Corridor. From reconstruction to development*, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 4, no. 5, April 2014, 2.
<https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/5120-angolas-lobito-corridor.pdf>.

and MPLA”.⁷⁹⁶ As the war heated up, transport by train (cargo and passengers) declined dramatically. One decade after the outbreak of the war, “the value of Angolan railway systems had fallen to 12 percent of the 1974 figure”.⁷⁹⁷ In the short time period between the war of independence and the civil war, those directly affected by this strategy of sabotage quickly transformed from fellow colonized Angolans into potential allies or enemies to UNITA’s cause.

With UNITA’s initial headquarters in Huambo and its territorial stronghold throughout the central plateau, its sabotage strategy was a double-edge sword. With its sights on putting pressure on the MPLA, it was simultaneously inflicting considerable hardship on the farmers in UNITA’s territory, now unable to transport parts of their production. Further undermining the peoples within its control, the starvation and malnourishment provoked by the disruption of agriculture “led social banditry to re-emerge in its traditional zones”.⁷⁹⁸ The power of food production quickly became seen as both a tool and target of war. UNITA’s sabotage was designed to provoke famine in MPLA-dominated urban areas, while also mining the areas outside the cities to keep the urban dwellers from producing their own food in peri-urban fields. Likewise, the MPLA attacked peasants and smallholders outside the cities, accusing them of feeding UNITA troops, while “their fields and crops were regarded as war targets by MPLA”.⁷⁹⁹ The practice of farming found itself in the middle of the war for resources.

The peasants were caught in the crossfire of the two warring parties and increasingly abandoned to their own means. This abandonment of the MPLA made them prime targets for recruitment into the UNITA camp, allowing it also to extend its territory beyond its “traditional” base of support.⁸⁰⁰ Farmers were targeted specifically for their role in food production, but in reality “the MPLA regarded all people in the bush as Unita supporters”.⁸⁰¹ It remains unclear how anchored this mentality that “bush” equals “Unita” remains in the MPLA ethos today, or if the idea faded in peacetime. As agriculture became attacked on both sides of the war, the ability to provide food to its people became a pressing priority.

⁷⁹⁶ W. Martin James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola, 1974-1990* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 192.

⁷⁹⁷ World Bank, *Angola: An Introductory*, 265.

⁷⁹⁸ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 236.

⁷⁹⁹ Inge Brinkman, “War and Identity in Angola: Two Case-Studies”, *Lusotopie*, (2003): 213.

⁸⁰⁰ Christine Messiant, “Angola, les voies”, 176.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 215.

3.4.4 SECURING FOOD SECURITY

The food security situation within UNITA territory was especially scarce due to the group's notorious hostility in allowing outsiders to operate in the areas it controlled, creating logistical difficulties in properly documenting the social needs within its territory, though it had reportedly set up "rudimentary services in the areas under its control".⁸⁰² Though difficult to document, some believed that

food insecurity has been less acute in UNITA than in government areas, due to the higher access to arable land in the former, and to the tight military discipline imposed on the peasants forced to cultivate the movement's elite and the army while still being able to keep part of their harvest for self-consumption.⁸⁰³

This question of 'acuteness' is relative, however. Others found the opposite whereas food insecurity "was particularly acute in UNITA demobilization areas".⁸⁰⁴ Justin Pearce notes that peasant farmers almost certainly gave more than they could have received from UNITA and the relationship "was above all a matter of extracting".⁸⁰⁵ Nevertheless, social control over the peasants living within its territory was orchestrated by playing on the traditional power structure.

UNITA's management, through its deep Ovimbundu cultural knowledge, understood the deep and inherent importance of the traditional chiefs for the populations and thus made an arrangement where the chiefs could maintain their prestige and privilege as long as they provided support to UNITA if and when they were called upon to provide conscripted soldiers or food for their soldiers, at times in exchange for bartered goods from South Africa or Namibia due to a lack of money in the "liberated areas".⁸⁰⁶ The question of the weaponization of food in the civil war could shed important light on how the questions of food production and food security are influenced today, both by the government and the population at large. In a country with a deep agrarian tradition, this important point could be significantly expanded upon through extensive interviews with the rural populations having experienced conditions on the ground.

⁸⁰² Pavignani & Colombo, *Providing health services*, 7, 12.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁸⁰⁴ Hughes, "Economy", 48.

⁸⁰⁵ Pearce, *Control, ideology*, 191.

⁸⁰⁶ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 263.

3.4.5 THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN DDR

Emerging from the civil war, the different *Desmobilização, desarmamento e reintegração* (DDR, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration) protocols to reintegrate former soldiers into the population were an overall success in establishing peace, supported by a strong network of faith-based organizations.⁸⁰⁷ The vast scale of this DDR campaign is demonstrated by the sheer numbers: concentrated in the inner provinces, UNITA ex-combatants and family members were estimated to include approximately 500,000 people,⁸⁰⁸ beyond the resettling of up to four million internally displaced civilians.⁸⁰⁹ The central driver of this effort was the *Programa Geral de Desmobilização e Reintegração* (PGDR, General Program of Demobilization and Reintegration), financed by the World Bank at US\$45 million and implemented by the *Instituto de Reintegração Social dos Ex-Militares* (IRSEM, Institute of Ex-Soldier Social Reintegration), which sought to resettle around 138,000 demobilized soldiers and their families (105,000 former UNITA combatants and 33,000 soldiers of the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA)) into the provinces of Benguela, Bié, Huambo, Huíla, Cuanza Sul and Malange from 2003-2006.⁸¹⁰ Demobilizing soldiers after war then necessitates the long-term perspective of setting them up with a viable future.

The Reintegration phase of the process “has been predominantly agriculture, for example, the delivering of seeds, tools, fertilisers, as well as training and technical assistance”.⁸¹¹ This component of the DDR process was to

be implemented by partners already working in the agricultural sector (FAO, WFP [World Food Program], GTZ [German Development Cooperation], CARE) through the provision of

⁸⁰⁷ One concrete example of this faith-based DDR campaign is that of Father Benedicto Sánchez Peña of the Catholic *Espiritanos* community. From 2000-2011, Father Sánchez organized 65 discussions with over 25,000 military members (both current and former) in which he preached on his *Os Sete Caminhos da Reconciliação* (The Seven Paths of Reconciliation) in which the topics discussed evolved alongside the social, political and religious changes within the society. Personal communications, Luanda, August 2017. For further information, see Appendix #10.

⁸⁰⁸ Imogen Parsons, “Beyond the silencing of guns: demobilization, disarmament and reintegration”, in, *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 40.

⁸⁰⁹ João Gomes Porto & Imogen Parsons, *Sustaining the Peace in Angola: An Overview of Current Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration*, Paper 27, Bonn, Bonn International Center for Conversion, 2003, 8. https://www.bicc.de/uploads/tx_bicctools/paper27.pdf.

⁸¹⁰ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 1127-128.

⁸¹¹ EC, *Country Level Evaluation*, 24.

support to returning ex-combatants and their families as well as the provision of appropriate seeds, tools, and basic inputs such as fertilizer, veterinary drugs, and technical assistance.⁸¹²

However, comprehensive reviews of the myriad DDR initiatives are sparse.⁸¹³ For the interest of furthering this study, it would be important to better understand how the former UNITA soldiers and their families were reintegrated into the agricultural sector and, in some cases, introduced into specific farming development schemes along the lines of the one of the most famous examples, Aldeia Nova.⁸¹⁴

Aldeia Nova is a major PPP project inaugurated in 2005 by the President José Eduardo dos Santos located in Waku-Kungu, Cuanza Sul province financed in part by the Ministry of Agriculture (US\$70.5 million), the World Bank and the European Union, built strategically on the colonial infrastructure of the colony of Cela.⁸¹⁵ The geographic placement represents another of Christopher Cramer's "trend in continuity" described previously in §2.2.2. The project initially planned for 600 families.⁸¹⁶ The farm is organized on "the Israeli Moshav model of private, small holder agriculture and joint services" with each family, including those of demobilized UNITA and MPLA soldiers, each receiving 30 hectares of land to work, a 70m² house equipped with basic necessities, each with three hectares of personal land, distributed throughout fifteen villages each with 27 hectares for community farming.⁸¹⁷ The project is managed by the Israeli group LR The Aldeia Nova model leads to broader questions as to what role the agricultural sector has played in 'keeping the peace' in Angola. More research needs to be done to find out how many soldiers have been assisted in these initiatives and how the projects have evolved since the implementation of the DDR protocols.

⁸¹² Porto & Parsons, *Sustaining the Peace*, 78.

⁸¹³ For some research dedicated to the issue, see: *Ibid*, Parsons, "Beyond the silencing", 40-43; EC, *Country Level Evaluation*, 24-25, 105-124, in the bibliography.

⁸¹⁴ José Casimiro, "Antigos militares realizam sonho de vida nova", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 10 August 2013. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/reportagem/antigos_militares_realizam_sonho_de_vida_nova.

⁸¹⁵ Quitari, "Agricultura familiar", 249. See also Garcia Quitari (pgs. 249-255) for a summary of the Aldeia Nova project, which was the subject of his Master's thesis as well.

⁸¹⁶ Angop, "Kwanza-Sul: PR inaugura projecto Aldeia Nova", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 1 Dec. 2005. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2005/11/48/Kwanza-Sul-inaugura-projecto-Aldeia-Nova,70fde3f2-4db1-44e7-9625-0b77fe0157c4.html.

⁸¹⁷ LR group official website. See: <http://lr-group.com/project/adama-aldeia-nova-angola-2/> (accessed 10 Aug. 2020).

3.4.6 A MIXED LASTING LEGACY

The longest lasting and most nefarious result of UNITA's decades-long stronghold in the countryside was its precarious nature of 'statecraft' that held a consistently short-sighted strategy due to its constantly changing situation. Dominating its subjects but unable to provide real development opportunities

UNITA's activities while exploring the resentment of peasant societies prevented the success of attempts to transform social relations in the countryside, either of a socialist or a capitalist nature. The impact of the late colonial war in post-colonial peasant societies was similar to the colonial war: forcing peasants to move backwards in time to subsistence economy and increased poverty.⁸¹⁸

The replacement of UNITA by the MPLA party-state brought little concrete change to the rural populations, particularly in their socio-economic situation. Angola's farmers have remained stuck in rudimentary production methods and little has changed in the modernization of the sector, regardless which political power is or was in place. According to the latest research on the levels of UNITA's influence in the country,

the social, political, economic and cultural grievances that UNITA mobilized in its own legitimization discourse and which were central in the creation and sustaining of its social base throughout the conflict, have not disappeared. Rather, and that has become quite clear in the 2017 elections, UNITA has successfully reshaped this message for a younger, urban electorate less marked by the direct experience or memory of the war, and made substantial gains in some urban constituencies.⁸¹⁹

What are the implications for the government's state-building plans in the periphery in recognition of this continued support for UNITA in its historical strongholds? Has the MPLA sufficiently moved past factional politics in its endeavors to unite the nation that continued UNITA support in certain areas would not influence their decisions in deciding where to plan development programs and provide governmental assistance?

⁸¹⁸ Coelho, *Rupture and Continuity*, 264.

⁸¹⁹ Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars*, 17.

The vestige of UNITA's role in the civil war living in the modern memory of the MPLA, and how it has crafted political decisions, is a phenomenon that will require deeper investigation moving forward. As this chapter has discussed, both the administrations of Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos attempted to take a party-state approach to institutionalizing rural spaces and restarting the agriculture sector, but were constantly hindered by the active presence of Jonas Savimbi's vocal UNITA party structure. The MPLA's territorial grasp was under constant strain, creating vast areas of political vacuums occupied erratically. The inability to form a permanent presence and extend its authority into the periphery led to a fomenting distrust toward the ambitions of private actors operating in the peripheries, accused of working against the national interest (and that of the MPLA, as they were considered one and the same). The desire to embark on the reconstruction effort alone after the war was likely heavily influenced by the final victory over UNITA paving the way to the MPLA's long-held desire to finally achieve total territorial domination, projecting its authority throughout. The next chapter will probe to what extent the countryside was also occupied by a whole different constellation of actors with conflicting loyalties and missions, this time coming in from abroad.

Chapter 4 Internationalization of the countryside & the shifting power balance

Until now, the heavy emphasis of this study has been the main political power players (the ‘elite’) in Angola and how they attempted to organize and institutionalize rural spaces, thereby projecting their power into the territorial peripheries. Due to the constant ravage of war, a calculated presence of *realpolitik* has dominated decision-making centered around consolidating power and establishing authority, while authoritarian methods towards civilians were justified as necessary for maintaining social order. The Angolan population not active in the war had been mostly confined to the sidelines or caught in the crossfire amidst the constant chaos, turmoil, and *confusão*. This is not however to assume that Angola’s patchwork of civil society actors has not been influential in the course of the country’s history, nor that it has always been afflicted with such dearth of agency that social organizing around local and national issues could be considered a new phenomenon.

In fact, different forms of modern-day Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have existed in Angola for centuries, from mutual assistance groups independent from the royal power of pre-colonial kingdoms, to religious groups’ social programs during colonial times, as well as the key role of workers associations morphing into the anti-colonial liberation movement of the 1960s.⁸²⁰ Nelson Pestana identifies the beginning of the Angolan associative movement as forming in the mid 19th century with the emergence of cultural associations as well as mutualist and cooperative movements that led to the struggle to affirm citizenship rights beginning from the 1930s until the 1960s when the struggle moved to direct action in the form of the liberation movement.⁸²¹

The stage of ‘civil society’ referenced in this chapter is, therefore, the “rebirth of the associative movement, with the affirmation of its autonomy and of its legitimacy of intervention in the public space”.⁸²² During the civil war, as time went on, peace processes failed, and patience wore thin, the population began to mobilize alongside the unprecedented

⁸²⁰ Inge Tvedten, Éric Morier-Genoud & Brigitte Lachartre, “La scène angolaise : Limites et potentiel des ONG”, in *Lusotopie*, Les organisations non gouvernementales en Lusophonie. Terrains et débats, no. 9, 1st semester (2002), 173.

⁸²¹ Pestana, *As Dinâmicas*, 3.

⁸²² *Ibidem*.

arrival of new foreign actors into the social arena in new ways and forms given that “the government came to rely heavily on multilateral and bilateral aid organisations and international NGOs for emergency relief and social development”.⁸²³ This expanding cadre of actors operating within the territory (CBOs, NGOs, donors, religious organizations, international organizations and agencies) would promote social organizing and civil mobilization efforts in such a way as to slowly build a wall of influence to push against the authoritarian governance model built up and consolidated by the MPLA-led government. This process, the accelerated internationalization of the countryside, marked a major shift in the balance of power between the government and the governed.

In this vision, the role of the ‘activist’ or ‘engaged’ civil society actors and organizations is “understood within an instrumentalist and functionalist view of democracy and development, from a micro, short-term and sectorial dimension” serving “as the space for the exercise of freedom of expression, association and initiative, alleviating tension within historically authoritarian societies, favouring greater political, economic and social stability, and supporting the peaceful handover of power between opposing parties”.⁸²⁴ This particular vision attributes significant potential power and responsibility to the country’s NGO and CSO sectors, but must be placed in the unique historical and social context of Angola where the authoritarian pressures on these actors have remained relentless even through the accumulating years of peacetime, while also taking into consideration the disruptive and manipulative effects of prolonged war.

4.1 Exacerbating and alleviating civil conflict through foreign forces

NGOs and CSOs have thus been undoubtedly influential in the country’s internal and external affairs, though their struggle to establish the space to operate freely has been arduous. Their persistence has paid off, notably in the post-civil war period, as the means, know-how, and resources of social organizing built up and became more readily available. To establish a framework for this myriad of organizations, we will expand upon those

⁸²³ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 19.

⁸²⁴ Nuno Vidal, “International development strategies for the XXIst century and post-modern patrimonialism in Africa – Angola and Mozambique”, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 61, no. 1, (2018): 4. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329201800115>.

previously described in §1.2.5. Based on Cesaltina Abreu and Inge Amundsen's 2006 work *Civil Society in Angola: Inroads, Space and Accountability*, civil society organizations in Angola can be categorized into six groups: (1) National NGOs, (2) INGOs, (3) faith-based organizations, (4) media, (5) trade unions and professional organizations, and (6) organizational networks. This study adds another key category of (7) 'grassroots elite' NGOs, inspired by Inge Ruigrok's *Facing up to the Centre: The Emergence of Regional Elite Associations in Angola's Political Transition Process* (2010).⁸²⁵ The goal of this chapter is thus twofold. Firstly, it expands upon the evolution and impact of these different categories, investigating the roles that they have played in the transformation of Angola's 'civil society' and how these cumulative actions attempted to consolidate the population's agency. Amid the internationalization of the Angolan countryside, the populations' battle for influence and agency in the post-independence era will remain a central concentration here. Secondly, it explores how this influence has affected the MPLA's approach to governing the peripheries, focusing most notably on the post-civil war period.

Among geopolitical relations, different types of foreign assistance and aid exist (military⁸²⁶, political, humanitarian, socio-economic assistance) between different levels of actors. The impact of foreign military intervention during the civil war has been among the most studied aspects of the civil war and will not be extensively developed in this section. Nor does this chapter attempt to quantify how "effective" foreign aid or assistance has been, as scientific approaches to measuring this question are plagued with structural problems including incomplete statistical data sets, a lack of a standardized identification strategy and unreliable growth statistics.⁸²⁷ The hypothesis of this study proposes that the processes and consequences of the surge in new foreign aid and assistance, notably originating from 'Western' liberal democracies after the 1991-92 electoral period, is particularly important in understanding the MPLA's strategy of peripheral state-building in peacetime, notably in how it has shaped its response to the rural population overall. This section is thus aimed at exploring the vast network of foreign and international influences that have come and gone through Angola's borders since independence and, ultimately, how this array of influences

⁸²⁵ Ruigrok, "Facing up", 2010.

⁸²⁶ For a review of UNITA's "foreign connections and imported ideologies", see Pearce, "L'UNITA à la recherche", 218-229.

⁸²⁷ Axel Dreher, *et al. Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset*. AidData Working Paper #46, Williamsburg, Virginia, AidData, 2017, 4. <https://china.aiddata.org/projects/34786>.

(military, financial, economic, political, social, organizational) combined with natural forces have affected the governance approach of the MPLA towards its peripheral spaces and to what extent these influences have remained present.

Historically, the analysis will begin upon independence and will be heavily influenced by the ensuing civil war period and its role of bringing in a vast variety of international organizations and NGOs during and after this period. Following each foreign influence in such a fluid historical period in remote geographic spaces that remain chronically understudied and difficult to safely access until relatively recently is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the prospect nevertheless offers a rich tableau of ingrained interests for future studies. Instead, the analysis will attempt to paint the gradual fusion between NGOs, the civil society, and eventually the government itself with a broad brush, focusing on some of the most influential actors on the ground.

4.1.1 THE DEEP-SEATED ROOTS OF NATIONALIST AGENDAS

The prolongation and intensification of the war was due in part to the participation of foreign military assistance, bringing the war to a slow burning stalemate and increasing the MPLA's inability to assert its sovereignty and legitimacy in the countryside. What are the long-term effects of foreign military intervention regarding the MPLA's approach to rebuilding its peripheries? How did the MPLA view the (heavily rural) populations under UNITA's nominal control both during and, more importantly, after the war? Did the animosity against its political foes disappear with the death of Jonas Savimbi and the will to bring the nation together, even though the political opposition party endured and remains its most formidable, though severely weakened, political challenger? Answers to these questions are profound and multi-faceted, requiring a study dedicating wholly to their response. The following section will explore some of the avenues and evidentiary leads to these questions.

As evidenced by its duration and intensity, the Angolan civil war was an extremely complex phenomenon bringing together national, regional and international forces. The role and influence of foreign actors has tended to overshadow the deep endogenous roots of the

conflict. Rather than a product of the Cold War, the civil war “began before independence and is situated in the prolongation of the division in three organizations of Angolan nationalist movements”.⁸²⁸ Furthermore, the nationalist movements themselves, organized along social, geographic and ethnic lines, were largely forged through the colonial experience.⁸²⁹ The causes and long-term effects of this struggle have impacted every aspect of life in Angola, justifying the deep academic interest in the internal power struggles. This reality should not, however, minimize the deep impact that foreign influence⁸³⁰ had on the country’s civil strife: “Foreign interests have played a crucial role from the war for independence onwards. Yet they themselves did not create the divisions within Angolan nationalism – divisions that stem basically from a power struggle between different elites – although they certainly exacerbated them”.⁸³¹ As in any prolonged dirty war, the lines between allies and enemies shifted alongside the changing balance of power, frustrating any streamlined diagnosis of the roles and the lasting impacts of particular actors during the war.

4.1.2 SHIFTING ALLIANCES AMID THE 'SCRAMBLE FOR ANGOLA'

As the Alvor Agreement (1975) negotiations slowly collapsed and the transitional government’s demise became clearer, the emerging political parties each began to consolidate their respective political and military allies while international actors descended upon the country in a “Scramble for Angola”.⁸³² As we will see later, however, the status of allies and

⁸²⁸ Messiant, “Angola, les voies”, 157.

⁸²⁹ Guimarães, *The Origins*, 3-84.

⁸³⁰ Edward George compiled a list of the different foreign influences supporting each side: “The MPLA received aid from the Soviet Union, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Algeria, Vietnam, North Korea, the PALOPs, Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea-Conakry, East Germany; the FNLA received aid from the CIA, Zaire, China, Romania, Tunisia, Tanzania, France, Britain (mercenaries), Belgium, Zambia, India; and UNITA received aid from South Africa, Côte d’Ivoire, the Arabian states, Morocco, Senegal, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Togo. Most of the FNLA’s backers also gave aid to UNITA, and some (such as Romania, Guinea, Tanzania and Zambia) switched sides on at least one occasion.” (George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 311) This extensive list leaves out the complex military role that the Brazilian dictatorship played in the beginning of the civil war, with documentation showing elite police units of Rio de Janeiro specialized in explosives assisting the FNLA (Gisele Lobato, *O Brasil e a independência de Angola (1975): política externa oficial e diplomacia militar paralela*, Master’s Thesis, Lisbon, Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, 2015, 83). See also Gisele Lobato, “The Strange Case of Brazilian Support to the FNLA in the Final Stage of Angolan Colonization”, *Africa e Oriente*, no. 3, (2017): 31-48. For a personal account of these moments in history as told through a Brazilian soldier in Angola, see Pedro Marangoni, *A Opção Pela Espada*, (Scotts Valley (California): CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012).

⁸³¹ Messiant, “Angola, les voies”, 17.

⁸³² Edward George, *The Cuban Intervention in Angola, 1965-199. From Che Guevara to Cuíto Cuanavale* (Oxon-New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 60.

enemies were far from clear cut in the heat of war. Almost immediately, these foreign backers began laying the groundwork for Messiant's aforementioned "exacerbation": "South African instructors, CIA paramilitary personnel, and the first members of the Cuban military mission (MMCA) began arriving in Angola at roughly the same time, in late August 1975", with the Soviets arriving only post-independence after the country had become "juridically independent".⁸³³ However, very few if any of these actors descending on Angola with the goal of positioning themselves for its future independence had any real idea how the combination of their respective interventions would dramatically escalate the conflict.⁸³⁴ Further exacerbating the war's division, given the extremely fluid conditions that these discussions were held in, was the fact that many of the partnerships initially forged would waver, crumble, and renew throughout the ensuing civil war.

The opaque nature of allies and enemies throughout the war are revealed through some principal examples. The Soviet Union's growing international presence and overt commitment to spread its socialist 'internationalism' ideals throughout the world contributed to its image as being the principal ideological and political supporter of the 'Marxist-Leninist' MPLA. In reality, this support was not unconditional and vacillated leading up to independence until it saw a ripe geopolitical opening.⁸³⁵ The Soviet Union even temporarily withdrew its support to the MPLA between 1973 and early 1975 due to a power-sharing agreement between Agostinho Neto and the FNLA's Holden Roberto, perceived by the Soviet Union as ceding too much control to the latter.⁸³⁶ For its part Romania, admittedly a much smaller player in the arena of state actors, initially "gave military aid to UNITA and the FNLA, and medical aid to the MPLA" before siding definitively with the MPLA. Cuba⁸³⁷ and Yugoslavia, however, never wavered in their support for their 'socialist' ally.

⁸³³ Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 351.

⁸³⁴ George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 53.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁸³⁶ Tor Sellström, *Sweden and National Liberation in Southern Africa. Volume I: Formation of a Popular Opinion (1950-1970)* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), 399-400.

⁸³⁷ Cuba's involvement in Angola and Africa's independence movements more broadly have attracted a vast amount of academic interest. For some of the most complete works bolstered by unprecedented archival access, see notably Piero Gleijeses' two-volume historical account, both published by the University of North Carolina Press: *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (2011) and *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* (2013). As an anecdotal point of the multilayered alliances in war, Cuban and American interests were not always diametrically opposed in Angola. During the Reagan administration, socialist Cuba had its troops protect the then-US Gulf Oil Company (now Chevron) so it could continue its oil production unabated to fund the war operations for the 'socialist' MPLA (Le Billon, Philippe, "Angola's Political Economy", 65). Likewise, at the same time that 'Marxist-Leninist' Angola was at war with capitalist apartheid South Africa, cargo ships of Angolan oil were being sent directly to South African ports (Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 32).

Overall, Cuba has had enormous lasting influence on Angola while changing the course of Southern African history by beating back South African troops from southern Angola, most notably at the famous Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, and thereby securing the independence of Namibia in exchange for withdrawing their estimated 50,000 troops after a UN agreement between Angola, Cuba and South Africa on 22 December 1988.⁸³⁸ The South African government had multiple interests in influencing internal Angolan politics, most notably its fear of a Marxist, anti-apartheid government giving shelter to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) independent movement on its southern border, which had been operating there since the mid-1960s, but also the "development of the Cunene hydroelectric scheme in the early 1970s [which] gave South Africa a direct stake in southern Africa, the \$400m installations providing irrigation and electricity for northern Namibia".⁸³⁹ Ultimately, it was the South African troop invasion across the southern border in mid-October 1975 that "triggered the dispatch of Cuban troops" to the country.⁸⁴⁰ Furthermore, the decisive decision to send Cuban troops into Angola to push back the invading South African Defence Force (SADF) was taken solely by Fidel Castro, only later supported by the Soviet Union.⁸⁴¹

On the other side of the conflict, Jonas Savimbi's "UNITA entered into a strategic alliance with apartheid South Africa and received strong (if largely covert) support from the USA, especially under the Reagan administration".⁸⁴² The Chinese and North Koreans also gave temporary direct support to UNITA. Chinese military instructors were on the ground by the summer of 1974 and left on 27 October 1975, positioning themselves in Zaire without crossing into Angola, while North Korean instructors already on the ground in Zaire training Mobutu's elite forces also assisted in the training of UNITA troops.⁸⁴³ Apartheid South Africa, UNITA's most influential international backer, also produced mercenary soldiers out of its SADF-trained forces that at once fought against the MPLA's *Forças Armadas Angolanas*

⁸³⁸ Manuel Paulo, "The role of the United Nations in the Angolan peace process", in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 28.

⁸³⁹ George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 62, 123.

⁸⁴⁰ Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 352.

⁸⁴¹ George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 65.

⁸⁴² Péclard, *et al.*, *Civil Wars*, 12.

⁸⁴³ Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 351.

(FAA, Angolan Armed Forces) before being pulled across the battle lines by monetary incentives to fight alongside them.

The MPLA-led FAA fighting against South African government forces was actually supported for a time (from September 1993 until 1995) by these ex-SADF soldiers, estimated to be at least 500, on mercenary contracts.⁸⁴⁴ The United States also switched sides as it initially supported the FNLA through the covert CIA program “Operation IAFEATURE” launched in July 1975⁸⁴⁵, quickly throwing its support behind UNITA until it was finally cut off in mid-1993 after it continued to reject further attempts at cease-fire, finally shifting its support to the MPLA and opening up the path for United Nations sanctions on Savimbi’s operations.⁸⁴⁶ As Cold War history has shown, both UNITA and the MPLA were adept at playing off the East-West international paradigm to secure resources for their own benefit, while learning in real time the fickleness of allied support when money and power are up for grabs.

4.1.3 PRIVATE SECURITY AND MERCENARIES

As briefly mentioned above, another source of Messiant’s “exacerbation” for the MPLA was the pernicious presence of both foreign mercenaries and private and public enterprise security companies (PESCs) inside Angola’s sovereign territory. Keeping these flexible alliances in mind, the omnipresent existence of foreign interests as well as the physical presence of foreign fighters and private security officers were a reality for all of the major warring factions, with the alliances rallying around *realpolitik* and self-interested economic objectives. The FNLA of Holden Roberto, supported in part by its regional Zairian ally, recruited mercenaries from Britain,⁸⁴⁷ the US and the Netherlands; the MPLA were supported by their regional Congolese allies, known as *Katangenses*,⁸⁴⁸ SADF mercenary forces

⁸⁴⁴ Sean Cleary, “Angola: A Case Study of Private Military Involvement”, in *Peace Profit or Plunder*, (eds), Jakkie Cilliers & Peggy Mason, (Pretoria: The Institute for Security Studies, 1999), 146, 152.

⁸⁴⁵ George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 61.

⁸⁴⁶ Christine Messiant, “Why did Bicesse and Lusaka fail? A critical analysis”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 20.

⁸⁴⁷ The recruitment of British mercenaries began in late 1975 through “a bogus security company, the ‘Security Advisory Service’ based in Camberly, Surrey, and by late December, 128 men had been sent into northern Angola” (George, *The Cuban Intervention*, 108).

⁸⁴⁸ Named for the southernmost Katanga Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, were many of the fighters originated, also known as Shaba Province during the reign of Zaire’s Mobutu Seso Seko. The province

as well both military and security assistance from its ‘socialist’ international partners including East Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Cuba and the Soviet Union.⁸⁴⁹ UNITA was provided logistical support in the war by “[c]ompanies and individuals domiciled in Belgium, Zaire/DRC, South Africa, Namibia and perhaps elsewhere”, though it is debatable if the group directly hired mercenary forces itself.⁸⁵⁰ This practice of contracting outsiders for logistical operations followed a precedent set by the outsourcing of the running of the oil sector that would continue after the war, shaping “the state’s logistical approach to post-war reconstruction and agrarian development through private contracting with enterprises from China, Brazil, Portugal and elsewhere for dozens of large agricultural projects and numerous agro-industrial growth pole projects”.⁸⁵¹ The contracting out of economic growth had already started with the running of the oil sector by Western companies in partnership with Sonangol. This model would be extended to the peripheries in the hopes of reviving the agricultural sector through foreign assistance and technical know-how.

As foreign arrivals increased, the ultimate end game of power and authority became diluted in the amalgam of conflicting interests. While PESCAs came and went throughout the war, at the height of the Angola war in December 1997 it is estimated that over eighty private security groups were operating in Angola, mainly responsible for “‘asset protection’ services: guarding and protection services for embassies, hotels and corporate premises, warehouses, diamond fields, oil refineries and terminals, and of cash-in-transit”.⁸⁵² While most private security operators were tasked with defensive measures, foreign soldiers were also prevalent on both sides of the war. The biggest private company supplying mercenary soldiers, trained by the South African Defence Force (SADF), was Executive Outcomes (EO), which had the resources and training that no civilian company could replicate, providing both private security and elite military services.⁸⁵³ As noted above, South African mercenary soldiers coming out of the SADF-trained forces fought against the MPLA before being pulled across the battle lines through monetary incentives to fight for them.

was dissolved in 2015 and split into the Tanganyika, Haut-Lomami, Lualaba, and Haut-Katanga provinces. See Erik Kennes & Miles Larmer, *The Katangese Gendarmes and War in Central Africa: Fighting Their Way Home* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), notably the chapters “With the Portuguese, 1967-1974” and “The Katangese gendarmes in the Angolan Civil War, 1974-1976”.

⁸⁴⁹ Cleary, “Angola: A Case Study”, 148.

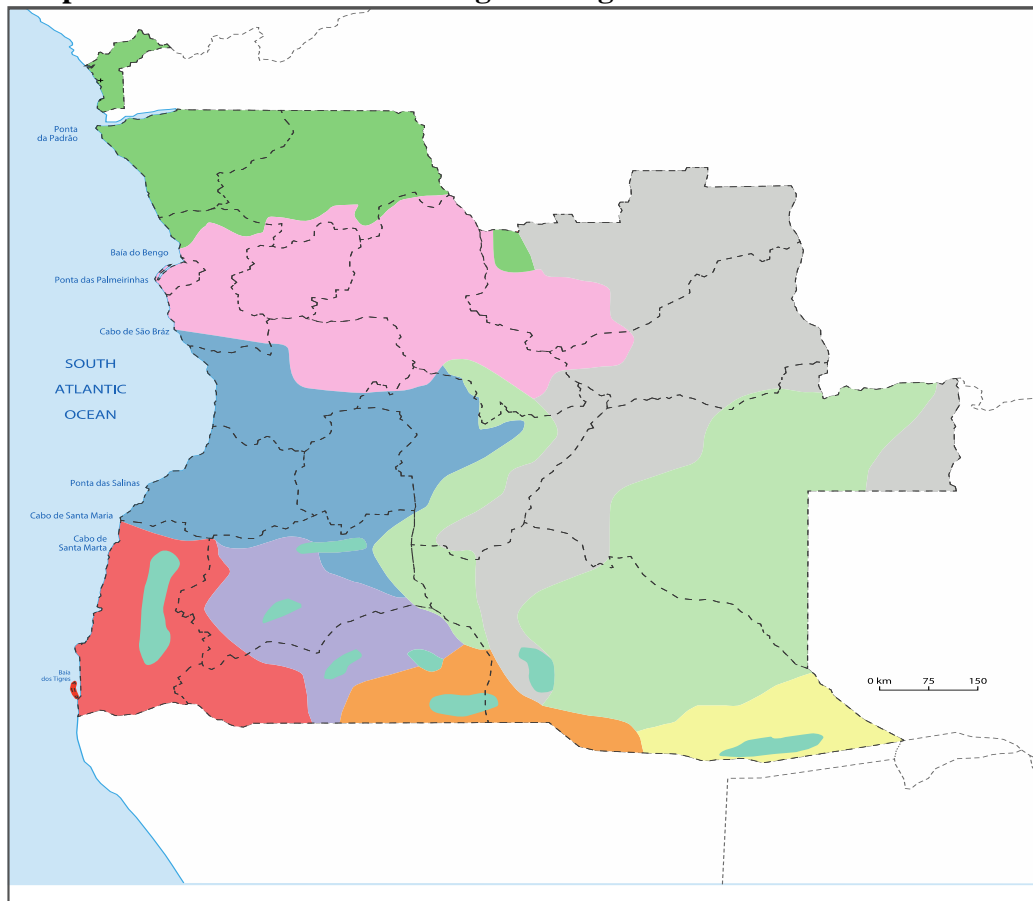
⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁸⁵¹ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories”, 119.

⁸⁵² Cleary, “Angola: A Case Study”, 147.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, 148.

Map 7 - Ethnic distribution in Angola alongside UNITA territorial control



The accumulation of wavering commitments, weak alliances, and self-interested actors surely accentuated the seasoned mindset of Angola's elites with the reality that true loyalty is a rare resource in the political arena and reinforced the fact that the most effective currency for maintaining allies and alliances was money and access to power. To what extent this international worldview seeped into the MPLA's future approach to organizing national alliances and its vision of national unity is impossible to accurately quantify or qualify, yet it remains an important point to consider when analyzing its overall strategy of governance, as well as its inherent distrust distilled throughout the population perceived as supporting its political foes.

The historical reality of senior MPLA officials making policies to develop the peripheral areas of Angola is that those areas were, during significant time periods in contemporary history, overrun, ruled and pillaged through a combination of forces intent on the destruction of the MPLA and thus by extension the very seed of ‘revolution’ that liberated the country from outside oppression. While the war was won at heavy cost, this internationalization of the countryside by destructive military actions through the aforementioned “Scramble for Angola” not only released primal forces that changed the course of the civil war, but similarly left an enduring legacy that has unleashed further fundamental forces of social control that remain difficult to discern, but palpable nonetheless.

4.2 Leveraging future experimental spaces of compromise

During the war and after, the populations on the ground in the vast rural and peri-urban areas of the country desperately lacked formal representation and recognition with a distracted and disinterested government. NGOs would be tasked with filling the void “of basic social services, humanitarian relief and development resources” left by the state’s absence.⁸⁵⁴ Development aid during the end of the war was heavily concentrated in urban areas, principally in Luanda and a few demographically important provinces such as Huambo, Bié, Benguela and Huíla. While increasing efficiency, this urban biased approach arguably contributed “towards the development of ‘first rate’ and ‘second rate’ provinces already implicit in government policies and financial allocations, potentially having severe implications for a further regionalisation of Angola”.⁸⁵⁵

As will be demonstrated through the compilation of NGO and CSO data on the timeline and geography of their interventions below in §4.3.5, we argue here that the territorial division of Angola’s development has in reality broken down into a triple division⁸⁵⁶: (1) Luanda, the capital, making up an all-powerful category in and of itself, (2)

⁸⁵⁴ World Bank, *Angola Country Economic*, 124.

⁸⁵⁵ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 21.

⁸⁵⁶ In reality, given such a vast and heterogenous territory, making clean divisions between regions and provinces is made extremely difficult and counter-examples surely arise. Along these lines is the economist Manuel José Alves da Rocha’s (2010) important contribution laying out the regional inequalities and asymmetries attempting to highlight the territorial divisions through an economic lens. The preface by

some provinces that are geographically and topographically favorable for development with historical importance in the economic or social spheres, including the provinces of Huambo, Bié, Benguela, and Huíla, and (3) the rest of the territory, some more populous and economically active than others, but clearly more marginalized according to the data on the implementation of social and economic programs.

The addition of a third category seems necessary to differentiate between a relatively active province such as Huíla and historically marginalized provinces such as Lunda Norte or Moxico, for example. From a historical perspective, this bifurcation of first, second, and third “rate” provinces has been present since colonial times, heavily concentrated in coastal territorial development with only a few exceptions of major in-land urban centers. The limited colonial-era infrastructural development coupled with favorable geographic positioning arguably did more to anchor this tri-tier provincial reality than any other actions, creating the mold that all organizations operating in the territory, from the modern government to donor groups to NGOs, would later follow. Therefore, development aid focusing on heavily concentrated areas would not just have ‘potential’ severe implications, as postulated by Inge Tvedten, rather paradoxically it has *further engrained* the already established regional marginalizations throughout the territory. Given that most of the populated coastal urban areas were controlled by the MPLA during the civil war, this made international humanitarian assistance a *de facto* pro-MPLA activity, furthering the political cleavage.

4.2.1 RELUCTANCE TO CHANGING 'NORMS'

Moving on from the military and security domains, another set of international actors that imposed their influence on the Angolan government during the war and afterwards were the post-WWII international institutions established through the United Nations system as well as those created through the Bretton Woods Conference including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) which later integrated the World Bank (WB). The entrance of these

Fernando Pacheco both confirms these deep divisions (comparing Luanda to Moxico, for example), but also points out various methodological difficulties of such a methodological approach.

actors was mainly due to the combination of state fragility brought upon by war, thereby opening up the need for humanitarian agencies and planting the seeds for the “conditions for the emergence of a new Angolan civil society” based on NGOs working in the areas “of humanitarian aid, human rights, and peace”.⁸⁵⁷ The influence they were able to wield, however, has been heavily nuanced by the unique historical confluence that characterized the emergence of Angola among the international community in the latter stages of its civil war.

The International Financial Institutions (IFI) typically attaching conditions to loans in exchange for fiscal discipline and improved good governance practices were similarly weakened by Angola’s massive oil wealth that gave it a unique bargaining chip to attract foreign lenders, notably China. Nevertheless, a deep need for resources, technical expertise, and a desire to be recognized as a legitimate player on the regional and global stage pushed José Eduardo dos Santos’ regime to engage. The desire for maintaining control over civil society coincided most strongly with the increasing flows of INGOs and their foreign donors into the 2000s as the government began to reestablish its physical and symbolic presence across the territory.

The country’s precarious financial situation⁸⁵⁸ coming out of the civil war meant that the leaders of Angola understood well their need for foreign assistance in the rebuilding effort, repeatedly calling out to the international community for assistance.⁸⁵⁹ With the convergence of relative institutional stability, the liberalization of its economy in the mid-1990s, and the willingness to further open its countryside to liberal economic forces, various foreign countries responded to the call for rural development. Spain, South Korea, Israel, Italy, Brazil, and China all joined the rural economy as a result.⁸⁶⁰ For Angola, a country that imports between 50%⁸⁶¹ and 70%⁸⁶² of its foodstuffs, these economic partnerships bring much needed resources to a still nascent rural economy. This recognition of the importance of foreign aid and assistance prompted a considerable degree of acquiescence to overtures

⁸⁵⁷ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 2.

⁸⁵⁸ For a deeper analysis of the financial situation of Angola and its loan negotiations at the time of the end of civil war, see: Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 53-57; Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon’s Gift: The real story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 273-277.

⁸⁵⁹ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 54.

⁸⁶⁰ Angola, Ministry of Agriculture, *Plano de Desenvolvimento de Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário (PDMPSA) 2013-2017*, Luanda, Oct. 2012a, 29-30.

⁸⁶¹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 26.

⁸⁶² CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 104.

to these new arrivals, but the party officials simultaneously attempted to carefully manage these different actors spreading across the countryside.

As the decades of civil war stretched on, the world outside of Angola's borders was undergoing massive changes that would influence the trajectory of its domestic conflict, notably the strengthening links of globalization, technological innovation, and the upending of the bi-polar ideological struggle. The 1990s and the end of the Cold War brought particular hope among the strengthened Western-based international system that democratic forces would win out over authoritarian regimes. As explained by Nuno Vidal, the four major agents entrusted with propelling this transformative process would be first and foremost the political opposition parties, followed by the consolidating business environment emerging from the informal sector, the plethora of civil society organizations (CSOs) and finally international partnerships with organizations conceived in support of the same aims.⁸⁶³ This section will focus specifically on the emergence and role of CSOs in this transformative process, though it is worth mentioning Inge Tvedten's analysis of the business-oriented 'mass organization' National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA) being "instrumental in bringing about the future political liberalization".⁸⁶⁴ Furthermore, the internationally accepted role of the state itself was undergoing important changes at the time, putting additional pressures on governments to adapt and accept changing values and norms.

As mentioned in §2.1.2, one of these principal changes was the paradigm shift from focusing on state security to human security in the international system. The key documents codifying these changing values and norms were *The Responsibility to Protect* (2001) of the International Commission on Intervention and States Sovereignty (ICISS), *Human Security Now* (2003) of the Commission on Human Security and the 1994 *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Human rights began to occupy the forefront of international causes. Descending on Angola, the turn of the century witnessed the arrival of numerous NGOs advocating for human rights programs.

The organizations were propelled by both international actors such as the UN and the United States, as well as increasing internal complaints about the situation within the

⁸⁶³ Vidal, "International development", 3.

⁸⁶⁴ Inge Tvedten, *Angola: Struggle for Peace and Reconstruction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 28.

country.⁸⁶⁵ This does not mean the issue was new to Angola, however, as the issue has been advocated for by religious institutions in particular going back to independence. The *Conferência Episcopal de Angola e São Tomé* (CEAST, Catholic Episcopal Conference in Angola and São Tomé) was particularly active, playing “an important role in speaking out through its pastoral newsletters for peace and respect for human rights from 1974. Between 1974 and 1998, sixty-four pastoral communications were issued, often at a time when no other voices were heard”.⁸⁶⁶ The world outside of Angola’s borders was undergoing drastic changes at the same time of Angola’s final tumultuous decades of internal turmoil. The cumulative effect of these transformations would be an authoritarian government reluctant to relax its hold on total victory after vanquishing its enemy emerging onto the world scene at the same time as a diversifying coterie of international organizations were pushing ruling governments worldwide to take uncomfortable political positions on transparency and accountability that would require ceding strategic powers and controls. While this pressure campaign was able to bear fruit in Angola, allowing for more ‘participative’ space⁸⁶⁷ among non-state actors, the progress also led to serious backlash as the elites tried to reinforce their authority when it felt threatened or considered it was ceding too much power too quickly.

Certain participatory spaces, mostly confined to socio-economic development, were eventually opened, though these new spaces were constantly measured, infiltrated and manipulated by vested interests. Other actions involving concepts of governance such as transparency, accountability and human rights, deemed to be imposed by ‘Western’ political systems, were treated with stricter and, at times, extreme measures. On these specific issues, the government under José Eduardo dos Santos built up a front of resistance until the end of his term in 2017. The government’s systemic pushback, described in chapter six of this study, would have dire effects on the population as the government sought to undue the influence these international actors were able to exercise in the country.

⁸⁶⁵ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 31.

⁸⁶⁶ Vines, *et al*, *Angola: Drivers of change*, *Position Paper 3*, 14.

⁸⁶⁷ The concept of ‘participatory spaces’ is defined below in §4.4.1.

4.2.2 COLLABORATIVE PUSHES FOR PEACE

The United Nations' various peace-keeping missions⁸⁶⁸ and associate organizations played a marginal role in keeping the peace, alongside the work of numerous NGOs, CSOs, and religious organizations. The UN missions overall were largely seen as failures as they were unable to bring any prolonged stability to the country or protect the civilians from attacks.⁸⁶⁹ Even the Special Representative of the UN mission, Margaret Anstee, cognizant of the severe lack of resources that the missions were asked to perform with, admitted that "the UN should never have conducted a peace process under such conditions".⁸⁷⁰ The missions were criticized both by the Angolan population for their inability to stop the conflict and by both warring parties, ultimately demanding their withdrawal.

The pressure campaign led to the closure of the MONUA mission and its Special Representatives office in Luanda, leaving only 30 people in the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA).⁸⁷¹ While the peacekeeping mission failed, the UN's humanitarian role had more measured success, though the lack of resources similarly hindered capacity. By the end of the civil war, the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs calculated that over four million people received humanitarian assistance in 2003⁸⁷² out of approximately 18 million in total, comprising nearly one in four Angolans.⁸⁷³ Dealing with the constant stream of rural populations seeking a safe haven in the country's cities while simultaneously managing the massive flow of returnees and their resettlement became a monumental task, made infinitely more precarious through the estimated 20 million landmines laid across the territory during the war.⁸⁷⁴ The United Nations' withdrawal would weaken its capacity to respond, leaving room for others to take up the space left by its absence.

⁸⁶⁸ The different missions included: UNAVEM I, January 1989-May 1991; UNAVEM II, May 1991-February 1995; UNAVEM III, February 1996-June 1997; MONUA [United Nations Observer Mission in Angola], June 1997-July 1999. For a full review of the role of the United Nations in the Angolan peace process, see: Manuel Paulo, "The role of the United Nations in the Angolan peace process", in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 28-32.

⁸⁶⁹ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 5.

⁸⁷⁰ Christine Messiant, "Why did Bicesse and Lusaka fail? A critical analysis", in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 18.

⁸⁷¹ Paulo "The role", 29-30.

⁸⁷² Garztecki, "Recent History", 46.

⁸⁷³ World Bank database. See: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/angola> (accessed 25 Oct. 2020).

⁸⁷⁴ See §1.3.4 for more information on landmines.

The pursuit of peace became one of the most important historical conjunctures bringing together groups of actors that had previously been operating separately in their own areas of influence, spearheaded by the initiative of religious institutions. Though undeniably positive forces, one major critique of the religious institutions was “the lack of a shared ecumenical approach to peace”.⁸⁷⁵ Having previously advocated for peace separately, the major protestant organizations of the Council of Christian Churches of Angola (CICA) founded in February 1977 and the Angolan Evangelical Alliance (AEA), as well the Angolan Catholic Church’s Episcopal Conference of Angola and São Tomé (CEAST) became involved in the founding of the Peacebuilding Programme in 1998 alongside different civic and religious organizations, later creating the *Comité Inter-Eclesial a Paz em Angola* (COIEPA, Inter-Ecclesial Committee for Peace in Angola) in 1999 in order to unite forces as a demonstration of hope to overcome historical tensions and rivalries for the common good.⁸⁷⁶ Shortly thereafter, one of the first initiatives of broad-based collaboration between disparate actors was organized in the form of a Peace Congress promoted by CEAST in July 2000. The concept of ‘collaboration’ is going to be referred to throughout this chapter and is understood by its definition according to the Cambridge Dictionary as “the act of working together with other people or organizations to create or achieve something”.⁸⁷⁷

Broadcasted live by *Rádio Ecclesia* throughout the capital and its surroundings, the religious network brought together members of the political parties, parliamentary officials, representatives from over 22 churches, members of NGOs and CSOs to advocate for “the establishment of some form of permanent dialogue to include ‘the most representative levels of civil society, such as the churches, political parties and other institutions’”.⁸⁷⁸ The joining of forces among the religious leadership gave the populations an important space to come together in both dialogue and action, bridging the territorial divides with their broad national networks and strong local presence:

Their legitimacy and influence are strong within urban and rural areas, and also reach to grassroots levels, a factor which differentiates them from the majority of other civil society

⁸⁷⁵ Vines, *et al.*, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 15.

⁸⁷⁶ Michael Comerford, “Alternative voices: the Angolan peace movement”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 33-34.

⁸⁷⁷ According to the official website of Cambridge Dictionary. See:

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/english/collaboration> (accessed 14 June 2020).

⁸⁷⁸ Comerford, “Alternative voices”, 34.

organizations, whose legitimacy and influence is generally greater in urban areas among professional and working class Angolans.⁸⁷⁹

After the end of the war, more collaborative efforts continued to evolve with the needs on the ground, later putting their weight behind the combat against the spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) throughout the territory with round table meetings “held in order to engage the support for measures to combat SALW on the part of government institutions, political parties, churches, traditional authorities and other non-governmental organisations from Angola and abroad”.⁸⁸⁰ Public awareness campaigns intended to maintain the peace came in the form of “theatre performances, seminars, workshops, actions campaigns with public marches and newspaper, radio and television interviews”.⁸⁸¹ Coming from a serious democratic deficit, the pro peace movements spurred major social organizing initiatives across the country and became part of the first attempts at healing the brutal scars left behind by a war that technically ended but remained prescient in the hearts and minds of a fearful but hesitantly hopeful populace.

4.2.3 THE IMF AND A PUSH FOR TRANSPARENCY

A lack of transparency and the widespread use of patronage and clientelism were a major impediment for the engagement of international institutions when strategizing how to approach Angola’s fractured political environment. In the pivotal years of the 1990s, analysts were nearly unanimous in pointing out the steady accumulation of power within the office of the Presidency, while also “highlighting the exponential growth of corruption and an increasing dependence on a system dominated by clientelistic redistribution”.⁸⁸² In the push

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁸⁸⁰ Biting the Bullet, *International Action on Small Arms 2005: Examining Implementation of the UN programme of action*, London, International action network on small arms, 2005, 60. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/20271/SW_red-book-2005_6.pdf. For an in-depth study on the widespread arms trade during the civil war, see Virginia Gamba & Richard Cornwell, “Arms, Elites, and Resources in the Angolan Civil War”, in *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, (eds), Mats Berdal & David Malone, (Boulder-London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 157-173.

⁸⁸¹ Biting the Bullet, *International Action*, 60.

⁸⁸² Nelson Pestana, “A classe dirigente e o poder em Angola”, VIII Congresso Luso-Afro-Brasileiro de Ciências Sociais, Coimbra, Sept. 2004, 5. https://www.ces.uc.pt/lab2004/pdfs/Nelson_pestana.pdf.

for greater transparency and accountability in a country that had largely foregone either, two major international campaigns made their way onto the donor agenda.

The greatest asset to the world economy that Angola possesses is its vast oil wealth, jealously guarded by the inner elite circle of the MPLA-led government. A major point of reform requested from Western donors was transparency of all the actors linked to the sector, which simultaneously financed the government's weakened capacity to run the country, powered the MPLA's war machine, and held the financial power behind the hopes of rebuilding once the war ended. It was particularly this third purpose that drew the majority of calls for systemic reforms and transparency from Angola watchers both inside and outside its borders. Two main programs in particular were supported in this effort: Publish What You Pay (PWYP), an initiative of INGOs pressuring multinational companies to publicly publish their financial transactions and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a campaign to pressure resource rich developing countries to spend a part of their revenue on local development programs⁸⁸³ along the lines of the emerging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. While the dominant oil sector gave Angolan leaders their principal point of leverage in seeking loans and building alliances, the sector also drew the most scrutiny from international institutions seeking reforms of transparency within the country.

Consequently, innovative partnerships formed and effectively teamed up to pressure a government antithetical to foreign 'meddling' in domestic affairs and having escaped nearly any subjugation to accountability measures. Through the oil sector, special partnerships were forged between the International Monetary Fund and human rights organizations such as Global Witness, trying to advocate for transparency reforms for both the government and the oil companies operating in Angola.⁸⁸⁴ However, the transparency campaign hit many hurdles and significant pushback from both sides. The government was resistant to having outside inspectors opening the country's financial transactions as elites used them to enrich themselves and their allies in a bid to best position themselves for comfort amid the country's chaos and widespread deprivation.

⁸⁸³ Amundsen & Abreu, "Civil Society", 12.

⁸⁸⁴ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 10.

The oil companies themselves felt pressure too, as British Petroleum (BP) had to quickly backtrack on its stated intentions to publish its financial information with Angola after the government subsequently threatened to terminate its contract.⁸⁸⁵ The calls for reform were warranted as the equivalent of billions of dollars disappeared from the country's coffers crucial for rebuilding its future. According to the IMF, in the final years of the war, between 1997 and 2002, US\$4.22 billion “disappeared”.⁸⁸⁶ At the same time of these dubious financial transactions was a different shady oil-backed debt restructuring deal made with Russia where a cadre⁸⁸⁷ of Israeli, Russian, French and Angolan middle-men allegedly siphoned off hundreds of millions of dollars. The opacity of this transaction reportedly “poisoned Angola’s relationship with the IMF for years”.⁸⁸⁸ Eventually, the INGO and IMF pressure campaign temporarily won this battle, while the ‘war’ would continue.

The “poisoned relationship” with the IMF was temporarily mended, reaching a deal with the Angola government in April 2000 with several strings attached: “Key aspects of the programme are to establish macro-economic stability, promote poverty reduction and dismantle the state controls and distortions that have enabled widespread corruption and inefficiency.”⁸⁸⁹ An IMF report a mere two years later accounted for nearly US\$1 billion missing from the treasury in 2001, with an additional US\$4 billion missing from the five years prior.⁸⁹⁰ Further talks in 2004 collapsed due to the refusal of government authorities to submit to meaningful control mechanisms regarding the management of the country’s oil revenues.⁸⁹¹ Ultimately, despite the pressure applied by the IMF, none of its demands was ultimately met.⁸⁹² A 2011 audit of the country’s finances by the IMF found a “US\$32 billion discrepancy” linked to account activity of Sonangol not linked to official budgetary accounts.⁸⁹³ The corruption has been vast and deep, while investigations continue to unveil more about the opaque networks that continue to operate with support of a cadre of

⁸⁸⁵ Nicholas Shaxson, *Poisoned Wells: The Dirty Politics of African Oil* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 2.

⁸⁸⁶ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 39.

⁸⁸⁷ Two of those involved, Pierre Falcone and Arkady Gaydamak, were also directly involved in the “Angolagate” affair of arms-trafficking to the MPLA between 1993 and 1998.

⁸⁸⁸ Shaxson, *Poisoned Wells*, 178.

⁸⁸⁹ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/200*, 11.

⁸⁹⁰ United States Senate, *Keeping Foreign Corruption Out of the United States: Four Case Histories*, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Washington D.C., 4 Feb. 2010, 246.

⁸⁹¹ Paulo Conceição João Faria, “The Dawning of Angola’s Citizenship Revolution: A Quest for Inclusionary Politics”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, no. 2, (2013): 309.

⁸⁹² Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 6.

⁸⁹³ David Pilling, “Africa: Can João Lourenço cure Angola of its crony capitalism”, *The Financial Times*, London, 9 July 2019. <https://angolaforex.com/2019/07/09/africa-can-joao-lourenco-cure-angola-of-its-crony-capitalism-by-david-pilling-in-financial-time/>.

politically-connected Angolans and a small army of Western-based (mostly Portuguese) “lawyers, bankers, accountants, consultants, business people, civil servants and politicians”.⁸⁹⁴ The anti-corruption campaigns and demands for transparency would bring unwanted sunlight to the clientelism, nepotism, and state patronage within the inner circle of elites. The serial misuse of resources has had a wide-ranging impact on the relationship between the government, the international community, and increasingly Angolans themselves.

While many donors remained committed to humanitarian and emergency assistance after the war, as the years of peacetime grew long and the economy boomed, buoyed by rising oil prices, international donors began to pull out of the country. Angola became to be seen as too ‘wealthy’ in resources to merit intensive donor activity while the continued lack of transparency or serious reform by the Angolan authorities caused other organizations to consider whether picking up where the government should be performing was the right long-term strategy. Some researchers claimed that “it was the goodwill of donors and NGOs to take responsibility for these services which allowed the government to divert resources gained from the oil sector to areas outside of the social sector”.⁸⁹⁵ To a lesser degree, Tony Hodges analyzed that the “willingness of donors and NGOs to take on these responsibilities let the government off the hook; it could continue to divert the substantial public revenues from oil to other uses”.⁸⁹⁶ However, laying the blame on the shoulders of NGOs and their donors for the government’s weak social spending assumes that their absence would lead the government to significantly increase its presence and capacity in the social sectors, an unlikely scenario that has still never come to fruition as current spending levels continue to attest.⁸⁹⁷

Perhaps the persistent existence of the NGO sector and their continued focus on the sectors of health and education have prolonged the nefarious effects on the government’s budget throughout these decades, but no evidence exists that the government would willingly enter the spaces were the donor community to pull out of basic service delivery. The fact that the government has continued to attribute paltry sums to these three key sectors, with

⁸⁹⁴ Khadija Sharife & Mark Anderson, “How Angolan Elites Built a Private Banking Network to Move their Riches into the European Union”, OCCRP, 13 April 2020. <https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/how-angolan-elites-built-a-private-banking-network-to-move-their-riches-Into-the-european-union>.

⁸⁹⁵ Tvedten, Morier-Genoud & Lachartre, “La scène angolaise”, 177.

⁸⁹⁶ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 80.

⁸⁹⁷ See §3.1.6 for the data on public spending on the health and education sectors (1996-2020). See §3.3.2 for the public spending on the agricultural sector (2000-2020).

minimal difference from war time to peacetime, gives credence to the idea that they would have remained underfunded with or without the presence of Non-State Actors (NSAs) providing basic services normally reserved for the government. It cannot be known for sure, but the government certainly has not proven otherwise in the nearly two decades since.

When operating in weak states lacking transparency, the strategy of funneling donor aid through NGOs rather than directly through national governments became commonplace, seen as being more efficient and less prone to corruption and clientelism common in state agencies, particularly in poorly-governed conflict countries ripe with limited statehood or “fragile states”.⁸⁹⁸ Due to the weak administrative capacity and the lack of transparency, donor institutions that remain engaged with Angola specifically avoided funneling their resources through government agencies to avoid potential pitfalls of corruption and inefficiencies caused by the weak state institutions, instead preferring to work directly with Non-State Actors.⁸⁹⁹ The European Commission donor initiatives, for example, “have been channeled directly and indirectly through NSAs such as INGOs, NNGOs, Religious Institutions, CBOs and Associations”.⁹⁰⁰ Cutting the government out of the process, while the government was already mostly absent in the lives of the population living outside of the urban and peri-urban areas, essentially led to the government “losing legitimacy, not just in the eyes of the international community, but before its own people”.⁹⁰¹ Instead, a constellation of micro- and medium-sized organizations working mostly alone and at times in tandem provided the emergency aid and basic services that the government was incapable of, though authorities often attempted to link the programs to the government to build its image among the local populations.

⁸⁹⁸ Dreher, *et al. Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset*. AidData Working Paper #46, Williamsburg, Virginia, AidData, 2017, 8. <https://china.aiddata.org/projects/34786>.

⁸⁹⁹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78.

⁹⁰⁰ European Commission, *Country Level*, 165-166.

⁹⁰¹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 80.

4.2.4 THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE WORLD BANK: AIDING AND ABETTING THROUGH SOCIAL SUPPORTS

The European Commission played a major role in financing attempts to organize the multiplication of Non-State Actors arriving in Angola for diverse purposes. One of the main vehicles conceived for this purpose was the establishment of the Program to Support Non-State Actors (PAANE) in 2007 with the goal “to build up the capacities of non-state actors (NSAs) in their roles as implementers and representatives, improve NSAs’ access to information networks and promote social and political dialogue between NSAs and local and national authorities”.⁹⁰² The PAANE program finally became operational in 2015 after the *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical Unit on Coordinating Humanitarian Aid), which was responsible for overseeing the NGO sector, saw its mandate ended. UTCAH’s role will be developed below in §4.3.5.

Promoted by the European Commission, PAANE has been particularly criticized by civil society organizations and activists for melding the separate spaces of government and CSOs too closely, perceiving this strategy “as collaborationist, one of apolitical homogenization, induced subordination and cooptation”.⁹⁰³ Nuno Vidal further revealed that PAANE’s support to NGOs came with multiple conditionalities in their donor contracts ensuring the supported programs did not create conflicts with the government with the threat of termination or suspension of funds.⁹⁰⁴ This put PAANE’s program safely in the pocket of the government and significantly reduced the maneuverability space for the burgeoning civil society. Beyond its perception of bringing the two spheres too closely together, its implementation and methodology in data collection and categorizing was vastly inferior in quality and methodology than that of Angola’s previous UTCAH agency as will be described

⁹⁰² European Commission, *Country Level*, 163.

⁹⁰³ Nuno Vidal, “The international institutionalization of patrimonialism in Africa: The case of Angola”, in *Southern Africa. Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, (Luanda: Media XXI/Lisbon: Firmamento, 2009), 19.

⁹⁰⁴ Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral*, 2º Quinquénio 2009/2010 – 2014, Relatório de Progresso, Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Editora Firmamento/Lisbon, Media XXI, Jan. 2015, 18-19.

below. Its data and study of the NGO sector of Angola will be presented in the analysis found later in §4.3.6.

The World Bank has been an influential actor in funding initiatives promoting democratic norms, notably through its *Fundos de Ação Social* I (FAS, Social Support Funds) in 2001, FAS II in 2004 and FAS III in 2007.⁹⁰⁵ FAS is a nominally ‘autonomous’ institution initially created by the government in mid-civil war through decree n° 44 of 1994.⁹⁰⁶ Financed in part by the aid of the EU, the World Bank, bilateral agencies, the private sector and the Government of Angola (GoA), it was ultimately destined to reconstructing the social and economic infrastructure of the country.⁹⁰⁷ It played a major role in organizing collaborative spaces among the different NSAs through the establishment of ‘forums’ in 2003 and 2004 which “created opportunities for dialogue, civic education, practicing democracy, and representation of those who are usually excluded in decision-making processes, and has served as a demonstration effect of how accountability mechanisms work in practice”.⁹⁰⁸

The ability to construct and organize the forums in 2003 is exemplary of how quickly such projects can be implemented when pushed by major institutions such as the World Bank, while the national civil society conferences, organized by NGOs and CSOs, only began in 2007. However Henda Ducados, one of the founding members of *Rede Mulher* (Women’s Network), has found in her experience working as the Deputy Director of the Social Action Fund in Angola that the FAS process has been too “donor driven” and lacks a community-based approach integrating women into the various initiatives.⁹⁰⁹ FAS remains operational and according to its official website, it has provided US\$186.3 million for development projects, assisted in the construction of 4,100 infrastructure projects with over 9,925,325 beneficiaries and created 24,375 jobs.⁹¹⁰ The two principal fora created through the FAS were the Viana Município Development Forum begun in October 2003 and that of Caála

⁹⁰⁵ Mariana Felício & Serdar Yilmaz, *Local Government Discretion and Accountability in Angola*, Africa Region Working Paper Series no. 128, Washington D.C., World Bank, Oct. 2009, 23. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/811141467999121070/pdf/514080NWP0AO0L10Box342027B01PUBLIC1.pdf>.

⁹⁰⁶ European Commission, *Country Level*, 112.

⁹⁰⁷ Felício & Yilmaz, *Local Government*, 6.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁰⁹ Vidal & Andrade, *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação*, 11.

⁹¹⁰ The official government website for FAS is available at: <http://fas.co.ao> (accessed 14 July 2020).

(Huambo) *município* in March 2004.⁹¹¹ These fora would be the precursor for the later creation of the *Conselhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social* (CACS, Consultation and Concertation Councils). Championed as the ideal collaborative space between local government and local populations, the development of CACS will be expanded upon below.

A principal means of making these fora and CACS operational was the strategy of decentralization, conceptualized as “gradualism” (*gradualismo*) in the Angolan system, begun through the *Planos de Desenvolvimento Municipal* (PDM, *Município* Development Plans) and supported by FAS.⁹¹² After the war, such plans of decentralization were emerging as a key policy tool to bringing government to the local levels across the national territory. Despite the fervor, by late 2007 hardly anything had been enacted: “79% of ‘local government’ civil servants were in provincial government headquarters, with only 19% in municipalities and 1% in communes”.⁹¹³ These numbers remained constant in 2010.⁹¹⁴ The government’s presence on the ground was therefore contained almost entirely to urban and some peri-urban areas, leaving the countryside mostly absent of modern state authority at the same time it was undercutting and usurping the authority of the traditional power brokers.

This vertical expansion of power and authority created an institutional hierarchy that increasingly spread power from *comuna*, *município*, to provincial administrations, moving then to the *Ministério da Administração Territorial* (MAT, Ministry of Territorial Administration) and ending in the Executive with the President who can appoint and remove provincial governors.⁹¹⁵ However, with a scant administrative presence at the *comuna* level (1%) and only 19% at the *município* level (including urban *municípios*, which inevitably comprise the majority of this number) this unidirectional accountability structure has hardly anyone present, let alone to hold accountable, below the provincial level. The modern justice system followed the same pattern as judges and lawyers were similarly absent below the provincial capital level, whereas their respective administrations have failed to distribute the resources necessary to properly run the institutions at the local level and those that do exist remain

⁹¹¹ JMJ International, *Improving Local Governance in Angola Strengthening the Links between Decentralization and Community Driven Development*, Case Studies, Phase II, 70424, May 2006. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/12708>.

⁹¹² Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues, “A descentralização em Angola e os Planos de Desenvolvimento Municipal”, in *Descentralização e Desenvolvimento Local em Angola e Moçambique: processos, terrenos e atores*, (eds), Yves Fauré & Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues, (Coimbra: Almedina, 2012), 124.

⁹¹³ Oliveira & Taponier, ““O governo está aqui””, 176.

⁹¹⁴ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 42.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

weak and chronically lacking resources.⁹¹⁶ In discussion with an MPLA member⁹¹⁷ about whether the rural populations of Angola could be considered abandoned by the regime, his quip remark was that the problem was not government policy, but rather the lack of proper local implementation of the policies. And so turns the vicious circle.

As in any urban-rural dynamic, government presence decreases in relation to the distance from the city. Angola's vast countryside magnifies this equation exponentially with its government resources extremely concentrated in the provincial capitals and virtual absence outside their peri-urban perimeters. The lack of local representatives is directly linked with domestic politics as no officials are elected at either the provincial, *município*, or *comuna* levels.⁹¹⁸ An effort to rectify this situation was attempted with the creation of CACS, set up through decree n° 2 of 3 February 2007, promoted by PAANE (the initiative previously mentioned of the European Commission) "to advocate and influence the decision-making process for the preparation of the functional regulations with the aim of increasing participation and strengthening the role and influence of Civil Society in the process".⁹¹⁹ Though it is inherently a governmental institution, their foundation was established with assistance from the European Commission, the World Bank, and bilateral donors.

CACSeS were formed to provide new spaces for the population at the *município* level to participate in civic life, designed specifically for civil society participation in territorial and urban planning matters.⁹²⁰ Theoretically, these institutions would have the greatest impact on rural representation given that the administration is otherwise almost entirely absent. However, the limited legacy of local civic participation in governmental affairs represents a major structural impediment to the success of local governance, which assumes that the local population would see the value of their engagement in decision-making regarding affairs affecting the public domain, especially when they are afforded opportunities or rights.⁹²¹

⁹¹⁶ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 175.

⁹¹⁷ In discussion with an MPLA member, 29 July 2019, Angers, France. The individual requested anonymity to speak freely.

⁹¹⁸ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 41.

⁹¹⁹ European Commission, *Country Level*, 156.

⁹²⁰ UNDP, *Avaliação do UNPAF 2015-2019 para Angola*, Relatório Final, 20 Aug. 2018, 69. <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/7311>.

⁹²¹ Belisário dos Santos, "Descentralização e governação local em Angola: os desafios em termos de cidadania e de concentração dos recursos na capital do país" in *Descentralização e Desenvolvimento Local em Angola e Moçambique: processos, terrenos e atores*, (eds), Yves Fauré & Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues, (Coimbra: Almedina, 2012), 202.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of this representation is put into question given that local consultative organs ultimately have no decision-making powers.⁹²² The European Commission continued financing the World Bank's FAS strategy by funding the Social Action Fund III (FAS III) in 2007 promoting the adoption of

a Community Driven Development perspective aimed at providing or rehabilitating social and economic infrastructure and building human and social capital within and between communities and external support agencies such as local administrations and civil society organisations.⁹²³

These different programs were multiple attempts of local governance and local participation painted on a mostly empty canvas. The multiplication of initiatives provided many social experiments to test the flexibility and the capacity of constructing horizontal relations within a highly vertical governance system, while simultaneously creating the potential for administrative confusion and overlap. Such an example, that of PAANE and its counterpart the *Instituto de Promoção e Coordenação da Ajuda às Comunidades* (IPROCAC, Institute for Community Aid Promotion and Coordination), will be explained in §4.3.6 below.

On the subject of social organizing, the CACS initiative must also be mentioned here briefly for its role in opening official institutional 'participatory spaces' in January 2007. CACS are important in this section because, as Aslak Orre mentions in his article "Kalandula and the CACS: Voice or accountability" (2009), before the arrival of CACS "no forums of systematic dialogue or deliberation have existed between government (local or central) and civil society representatives".⁹²⁴ This statement is true to the extent that "systematic" dialogue had been difficult to establish, but saying "no forums", even temporary or one-off, have existed between government and civil society representatives ignores the initial creation of the fora by the FAS and the dialogue and deliberations that laid the groundwork for the CACS themselves, all activities certainly worth mentioning as central building blocks to forge the future 'participatory' spaces in Angola. The effectiveness of the CACS system remains inconclusive thus far.⁹²⁵

⁹²² UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 41.

⁹²³ European Commission, *Country Level*, 112.

⁹²⁴ Aslak Orre, "Kalandula and the CACS: Voice or Accountability", CMI Working Paper, V, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2009: 2. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3367-kalandula-and-the-cacs-voice-or-accountability>.

⁹²⁵ BTI, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Angola*, Gütersloh, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018, 13. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1427448/488345_en.pdf

4.3 Civil society finding its footing

Elites in Angola have long been aware of the potential political power behind social organizing, as their rebellion against the colonial forces was itself supported by a previous heritage of social organizing. Coopting civil society groups and NGOs has been a common practice throughout Angola's modern political history, going back to the beginnings of the liberation struggle. The MPLA's first foray came with the organization of thirty-some students (the majority being Angolan) hailing from different Portuguese African colonies under the banner of the General Union of Students from Black Africa under Portuguese Colonial Domination (UGEAN) set up in Rabat, Morocco in September 1961. In March 1962, Jonas Savimbi (at the time still part of the FNLA) set up another group of Angolan students in Lucerne, Switzerland under the National Union of Angolan Students (UNEA), with several of its members later integrating powerful positions within UNITA.⁹²⁶ The MPLA has continued this tradition until today with a loose network of partisan 'mass organizations' and government controlled or induced NGOs known as GONGOs (Government NGOs), which will be further developed below. Whether instigated through government forces, international donor programs, or national initiatives, the ending of the war unleashed social organizing forces and pushed open new spaces for dialogue that the government would respond to through *ad hoc* policies and control mechanisms. The development of these expanding and opposing forces will be developed below.

4.3.1 AN ASSIST FROM ABROAD: PIONEERING SELF-ORGANIZING INITIATIVES

With the slow but steady arrival of NGOs in the 1980s (the Canadian Development Workshop (DW) being the first foreign arrival in 1981), Angola needed to adopt a modernized regulatory framework in order for the organizations to function properly. The only organizations sanctioned with operating relief programs were limited church-based organizations such as the Catholic Church's Caritas Angola. Without any legal framework to

⁹²⁶ Sellström, *Sweden and National*, 395-396.

regulate the diverse activities of NGOs or CSOs, donors and aid organizations were forced to channel their aid through different government entities, creating an obvious structural weakness in the effectiveness of aid as the MPLA-led government was either inexistent or ineffectual across wide swaths of the country, thus a principal need for the aid itself.

The arrival of humanitarian assistance in the mid-1980s through the International Red Cross (ICRC) and various UN agencies broke through the monopoly held by the government.⁹²⁷ As the MPLA-led government remained focused on battling UNITA, it saw strategic benefits in ceding difficult service delivery to incoming international organizations. Not only would these organizations finance such operations as providing and delivering food aid, basic health services, and education, but delegating these services out to third parties allowed them more time to focus on winning the war and consolidating the main levers of power within the administrative state.

The few organizations that were working alongside the civil society, today categorized more broadly as NGOs or CSOs, were known as “solidarity movements” and “*cooperantes*”.⁹²⁸ This terminology is explained because DW, for example, was initially categorized under the same law regulating associations and cooperatives.⁹²⁹ The first non-church NGO was established in November 1989 as *Ação Angolana para o Desenvolvimento* (AAD, Angolan Action for Development), sanctioned by patrons of the MPLA-PT political elite.⁹³⁰ Inge Tvedten considers AAD’s establishment as the point that the government began to change its attitude towards the independent character of NGOs.⁹³¹ In reality, this series of events is standard operating procedure of the MPLA: each time it gradually cedes authority in an area of influence, it quickly moves to fill that space with allied organizations deriving from its own network in order to influence the direction of its development.⁹³² According to Fernando Pacheco, AAD was set up prior to the 1992 elections as a type of strategic safeguard for the MPLA so that, in the event they would lose the elections, they would have an organization in a space outside of the control of the state and the party where they could potentially exert influence.⁹³³ Furthermore, in my discussions with the director of Development Workshop,

⁹²⁷ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78.

⁹²⁸ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 28.

⁹²⁹ Interview with Allan Cain, Luanda, 27 July 2017.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 28; Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78.

⁹³¹ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 78.

⁹³² Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

⁹³³ Personal interview with Fernando Pacheco, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

Allan Cain, he affirmed that his own organizations had been advocating for a change shortly after his arrival in 1981 as it foresaw future organizations falling into the same regulatory constraints it found itself in.⁹³⁴

That same year in 1989,⁹³⁵ the first NGO created outside of the MPLA sphere, the Angolan Civic Association (ACA) also had close links to and the support of the Catholic Church. It is telling that the first NGOs established in 1989, before the Law on Associations of 1991, were either a clearly pro-MPLA partisan organization or one directly linked with the Catholic Church, as the Church was considered one of the most important neutral allies of the MPLA as it expanded its reach and authority across the country. That said, despite the Catholic Church's political neutrality during the war, the ACA "was never allowed much space to operate and found itself under consistent government pressure".⁹³⁶ This pairs well with the MPLA's *modus operandi* of first filling and controlling any 'participatory' spaces, before organizing a closely controlled space for subsequent NGOs and CSOs to later operate within.

With little to no coordinating infrastructure to guide the establishment of this new sector, the few NGOs present founded an informal network known as *Comité das Organizações Não-Governamentais em Angola* (CONGA, the Committee of NGOs in Angola) in 1988 to coordinate activities, avoid mission overlap and maximize efficiency of the limited resources. The CONGA network was dominated by foreign NGOs given their weight in human and financial resources and transformed into a major thoroughfare in the 1990s between INGOs and the government body, the Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UTCAH), to coordinate their actions.⁹³⁷ An alternative network was created shortly thereafter in 1991 under the name *Forum das ONGs Angolanas* (FONGA, Forum of Angolan NGOs) to better represent the growing group of national organizations.⁹³⁸ This separate network was also seen as necessary to build a stronger distinction from the government as CONGA was seen as being too closely intertwined.⁹³⁹ First proposed by Allan Cain, the founder of the Canadian INGO Development Workshop, in collaboration with

⁹³⁴ Interview with Allan Cain, Luanda, 27 July 2017.

⁹³⁵ Tvedten *et al.* "La scène angolaise", 74, note the ACA as "officially" beginning operation in January 1990.

⁹³⁶ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 8.

⁹³⁷ Amundsen & Abreu, "Civil Society", 38.

⁹³⁸ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 29

⁹³⁹ Amundsen & Abreu, "Civil Society", 38.

Fernando Pacheco and ADRA, FONGA was initially conceived as a potential network to coordinate the burgeoning group of NGOs foreseen arriving in the following decades.

The arrival was indeed exponential: “In 1996, 26 national and international NGOs were registered in the country. In 2001, there were 95 international and 365 national NGOs”.⁹⁴⁰ Towards the end of the 1990s a “civic” constituency began to emerge, intent on bringing the voice of the people into the political arena.⁹⁴¹ The coordinating bodies thus set up a network whose main purpose was to coordinate the information and activities of the other NGOs working alongside each other, in hopes of avoiding the wasting of resources and doubling up activities. This coordination was deemed critical during a pivotal moment when resources were precious and the population in the direst of needs. While representing a positive learning opportunity to build upon, FONGA did not work out as it was intended.

Image 7 - Cover of *Infonga Jornal* (1999)



Source: Mateus Machado (ed.), *Infonga Jornal*, n° 0, 1999, “Fundamental Rights for Humanity”.
Personal photograph.

⁹⁴⁰ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 6, 9.

⁹⁴¹ Comerford, “Alternative voices”, 32.

The organization's headquarters was based in Luanda, but it also had branches in Cabinda, Benguela, Huíla and Cuanza-Sul.⁹⁴² Likewise, most of the member NGOs were headquartered in the capital Luanda. Many of the organizations that were based and/or operating in the other provinces were skeptical of the network's intentions and criticized its perceived urban bias for supporting projects and groups based in the capital. Furthermore, over time the workers put in charge of FONGA began to develop their own projects outside of their initial mission of simply collecting and relaying information. These secondary projects began to operate in parallel to other NGOs' activities and dipped into the same donor sources. By using a similar donor funding pool as the other NGOs, these new FONGA projects had the effect of siphoning off financial resources from the organizations FONGA was intended to be helping, which created a new set of tensions within the NGO community.

After having strayed from its original mission and never having shaken off its perceived Luanda bias, FONGA was slowly disregarded by the NGOs it was tasked to coordinate with. The umbrella organization "instead became an instrument for top-down decision-making coloured by personal leadership styles and overseas agendas".⁹⁴³ Ultimately, FONGA found itself falling into insignificance like so many other NGOs that find themselves marginalized in the activist community, lacking independence, eventually without donors and without financing. Today FONGA still exists as an entity, but similar to many NGOs in Angola, it exists only as a ghost of its initial self.

4.3.2 'MASS ORGANISATIONS'

The government could no longer ignore the growing vibrancy of the civil society, but its authoritarian tendencies hardened through war pushed it to clamp down on the spaces afforded to the activities of the NGO and CSOs. Elites instead sought to support the emergence of allied CSOs that shared similar views and objectives, effectively serving as "chains of transmission" between the MPLA and local leaders in an attempt "to undermine,

⁹⁴² Amundsen & Abreu, "Civil Society", 39.

⁹⁴³ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 23.

influence and co-opt the genuine civil society movement”.⁹⁴⁴ While some of these MPLA support groups hailed from the colonial days, such as the *União Nacional dos Trabalhadores Angolanos* (UNTA, National Union of Angolan Workers) and the *Organização da Mulher Angolana* (OMA, Angolan Women’s Association), the others were formed during the period of single party rule and all overtly support the party line. These manufactured social organizations became so prevalent that Nuno Vidal (2009) considers them as a “parallel civil society”.⁹⁴⁵

These organizations supported by the government merited their own analytical category, known as ‘mass organizations’, coming to cover nearly all corners of the budding civil society, from those focused on youth with the *Juventude do Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (JMPLA, Youth of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) and the so-called *Movimento Nacional Espontâneo* (MNE, National Spontaneous Movement), *Organização dos Pioneiros Agostinho Neto* (OPA, Agostinho Neto Organization of Pioneers), women (OMA), as well as both general and specific trade unions with UNTA and the *União dos Jornalistas* (Union of Journalists). Inge Tvedten considered UNTA as the MPLA’s greatest ‘mass organization’ asset for its economic organizational capacity as it had an official membership total of 600,000 by 1984.⁹⁴⁶ Coupling UNTA’s influence on mass organizing the urban workforce with UNACA’s rural social organizing initiatives of peasant associations and cooperatives, the MPLA had command over the country’s productive agents, but its inability to adapt and deliver to these workforces beyond the oil economy would degrade both its ability to marshal the full potential behind these forces, as well as the workers’ willingness to blindly back up the party through its inabilities and incoherencies.

However, the constant attempts at controlling and co-opting these organizations, taking them over from burgeoning social organizing initiatives and transforming them into *de facto* arms of the government’s service provision and goods distribution promoted pernicious effects, leading “to a culture of irresponsibility, paternalism and promotion of clientelism”.⁹⁴⁷ Overall, these ‘mass organizations’ represent the popular frontline of the MPLA’s manipulation of Angola’s budding civil society, obscuring the emerging ‘will’ and

⁹⁴⁴ Fernando Pacheco, “Civil Society in Angola: Fiction or Agent of Change?”, in *Southern Africa. Civil Society, Politics and Donor Strategies*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Patrick Chabal, (Luanda: Media XXI/Lisbon: Firmamento, 2009), 125.

⁹⁴⁵ Vidal, “The international institutionalization”, 2009.

⁹⁴⁶ Tvedten, *Angola: Struggle for Peace*, 48.

⁹⁴⁷ Pacheco, “Civil Society in Angola”, 125.

‘voice’ of the people. The influence of these organizations began to wane in correlation with the coming waves of NGO and CSO organizations setting up throughout the territory, but they remain a formidable social organizing tool, especially in ginning up public support during election periods.

4.3.3 MASS MEDIA

As with all authoritarian regimes, crafting the public conversation and controlling the narrative has been understood as a critical tool to maintain power. The government eventually put together its trio of media outlets to shape public opinion and push its message: the print newspaper *O Jornal de Angola* run by the Angop news agency, a colonial vestige reconstituted in November 1975 from the Portuguese’s *Província de Angola*⁹⁴⁸, the *Rádio Nacional de Angola* across the radio waves, and the *Televisão Pública de Angola* for the television. For its part during the civil war, UNITA held a firm grip on its own media outlets. Its radio channel, known as the *Voç da Resistência do Galo Negro* (Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel) (the cock being the party symbol), more commonly known by its acronym VORGAN,⁹⁴⁹ was broadcast from Jamba initially by the British Broadcasting Corporation from 4 January 1979 until 1983 when it was later produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) of the CIA. UNITA’s print newspaper, *Terra Angolana*, was produced by the Kwacha UNITA Press news agency and printed in Lisbon with restricted circulation in Angola.⁹⁵⁰ The war dominated the domestic media coverage and each side pushed out its own propaganda. A significant change came in 1992 with a Constitutional law giving broad rights to the citizens including the creation of political parties, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. While these ‘freedoms’ existed in theory, in practice their exercise was extremely limited, even more so in the peripheries where the resources to exercise such rights were largely unavailable. It did however lead to the diversification of independent newspapers and media outlets moving beyond the domination of the state-run media’s perspective.

⁹⁴⁸ Gilson Lázaro, “Mídia e direitos humanos: o caso do *Jornal de Angola* e *Semanário Angolense*”, *Revista Africana de Mídias*, 20, no. 1 & 2, (2012): 40, 42.

⁹⁴⁹ In Lázaro’s article (2012) cited above, the acronym is incorrectly listed as VOGARN.

⁹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

The emerging independent media landscape advanced the national discourse toward more self-reflection on the potentially pivotal role of average citizens. Alongside the religious organizations, the budding independent press was crucial in nurturing a “critical consciousness” among the populations living through war.⁹⁵¹ This new “critical consciousness” would be difficult however to spread via mass media. Despite new independent publications emerging, the written press was severely underdeveloped and had an extremely low readership, limited mostly to Luanda and some provincial capitals. In 1997, the only daily newspaper published in the country, *O Jornal do Angola*, only printed 10,000 copies.⁹⁵² The media inevitably had an urban bias as the few journalists within the country were based in cities and thus focused principally on urban issues through access journalism. Furthermore, the development of an ‘independent’ press was in large part launched by allies of the president, giving only the perceptions of a diversity of opinion while in reality filling the limited space that alternative voices were allowed.⁹⁵³ By 2006, there were still hardly any regional media based outside of the capital, besides some NGO initiatives including *Ondaka*, Development Workshop’s Umbundu language community newsletter in Huambo, as well as private radio stations which were only operational in three provinces: *Rádio Morena* in Benguela, *Rádio 2000* in Lubango and *Rádio Comercial* in Cabinda.⁹⁵⁴ In the peripheries, radio has long been the preferred method of mass communication given its relatively cheap operating costs, a wide availability of radios throughout the country, and the low literacy rates of the population. In 2001, the rural population had a literacy rate of 50.1%, only increasing to 56.3% in 2009.⁹⁵⁵

Only after the civil war and the rebuilding of critical infrastructure did television become more widely available to non-urban areas, though the reliance on electricity where constant blackouts are the norm, its limited reach and high purchasing costs make it unaffordable to many rural households, not to mention where the necessary use of generators

⁹⁵¹ Henda Mateus, “The role of the media during the conflict and in the construction of democracy”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 64.

⁹⁵² Lázaro, “Mídia e direitos humanos”, 42.

⁹⁵³ Susana Salgado, *The Internet and Democracy Building in Lusophone African Countries* (London: Routledge, March 2016), 67.

⁹⁵⁴ Henda Mateus, “The role of the media during the conflict and in the construction of democracy”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 64.

⁹⁵⁵ Angola, *Angola, 40 Anos de Estatística 1975-2015*, Instituto Nacional de Estatística, Luanda, 2015, 16. https://www.ine.gov.ao/?option=com_fileman&view=file&routed=1&name=ANGOLA%2040%20ANOS.pdf&folder=publicacao%2FEconomia%20e%20Financas&container=fileman-files.

that require expensive fuel to keep the lights on. Given the preference for radio, it has also been the media with the highest regulatory control. This is unsurprising as it is also the medium with the broadest audience, especially in rural areas.⁹⁵⁶ The government has therefore taken strategic steps to limit the access of informational resources to the peripheries, effectively bifurcating the availability of information between urban and rural residents.

The history of the Catholic Church's *Rádio Ecclesia* is exemplary of the government's control over media and journalism in general. After having been expropriated by the state in 1977⁹⁵⁷ it was relaunched in 1997, though confined to broadcasting only in the capital Luanda.⁹⁵⁸ Only the state-owned RNA radio is permitted to broadcast nationwide, due to legislation passed in 1992.⁹⁵⁹ *Rádio Ecclesia* has been a media staple as a prominent source of reliable information on the radio waves across Luanda and frequently takes on issues of rights, peace, and reconciliation.⁹⁶⁰ But the station has been limited in its emitting capacity to the capital and its surrounding areas due to perceived bias against the MPLA, even "accused of 'radio terrorism' by the government in 2003" due to its perception of being too critical of the MPLA-led government and its officials.⁹⁶¹

Shortly thereafter, in early 2004 the government signaled its intentions to allow the Radio to broadcast beyond the walls of Luanda, only to renege on the proposal yet again.⁹⁶² The saga has continued as the government recently allowed *Rádio Ecclesia* to expand its emissions,⁹⁶³ though it is unclear how far these radio waves were allowed to reach. During my fieldwork and my visits to the central radio station in July 2017, the officials continued complaining about the station's confinement to the capital region. Leaving open these spaces of uncertainty and operational ambiguity should not be misconstrued as bureaucratic incompetence or administrative ineptitude, but rather another clear calculation of the government's strategy towards organizations it deems as potentially hostile to its political control, clearly including the Catholic Church in this category and effectively putting its

⁹⁵⁶ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 5.

⁹⁵⁷ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 85.

⁹⁵⁸ Comerford, "Alternative voices", 34-35.

⁹⁵⁹ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 2.

⁹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁹⁶¹ Mateus, "The role of the media", 64.

⁹⁶² Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 25.

⁹⁶³ USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade da Organização da Sociedade Civil para Angola em 2017*, Washington D.C., 2017, 3. <https://adpp-angola.org/images/Civil-Society-Organization-Sustainability-Index-CSOSI-report.pdf>.

officials on notice to not cross the MPLA party line. Moreover, the government has effectively staked out the strategic position of setting up a Chinese-style ‘firewall’ by eliminating specific media competition outside the city limits of Luanda, ensuring a greater control of the messaging reaching beyond the capital’s limits.

Before the arrival of the internet and social media, the rural populations had been once again marginalized by the media, regardless of the medium. Furthermore, cell phones and cell service are required to access the internet and are scarce resources outside of the main urban centers, especially when comparing prices to neighboring countries. South Africa has the most competitive prices while those of Angola are over ten times more.⁹⁶⁴ The telecommunication market in Angola is dominated by a duopoly of providers: Unicel and Movitel. Unicel, owned by Sonangol, the Brazilian Oi, and other Angolan shareholders (including the ex-President daughter, Isabel dos Santos), dominates the market at 73 percent, though Movitel, privatized in 2009 (the state still holds 20% of the market share), is gaining ground.⁹⁶⁵ In the new administration’s push for privatizing state assets, Unicel is now slated for divestment of the state’s 25% share through MS Telecom.⁹⁶⁶ Internet users have been increasing steadily in the country, going from 1,503,597 in 2012 to 4,566,390 in 2015.⁹⁶⁷ By 2018, the country’s 3G network reached 65% of the country.⁹⁶⁸ In reality, the statistics of rural and peri-urban are undoubtedly a small percentage of these totals. The overall media and informational landscape is yet another facet of the peripheries’ structural weakness, partly because of technical difficulties and lack of resources, partly due to direct political intervention dominating the limited messaging arriving to the countryside, thereby engaging in *de facto* censorship of information otherwise available in other geographic areas of the country.

⁹⁶⁴ IFC, *Creating Markets*, xvi.

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁹⁶⁶ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 101, Luanda, 5 Aug. 2019: 4984, 4988. <http://www.ucm.minfin.gov.ao/cs/groups/public/documents/document/zmlu/ode1/~edisp/minfin815554.pdf>.

⁹⁶⁷ Angola, *Anuário de Estatísticas Sociais*, 75.

⁹⁶⁸ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 34.

4.3.4 ESTABLISHING THE LEGAL-RATIONAL FRAMEWORK

While the government could clearly regulate and control the messages moving through the country's telecommunications, new formal regulations would need to be established to manage the reach and influence of the NGOs arriving *en masse* to the country. This reality led to the rise of the Law on Associations (n° 14 of 11 May 1991), which opened the way for NGOs and CSOs independent of the MPLA to register and enact their programs.⁹⁶⁹ Through this approach “the government exhibited a democratic opening to the international community while simultaneously delegating some of most ‘uncomfortable’ aspects of governing (providing services, infrastructures, civic education) to actors financed by foreign resources”.⁹⁷⁰ However, with a growing wave of NGOs setting up in the country and in an attempt to regain control of their actions, further restrictions on the sector would be called for almost immediately.

As early as 1996, the government “began drafting legislation”⁹⁷¹ to define an NGO more narrowly and thereby confine the scope for the activities of such organizations” though the draft was shelved in 2000, likely due to the deteriorating humanitarian conditions of the country and the heavy reliance on NGO assistance.⁹⁷² The lack of a clear regulatory framework alongside the varied projects and activities of the incoming NGOs created institutional instability in the government's attempted response to the organizations, all the while these organizations were seen as playing increasingly important roles during the war.

As the war dragged on and amid a desire for normalcy, different sectors of the population continued organizing and coordinating to advocate for various interests. Alongside this destabilizing regulatory framework, the government advanced with its aggressive plan to keep NGOs in a prolonged state of instability, promoting some while

⁹⁶⁹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 77.

⁹⁷⁰ Jon Schubert, “‘Democratização’ e Consolidação do Poder Político em Angola no Pós-Guerra”, *Relações Internacionais*, 37, (2013): 93.

⁹⁷¹ The draft regulations were written up within the Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration (MINARS) assisted by consulting firm KPMG, headquartered in the Netherlands (Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 22); Inge Tvedten incorrectly identifies the company as KPGM (Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 31).

⁹⁷² Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 10, 23.

undermining others.⁹⁷³ No NGOs were initially allowed to participate in the creation of new legislation governing their own activities, yet as it became known to them that new regulations were on the political agenda, “5-7 key NGOs under the joint auspices of FONGA and CONGA subsequently became involved in a consultative process with the Government, with their own legal advisor”.⁹⁷⁴ The recommendations provided by the NGOs were largely “disregarded” not only by the government but also by the legal consultancy group KPGM “who had little or no experience from civil society and NGOs”.⁹⁷⁵ It remains unclear if KPMG was (likely) paid directly by the government for its services, or rather merely provided benevolent assistance in its advising role. If the group was paid, then that would be a strong explanation for why the proposals coming from the civil society were ignored as their patrons would have preferred it.

The insider relationship between the Angolan government and KPMG was however further exposed through the “Panama Papers” investigation. Internal documents showed how KPMG worked alongside the Swiss-based asset management company Quantum Global, founded and managed by the President’s son’s friend and investor Jean-Claude Bastos, in Quantum’s role as the manager of the US\$5 billion held by the country’s Sovereign Wealth Fund (FSDEA). KPMG worked with Quantum Global to move “tens of millions of dollars” between Angola and Mauritius where Quantum Global had established seven different entities “to manage billions of dollars on behalf of the Angolan government fund”.⁹⁷⁶ While the civil society actors’ involvement yielded few concrete results, their insistence to become involved in the country’s legislative affairs was a vital *symbolic* step as the organizing power of the civil society pushed the government to begin normalizing its rocky relationship with these nascent organizations.

Only years later at the turn of the century, as the MPLA continued consolidating power and territory amidst the civil war,⁹⁷⁷ it moved quickly to enact its nation-building agenda with an eye on coopting parts of the NGO sector in the process. The *Regulamento das associações e instituições de utilidade pública* (Regulation on Associations and Institutions of Public

⁹⁷³ Schubert, “Democratização”, 93.

⁹⁷⁴ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 32.

⁹⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁷⁶ Will Fitzgibbon, *Angolan tycoon’s frozen funds highlight KPMG’s role in offshore secrecy*, Washington D.C., International Consortium of Investigate Journalists, 23 April 2018. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/paradise-papers/angolan-tycoons-frozen-funds-highlight-kpmgs-role-in-offshore-secrecy/>.

⁹⁷⁷ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 3.

Interests) was initially approved on 22 November 2000 and finalized on 23 February 2001.⁹⁷⁸ This was a mechanism to provide public support to certain organizations that were deemed to represent the “public interest”. If an organization passes certain criteria evaluated by the government itself, their approval allows them access to public funds.⁹⁷⁹ As an example of the arbitrary nature of being denominated “of public interest”, the government attributed this status to the so-called National Spontaneous Movement (*Movimento Nacional Espontâneo* – MNE), which is widely-known to be a government sponsored youth group that is mobilized in support of MPLA policies.⁹⁸⁰ In the mid-2000s room for independent maneuvering outside of the government’s agenda was limited, even though the government itself lacked a clear direction to its policy agenda, further complicating the environment NGOs were working in.

The blurred red lines existed with “restrictions on ‘political activity’ on human rights, good governance, transparency, accountability, participation, and other fundamental political issues in Angola”.⁹⁸¹ Despite these restrictions, a speech by President dos Santos in December 2007 further revealed the government’s frenetic approach to the NGO sector as he shifted his support for consultative approaches to problem solving.⁹⁸² This purportedly gave a larger independent space to Non-State Actors to be proactive in implementing their programs without constant government surveillance. These words were mostly empty, however, as the efforts of authoritarian control remained a constant presence throughout his tenure. The government had essentially been pushed into this conciliatory position through the heavy pressures put upon it through the end of the civil war and the stabilization and reconstruction effort assisted by international donors. Years after succumbing to international pressure, the booming oil production provided the financial breathing room to begin imposing its will anew. Micro-managing the NGO sector later became a frequent priority of the government, with further restrictions and regulations passed in three- to five-year intervals throughout the reign of José Eduardo dos Santos 2004, 2007, 2012, and 2015.

⁹⁷⁸ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 8.

⁹⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Democracy or Monopoly? Angola’s Reluctant Return to Elections*, New York, Feb. 2009, 27. <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/angola0209web.pdf>

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁸¹ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 227.

⁹⁸² *Ibid.*, 227.

4.3.5 INSTITUTIONAL INSTABILITY...

Through the 1990s, the coordinating government bodies in charge of managing NGOs constantly changed hands “with the Ministry of External Relations, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Commerce (!) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Reintegration being responsible at different points in time”.⁹⁸³ In an attempt to stabilize the sector and bring order to bureaucratic *confusão*, organizing and managing both national and international NGOs came under the authority of the *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance), created through decree n° 30 of 1998. Working under the tutelage of the *Ministério de Assistência e Reinserção Social* (MINARS, Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration), which was the main body implementing policies for humanitarian assistance and development aid and humanitarian,⁹⁸⁴ UTCAH transformed into the principal institutional enforcer of the different activities NGOs engaged in.

UTCAH’s principal mandate was “to coordinate, control and verify the programs/activities of national and foreign NGOs. It facilitates obtaining work visas and customs clearance for goods, products and materials that are imported or donated to the NGOs”.⁹⁸⁵ Given the grave humanitarian crisis affecting the country upon its foundation, UTCAH also played a role in the coordination of humanitarian aid alongside international NGOs (via CONGA) and agencies.⁹⁸⁶ In its role of humanitarian coordination, UTCAH mirrored the Humanitarian Assistance Co-ordination Unit (UCAH)⁹⁸⁷ set up in Luanda in 1993 by the United Nations⁹⁸⁸, which was tasked with providing the basic infrastructure for the arrival and distribution of the humanitarian aid coming into the country.⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁸³ Tvedten, Inge, *Angola 2000/2001*, 29.

⁹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁹⁸⁵ United Nations, *Core document forming part of the reports of states parties: Angola*, International Human Rights Instruments, HRI/CORE/AGO/2008, 16 April 2008, 35. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=HRI%2fCORE%2fAGO%2f2008&Lang=en.

⁹⁸⁶ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society”, 38.

⁹⁸⁷ The organization was also known as the Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 21) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) (Vidal, “The international institutionalization”, 34).

⁹⁸⁸ The four main donors of UCAH were ECHO, Sweden, the UK, and the USA. See: Toby Lanzer, “The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Angola: A Model for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance”, *Studies on Emergencies and Disaster Relief*, no. 5, Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996, 24.

⁹⁸⁹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 78.

At the time, the recognized MPLA-led government held only about 20% of the country's territory and was wholly unable to coordinate emergency relief services throughout the country.⁹⁹⁰ UCAH provided an important intermediary role for the coordination of humanitarian relief efforts (it did not implement programs itself) during the war between the two warring parties and NSAs as its “‘open door’ policy promoted dialogue between the unit, UN agencies, and donors, and NGOs so that, together, they could agree to certain principles and issues”.⁹⁹¹ Besides creating links with both sides of the war to enable emergency relief activities, UCAH's other major benefit was to heal the rift between UN agencies and the NGOs operating on the ground as the UN agencies, especially the UNDP, were criticized for its “paternal” and “haughty” position vis-à-vis the NGOs.⁹⁹² Reconciling these perceived slights would lead to forming a stronger, more unified bloc in advocating for more transparency and collaboration with the government. UCAH remained active until after the war in 2004 when it was transformed into a UN Transitional Coordination Unit (TCU).⁹⁹³ The TCU later handed over the responsibilities of coordination to UTCAH and MINARS.⁹⁹⁴ An expanded analysis of the imposed legislative restrictions will be developed in §6.1.

4.3.6 ...CREATING DIFFICULT DATA COLLECTION

Procuring data on Non-State Actors (NSAs) is “often incomplete” across Sub-Saharan Africa⁹⁹⁵ and Angola is no outlier. The collection of NGO data in Angola took up a significant amount of time and energy while in the field in Luanda at the headquarters of UTCAH. The government lists of NGOs were last published by UTCAH in 2012. After 2012, data collection bifurcated. The management of this sector had been transferred in April 2015 to the *Instituto de Promoção e Coordenação da Ajuda às Comunidades* (IPROCAC, Institute for the Promotion and Coordination of Aid to Communities).

⁹⁹⁰ Lanzer, “The UN Department”, 17.

⁹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*, 24.

⁹⁹³ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 21.

⁹⁹⁴ Nuno Vidal, “Política, Sectores Sociais e Sociedade Civil em Angola”, in *Sociedade Civil e Política em Angola: Enquadramento Regional e Internacional*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade, (Lisbon: Edições Firmamento/Luanda: Media XXI, 2009), 16.

⁹⁹⁵ USAID, *2015 CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington D.C., 2015, viii. https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/2015_Africa_CSOSI.pdf.

IPROCAC was set up as a public institute working within in the social sector “responsible for the promotion, coordination, control and evaluation of programs and projects implemented by NGOs that operate in Angola, as well as the mapping and accompaniment of vulnerable situations”.⁹⁹⁶ However, around the same time the European Commission was experimenting with ways to improve social sector data collection and subsequently set up the aforementioned *Programa de Apoio aos Atores Não Estatais* (PAANE, Program to support non-state actors) beginning in 2015.⁹⁹⁷ The new body was specifically tasked with building “up the capacities of non-state actors (NSAs) in their roles as implementers and representatives, improve NSAs’ access to information networks and promote social and political dialogue between NSAs and local and national authorities”.⁹⁹⁸ PAANE restarted the publication of NGO data in a simplified format beginning in 2015. This provides another case of burdensome bureaucracy as both institutions share similar roles in managing NSAs, while the NSAs themselves fall under further administrative strain in their attempts to respond and meet multiple requirements.

The data on NGOs and CSOs provided by the government body is admittedly flawed. Most observers of the sector believe that the actual number of organizations that are operational is a fraction of the official total.⁹⁹⁹ According to Fernando Pacheco, those with the experience and resources to enact quality, transformative projects is likely limited to dozens, rather than hundreds of such organizations.¹⁰⁰⁰ A report by the INGO World Learning in 2010 found that only approximately 60% of the officially registered NGOs in the country had actually implemented a program that particular year.¹⁰⁰¹ Given the fact that the data are of dubious scientific nature and are likely inflated to include phantom NGOs that exist on paper only, with little to no actual programs or activities, using the data to understand the sector can be counter-productive if the multiple asterisks are not taken into consideration. Nevertheless, analyzing the government data, however flawed, also gives us a look into the situation as the government itself saw it and reacted to it. A qualitative-based analysis is central to truly understanding the overall impact of the NGO sector, as well as the

⁹⁹⁶ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 51, Luanda, 13 April 2015: 1585. <https://archive.gazettes.africa/archive/ao/2015/ao-government-gazette-dated-2015-04-13-no-51.pdf>.

⁹⁹⁷ CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2015a, 211.

⁹⁹⁸ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 163.

⁹⁹⁹ UNDP, *Avaliação do UNPAF 2015-2019 para Angola*, Relatório Final, 20 Aug. 2018, 70. <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/7311>.

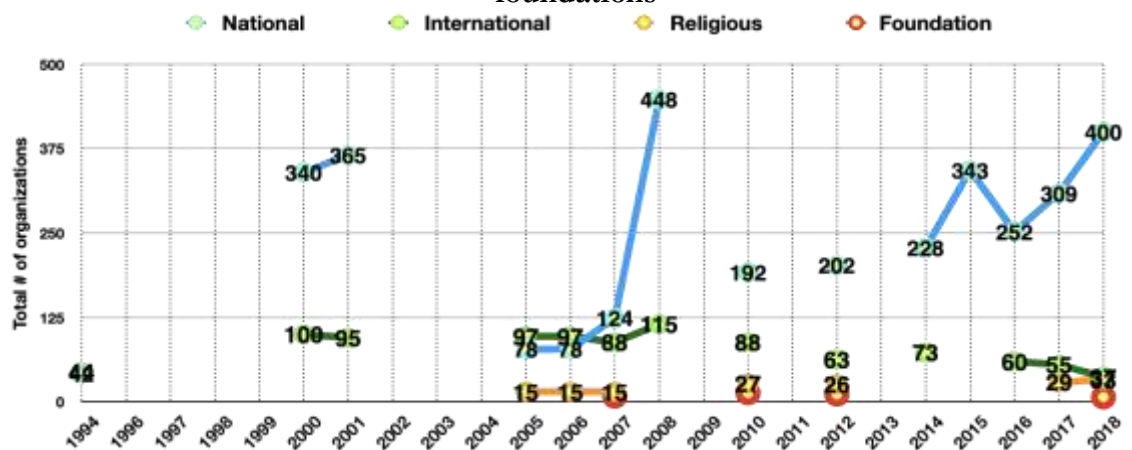
¹⁰⁰⁰ Personal interview, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

¹⁰⁰¹ USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability*, 20.

evolution of its activities in general. Nevertheless, a quantitative analysis regarding the evolution of NGOs will also reveal to what extent civil society has, at least quantitatively, begun to organize itself locally, regionally and nationally.

Acquiring the evolutionary data of UTCAH and IPROCAC was a principal goal of my field study in Angola. As explained in Chapter 1, my attempts were not very fruitful. In my fieldwork, I had focused my energy on UTCAH given that PAANE had only begun publishing data in 2015 and I was able to procure their 2015 directory. Since my fieldwork was done in mid-2017, I would have only been able to acquire their 2016 data, while UTCAH theoretically had their data going back to 1998. Instead, UTCAH provided me with the directory for 2003, 2007, and 2012. When enquiring about the previous years, the official made a reference to a fire that had destroyed an unknown number of years around the turn of the century.¹⁰⁰² Therefore, the following compilation of data showing the evolutionary trends in NGO activities was put together through the years of my doctoral research.¹⁰⁰³ These data give the most thorough vision of the *government's perspective* of the NGO sector, flawed as it is. The graphs have methodological flaws as the numbers were compiled differently by the separate government agencies collecting the data, while these government agencies recorded the data differently over the years, as well as secondary academic or institutional sources.

Figure 5 - Total number of registered NNGOs, INGOs, religious groups and foundations



Source: Mazarino da Cunha, “437 ONG trabalham na assistência social”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 23 October 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/sociedade/437-ong-trabalham-na-assistencia-social>; Susan Dow, “Strengthening the Role of Local NGOs in Angola”, Discussion Paper, Save the Children Fund, Luanda, July 1994; UNDP, *Avaliação do UNPAF*, 2018; UTCAH, Ministério da Assistência e Reinserção Social, *Directório das*

¹⁰⁰² Discussion with UTCAH official at the Luanda headquarters, July 2017. As I only planned on being there to ask for data and did not plan for a sit-down discussion, I failed to ask for the man's name.

¹⁰⁰³ The raw data used to create the following charts can be found in Appendix #6.

ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais, Luanda 2006; UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2007; UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2011; UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2013; Virginie Tallio, “La responsabilité sociale des entreprises : modèle de santé publique ou régime de santé globale ? L'exemple des entreprises pétrolières en Angola”, *Sciences sociales et santé*, 35, no. 3, (2017): 81-104; Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 30-31, USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade*, 2017; Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 7.

The graph above is the most comprehensive data I was able to obtain, despite my persistent attempts. In the abstract, it appears quite representative of a researcher entering into the complex maze of Angolan Studies for the first time: a combination of successes, failures, multiple connections made, and numerous mysteries left to resolve. A few simple examples of methodological flaws reveal the unreliability of the data compiled by the government. One of the most obvious was found in the 2007 UTCAH directory, where the Director General provided a summary of the total NGOs registered in 2006 and 2007. The summary provided for 2007 listed 124 NNGOs, 88 INGOs, 15 religious institutions, and 8 foundations, totaling 235. However, the UTCAH report provides a total of 135, undercounting the total by one hundred. Either the official tasked with the report was mathematically challenged, or simply sloppy in their administrative work, but either way such a clear accounting error does not provide confidence for the other numbers contained within the report. For that reason, efforts were made to verify numbers whenever possible. It is unclear as to why so few religious institutions are categorized in the data, given the relative prevalence of religious organizations in Angola. The category of religious institutions is likewise incoherent between the different years, as they are categorized simply as “churches” in 2006,¹⁰⁰⁴ as “religious institutions and churches” in 2007¹⁰⁰⁵ and simply “religious institutions” in 2010¹⁰⁰⁶ and 2012.¹⁰⁰⁷ The methodology for their categorization is not provided.

Furthermore, given the various sources that the data have been compiled from, the data come from primary and secondary sources, as can be noted in the sources of the graph above. One important methodological difference can be seen in the graphs below regarding the numbers for 2015, which are significantly higher than the previous years compared to others. This is explained because 2015 was the first year the official figures were published

¹⁰⁰⁴ UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2006, 13.

¹⁰⁰⁵ UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2007, 6.

¹⁰⁰⁶ UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2011, 16.

¹⁰⁰⁷ UTCAH, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, 2013, 18.

by PAANE, taking over from the then defunct UTCAH which published its last survey figures in 2012. The years of 2013 and 2014 thus fell into an administrative blackhole.

The methodology of collecting and organizing data between these two institutions was considerably different. Notably, the geographic location of the NGOs was limited to where the organization itself responded to the questionnaire and not where it is physically active. This explains the higher concentration of numbers for Luanda in 2015, where many NGOs are likely headquartered and would have easier responded to the questionnaire, even though they could be active in other provinces as well. However, ADRA for example is listed as being present in Huíla province, though its headquarters is in Luanda and also has branches in Benguela, Huambo, Malanje, and Cunene (the Huíla branch doubles as the Cunene branch also). Furthermore, the increased numbers compared to previous years can be explained by the fact that the 2015 survey registered all respondents to the survey, regardless of their legal status. Even NGOs still awaiting administrative approval to begin operating legally were therefore included, thereby inflating the numbers. Previously, UTCAH surveys only registered those legally operational, making a separate list of the organizations having applied for legalization.

The fact that 2015 is the year of a significant increase is doubly troubling given the accumulating hostilities of the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos creating hurdles for the NGOs sector. Coupled with the high operating costs in the country, the combative administrative environment, and the donor fatigue setting in for a country rich with oil but suffering from mismanagement and lack of spending on the health services being supported by the NGOs, many observers witnessed a lower activity of NGOs at this time. According to a 2018 UNDP survey:

In 2015, few donors remained in Angola. A limited number of implementing officials were identified, which represents a weakness for the implementation of projects at the local level. Traditional partners with strong operating capacities in the territory left the country, like Oxfam or the Red Cross. At the same time, different studies and informants attested to the weakness of the civil society.¹⁰⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰⁸ UNDP, *Avaliação do UNPAF*, 70.

As a result of the few remaining donors, it is estimated by that up to half of registered NGOs did not implement projects in 2015 due to a lack of financing, existing in effect as shell organizations in name only.¹⁰⁰⁹

While far from ideal, UTCAH was able to mark clear categories of NGO activities for the different organizations active on the ground. It separated national NGOs from international NGOs (further separating those legalized and those registered awaiting approval), as well as religious organizations and foundations. PAANE, however, makes no clear distinction between any of these categories, rather lumping them all together as CSOs and leaving it to the reader to analyze and distinguish the differences. Given the relative low number of registered foundations and religious organizations (previously separated under the UTCAH methodology) compared to the overall numbers of NGOs, the 2015 figures in the charts below include all three types of organizations, further inflating the 2015 numbers. Moreover, the 2015 PAANE directory's categorization of activities often veers from the previous methodology, creating rarely used and often random extra categories (for example, UTCAH listed "health" as a main activity, while PAANE uses "health" as well as HIV, malaria, tuberculosis; other times it creates entirely new categories such as "transformation", "prevention", and "production of literature" to name just a few examples.¹⁰¹⁰ In many other instances, the directory simply does not list any activity of the NGOs, even when their principal activities are literally written into the name of their organization. For example, the *Associação Angola Livre de Minas* (AALM, Angola Free From Mines Association) has no apparent activities, while 'demining' was a key category of previous UTCAH directories. The *Associação de Desenvolvimento de Agricultura e Apoio Rural* (ADAR, Association of Rural Support and Agricultural Development) also lists no activities, while "agriculture" would logically be one.¹⁰¹¹ Given this methodological difference between UTCAH and PAANE, the data collection followed for the production of the charts below adapted the PAANE directory to the categorization of activities already established by UTCAH. In other words, no new activity sectors were created based on the creative license employed by the PAANE directory. Instead, each NGO was inserted into a category that had been previously established by UTCAH.

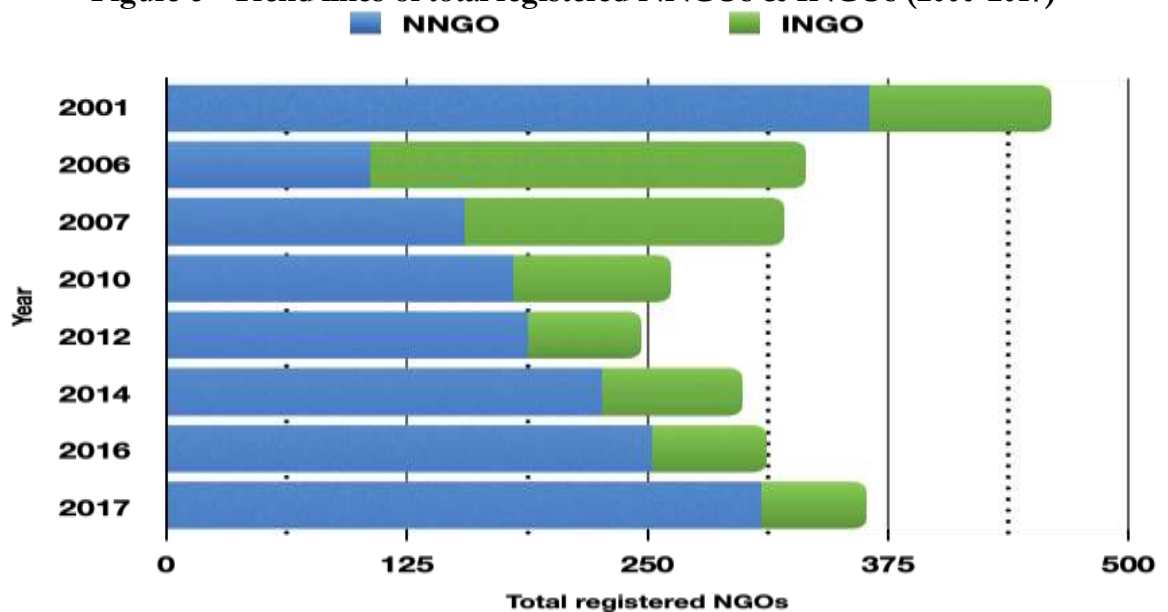
¹⁰⁰⁹ CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, 211.

¹⁰¹⁰ PAANE, *Directório das ONGs Nacionais e Internacionais*, European Union & Republic of Angola, Luanda 2015, 18-19, 61, 65.

¹⁰¹¹ PAANE, *Directório*, 25, 27.

Finally, given the multiple organizations that did not register any activities, the liberty was taken to attribute an activity to certain organizations, but only in the case that the title of their organization clearly demonstrated what the organization was involved in. To give some examples of the previously cited NGOs, AALM was registered as active in “demining” and ADAR in “agriculture”, even though it is not explicitly cited in the PAANE directory. Also, instead of creating new categories for malaria, tuberculosis and HIV, the activity was simply listed under “health”. In order to have the strongest data set possible, it would have been necessary to research each organization that lacked a category for their main activity, identifying which are officially registered, and which are registered as foundations and religious organizations. Alas, time constraints disallowed such an endeavor until a later time.

Figure 6 - Trend lines of total registered NNGOs & INGOs (2000-2017)



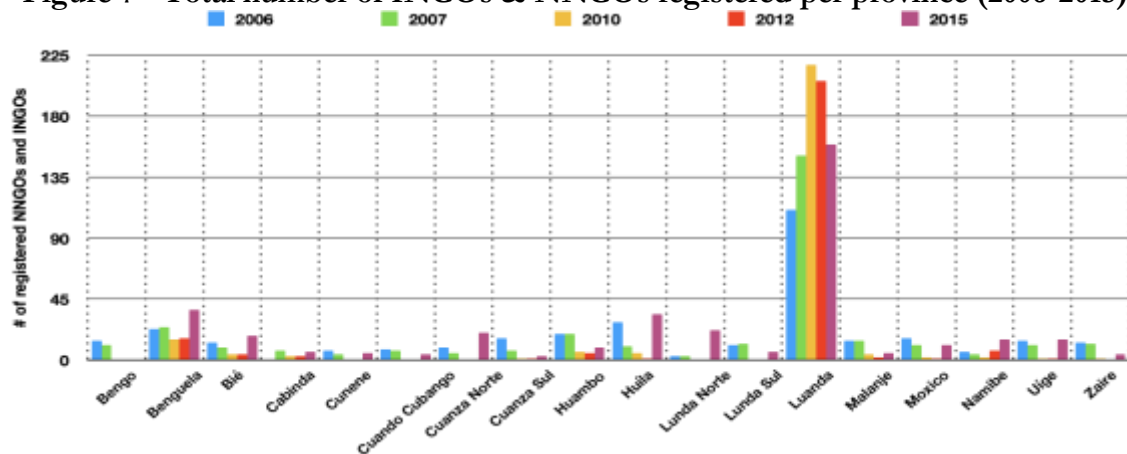
Source: Author's compilation.

In the overall trend lines shown in the chart above, the trajectory lines clearly begin to emerge after the outlier year of 2001. The huge amount of NNGOs is likely explained by the considerable amount of international assistance being funneled to the country still in the grip of continuous war. Numerous organizations were therefore created to deliver this assistance. The difficulty to operate in these circumstances likewise explains the relatively smaller amount of INGOs present at the time. What is surprising is the drastic reduction of NNGOs between 2001 and 2006. That change is the true outlier in this graph. Whether UTCAH changed its registering requirements, Angolans experienced their own fatigue (as opposed to ‘donor fatigue’) once the war finally ended, or the 2001 numbers were vastly

inflated by the government, further investigation is necessary to understand why so many NNGOs became deactivated between 2001 and 2006.

With the war finished, we see an emerging trend line characteristic of post-war rebuilding assistance by the donor community. INGOs initially descend in large numbers to assist in immediate relief and rebuilding efforts, then slowly decrease in action as stability is slowly restored within the country. As the INGOs retreat, NNGOs attempt to expand into these newly established spaces. The INGO decreasing presence can be attributed to donor fatigue as the country moved into peacetime and the emergency assistance became less urgent, government intransigence putting up bureaucratic barriers, and the overall logistical difficulties inherent in operating in Angola. Amid this donor fatigue, the booming economy in the 2000s provoked reflections among international donors if their role replacing the government in providing basic social services and development initiatives was not creating longer term harm as the government should have been stepping up its own governance capacity.¹⁰¹² Furthermore, as the economy strengthened and the MPLA-led government began consolidating its authority throughout the territory, the administration moved to tighten legal restrictions and administrative hurdles registering and operating NGOs in general.¹⁰¹³

Figure 7 - Total number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015)



Source: Author's compilation.

Next, we will analyze where these different NGOs are actually implementing their programs. Depending on resources, headquartering in one province does not mean that an organization is limited to that area. Likewise, NGOs can be competent in various sectors,

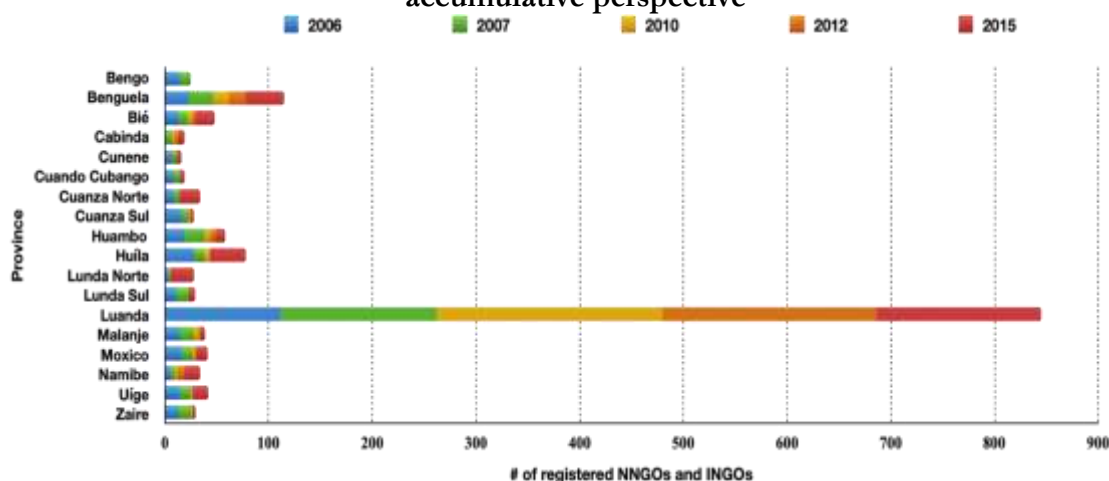
¹⁰¹² Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 80.

¹⁰¹³ The timeline of laws governing NGOs is described in §6.1.1.

implementing programs across different sectors, potentially in different provinces. The chart above therefore breaks down the different provinces where NGO were active between 2006-2015. The most specific territorial entity the directories record is limited to the provincial level. It remains therefore unknown how many organizations operate outside of the respective provincial capitals based solely on the government data. The charts above tracks the provinces where the different organizations are registered and, at least nominally, active. Various organizations can be active in multiple provinces and can be involved in multiple activities, thereby explaining the exponential growth of numbers in some cases.

One of the most significant findings in compiling these data is the absolute dominance of Luanda province in comparison to even other highly populated coastal provinces. The total combined number of NNGOs and INGOs registering in Luanda (845) from 2006-2015 dwarfs that of Benguela province (115), the second most active. Obviously, this number does not signify 845 different organizations, as many will reregister through the years as their programs continue. Nevertheless, if these numbers are to be believed, this would mean merely the total organizations registered in Luanda in only 2006 (111) were more numerous than the accumulated registration of NNGOs and INGOs in nearly every other province from 2006-2015, with the only exception being Benguela (115).

Figure 8 - Total number of INGOs & NNGOS registered per province (2006-2015), accumulative perspective

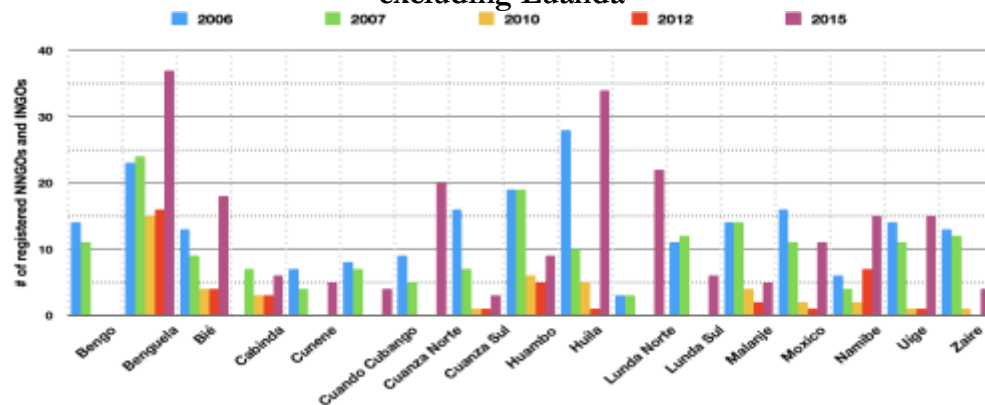


Source: Author's compilation.

The same chart seen through an accumulative perspective puts Luanda's dominance into starker contrast. This accumulation of organizations, investment, programs, energy, and focus is absolutely incomparable to any other location in the country. There are several logical

reasons to explain Luanda's dominance in these statistics, notably: the highest concentration of the country's population, the facility of transportation with the main international airport, the concentration of resources (human, financial, material), as well as its status as the country's economic, administrative, cultural, and fashion capital. However, Luanda could also be overcounted as some NGOs are headquartered in Luanda, while also active in other provinces.

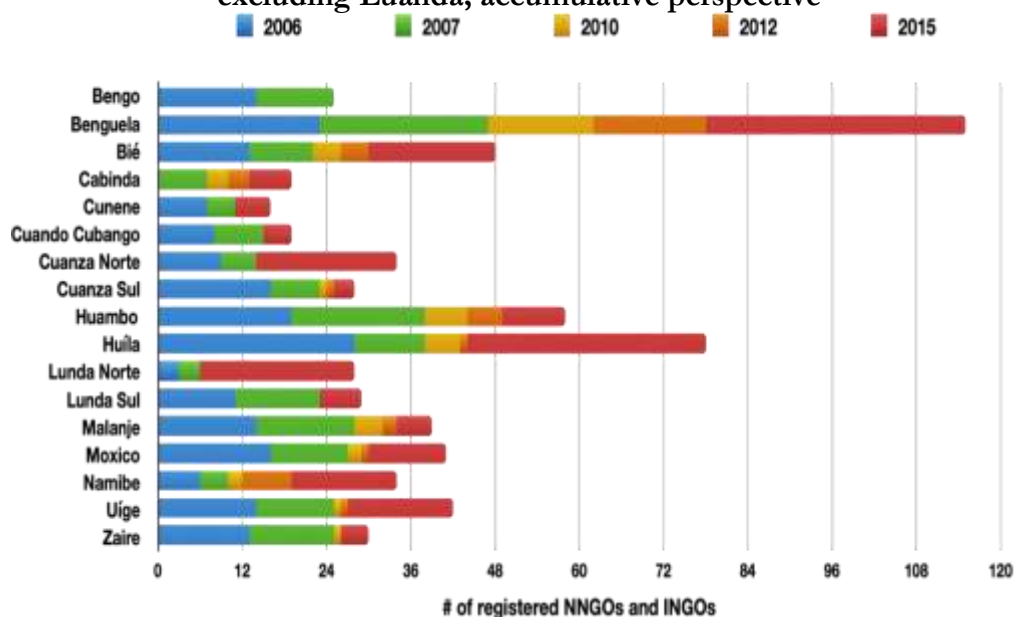
Figure 9 - Number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015) excluding Luanda



Source: Author's compilation.

If we take the major outlier of Luanda out of the statistics, we are able to have a better idea as to which provinces are most represented outside of the hyper concentration in Luanda. This allows for a much better perspective on the second-tier and third-tier provinces in regards to NGO activity. Benguela, Huíla, and Huambo province contain the most NGO activity outside of the capital, principally due to their major population clusters with the Benguela/Lobito corridor and the important provincial capitals of Lubango and Huambo where historical social activism and organizing are also key characteristics of these provinces. It is striking how similar the trends stay between INGO and NNGO programs per province, though some important changes are notable. For both organizations, Benguela and Huíla provinces dominate the resources as second-tier territories behind Luanda, with Huambo and Bié in some cases barely distinguishing themselves from the vast third-tier provinces. The third tier is more balanced across the NGO programs per province, with Huambo's 'second tier' status actually being overcome by Cuanza Norte and levelling with Namibe, making the province of Huambo much more active for INGOs than NGOs.

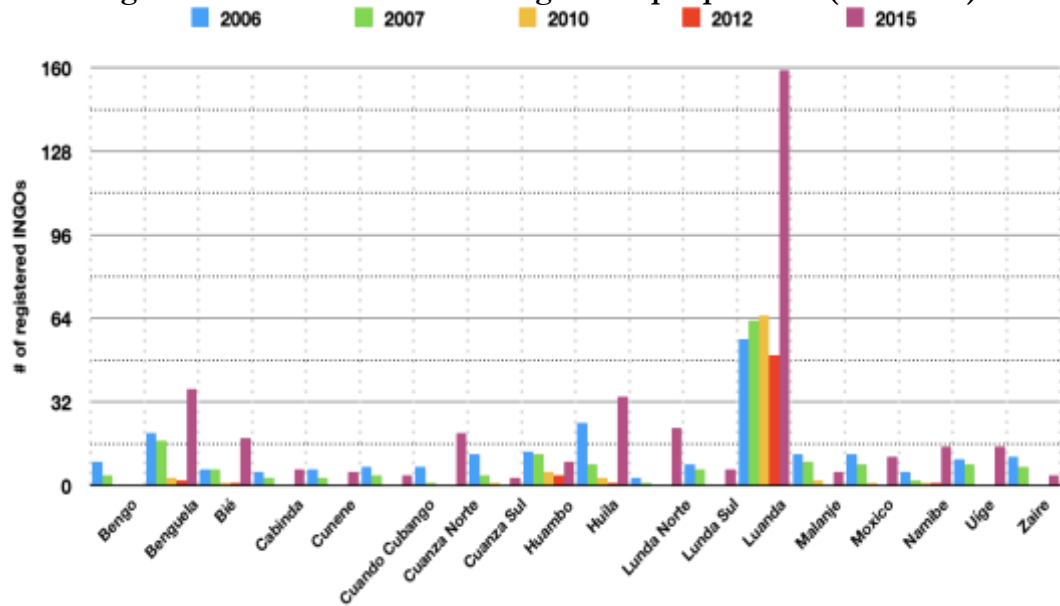
Figure 10 - Number of INGOs & NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015) excluding Luanda, accumulative perspective



Source: Author's compilation

The same chart seen from an accumulative perspective better reveals the deep territorial divides existing between the provinces. Justifying the analytical creation of the difference between the second and third “rate” provinces, as mentioned above, the total number (28) of programs enacted in Huíla in 2006 alone is more than the accumulation of programs between 2006-2015 for Bengo (24), Cabinda (19), Cunene (16), Cuando Cubango (19), and equivalent to Cuanza Sul (28) and Lunda Norte (28). Clearly, each registered organization is not equal. Some involve international donors with considerable budgets, highly experienced staff and ambitious beneficiary targets, while others are limited, low budget and small-scale interventions. These key nuances must be taken into consideration. But the wide disparity setting apart the five most active provinces (Luanda, Benguela, Huíla, Huambo and Bié) from the rest of the pack demonstrates a clear territorial schism in both social organizing activity and accumulating investment between the provinces, as well as the relative deprivation of the least active provinces of Bengo, Cabinda, Cunene and Cuando Cubango. Lunda Norte stands out strikingly as well, as it would be by far the least active province of all if not for a sudden increase due to the 2015 figures, a dubious claim as has already been noted on the numbers for 2015, which combine both NNGOs and INGOs.

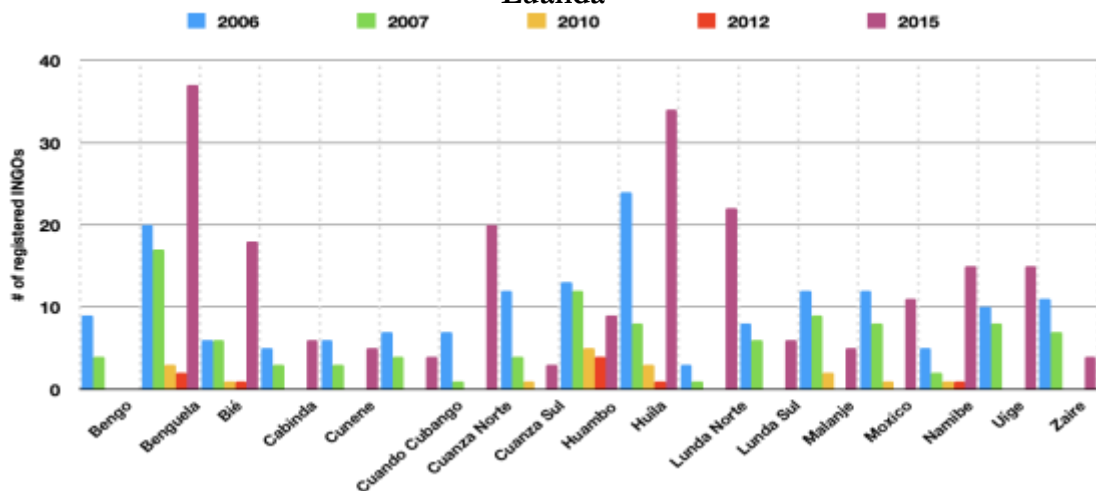
Figure 11 - Number of INGOs registered per province (2006-2015)



Source: Author's compilation.

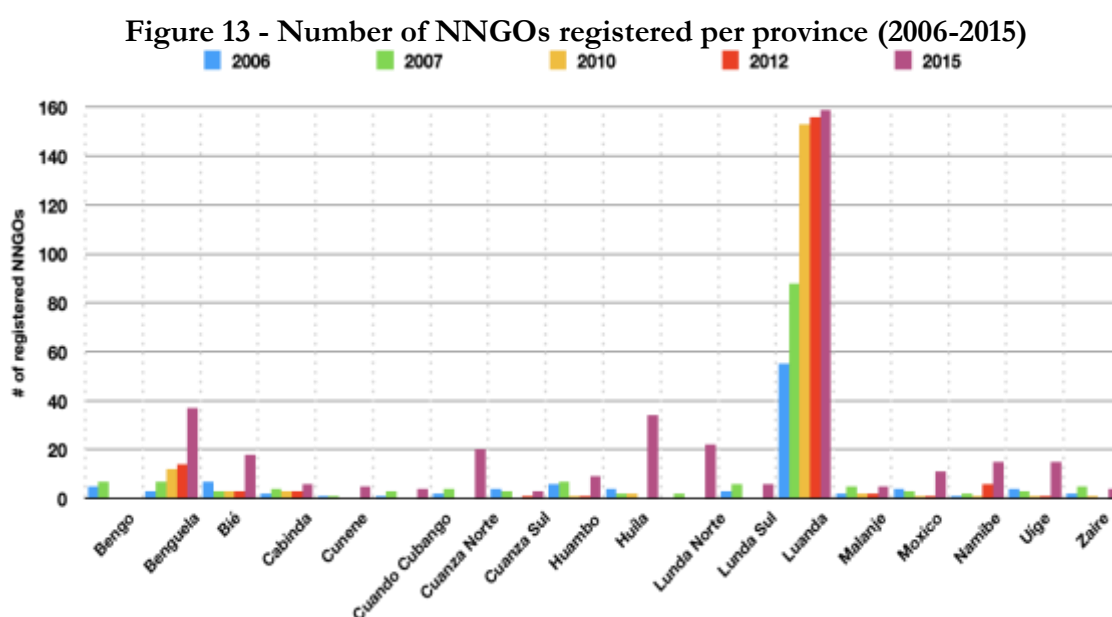
Next, we will see how the geographic repartition breaks down by comparing where INGOs are active compared to NNGOs. Starting with the international organizations, in the chart above we can see that INGOs are unsurprisingly heavily clustered in the province of Luanda. Benguela, Huambo and Huíla follow far behind, though register a more significant, prolonged presence than the rest of the provinces. Luanda's concentration is so strong that it distorts the data to see what is happening in the rest of the country. This is better revealed if we subtract Luanda's distorting effects on the overall dataset.

Figure 12 - Number of INGOs registered per province (2006-2015), excluding Luanda



Source: Author's compilation.

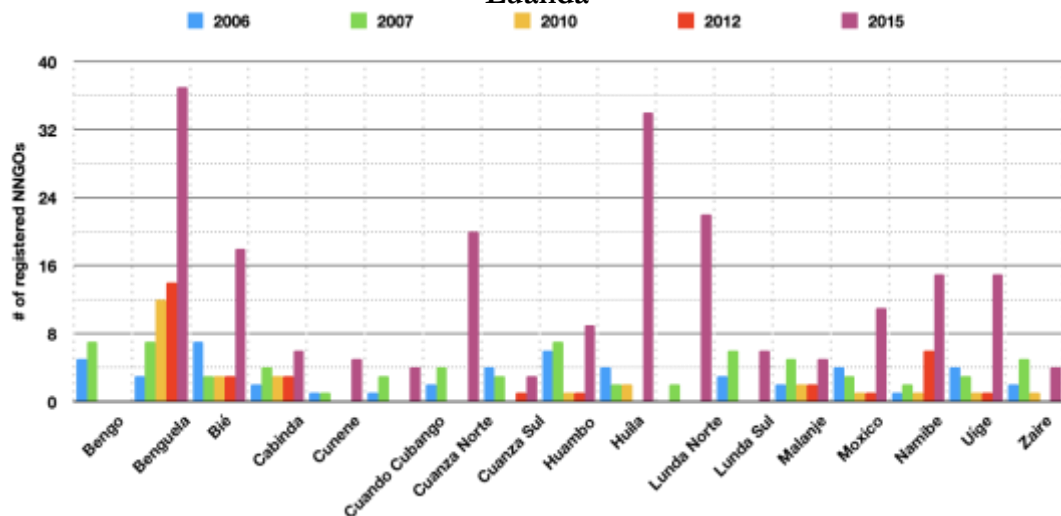
The graph above is the same as before, but with Luanda subtracted. Throughout the provinces, only Benguela, Bié, Huambo, Huíla and Namibe registered active INGOs throughout the 2006-2015 time period. This signifies a consistent, durable presence that the other provinces do not benefit from. If we contrast INGO geographic repartition with that of NNGOs, we will see a mirror image.



Source: Author's compilation.

In the graph above, we can see the geographic repartition of registered NNGOs throughout the country. As mentioned previously, the chart largely traces the same lines as that on INGOs, though the heavier concentration in Luanda is notable. Given the huge population gathered within the country's capital, it is statistically more likely to have more registered NNGOs where the population is more concentrated. If we subtract Luanda from the dataset, we again get a clearer picture about where social organizing is taking place within the NNGOs sector.

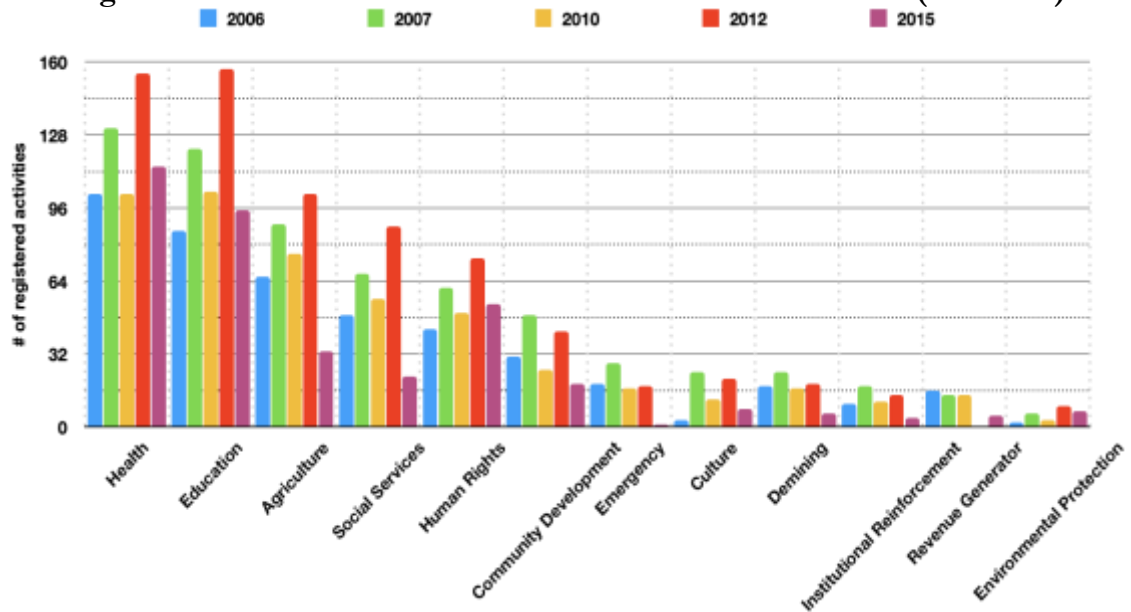
Figure 14 - Number of NNGOs registered per province (2006-2015), excluding Luanda



Source: Author's compilation.

The chart above shows another interesting contrast with the geographic repartition of the INGOs and provides a better snapshot of the capacity of social organizing broken down by province. Among NNGOs, we can see here that the amount of provinces housing sustained social organizing activity is significantly more widespread than that of INGOs. This is to be expected, but here the data confirms it. Benguela, Bié, Cabinda, Huambo, Malanje, Namibe, and Uíge all had registered NNGOs in their provinces throughout the 2006-2015 time period studied. If we include Luanda, that equals a sustained social organizing movement for nearly half of the country's provinces, while other provinces (Cuanza Sul, Huíla, Zaire) registered NNGOs in each of the years studied, except for one. However, the dataset once again reveals its weaknesses here. Taking just the Huíla example, it houses a permanent branch of ADRA's Huíla/Cunene branch, presenting an active and prolonged presence in the province. In 2012, it is only listed in Luanda. Further, we have documented the active presence of ACC, based in Lubango, during the years of 2012. It is not listed at all. Despite this, looking at the data above from a different perspective, the provinces of Bengo, Cunene, Cuanza Norte and Lunda Norte have significant deficits in social organizing capacity in the NGO sector. More research would be needed to see if CSOs or more traditional organizations are comparatively more active in social organizing in these provinces, or if this represents a broader absence of social organizing in general.

Figure 15 - Combined number of INGO and NNGO activities (2006-2015)

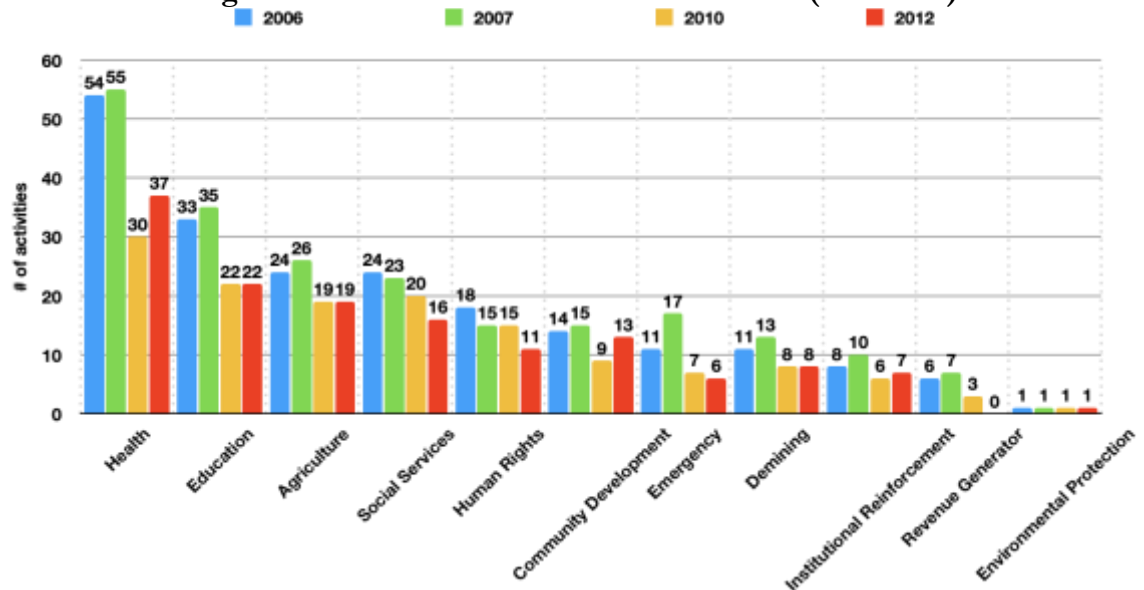


Source: Author's compilation.

Beyond establishing the territorial divisions created by the NGO sector, next we will look at which programs dominate the organizations' agendas, according to the government's official categorization.¹⁰¹⁴ Some organizations register as being involved in different sectorial activities. Above, we see the culmination of the activities both international and national NGOs have been involved in. Given the ravages of war and the desperate need for social services, it is clear that the health and education sectors dominate the activities of both national and international NGOs. The intersecting role of agriculture in providing both a social and economic foundation for many rural and peri-urban populations explains its position in third place. Social services is fourth (UTCAH fails to define precisely which "services" are included in this category), gaining popularity slower but accelerating comparably post-2012. Human rights follow comparably in fifth, confirming the reports of its growing prevalence towards the end of the war alongside the international emphasis on transitioning from state to human security. Community development registers consistent yearly development in sixth place. Demining leads the group of the least frequent activities, alongside emergency, culture, institutional reinforcement, revenue generator and environmental protection.

¹⁰¹⁴ There are thirteen official categories of activities as established by UTCAH. They are all represented in the graphs depicting the activity sectors except for "sport", which rarely registered any activity and was therefore left off.

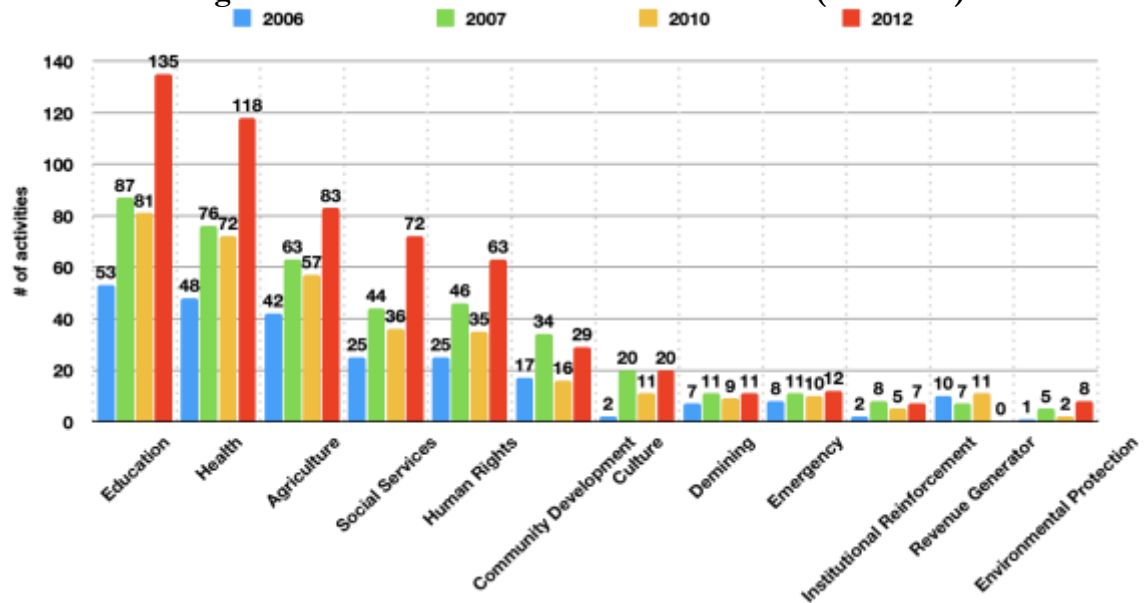
Figure 16 - Total Number of INGO activities (2006-2012)



Source: Author's compilation.

If broken down by national and international NGOs, the trends are once again surprisingly similar, though important differences exist. Basic social services of health and education are the top priority sectors for both, though importantly from 2006-2012 INGOs were overwhelmingly focused on health as their number one priority (176), with education (112) holding a distant second place. The number of INGO health programs has notably decreased each year since 2006, except for an uptick between 2010 (30) and 2012 (37). This attests to the slow pull out of INGOs as more time passes after the end of the civil war. As a revealing anecdote to the grave importance of health as a priority, in 2006 the total number of INGO health programs that year (54), is more than the entirety of programs from 2006-2012 involved in community development (51), emergency (41), demining (40), institutional reinforcement (31), revenue generation (16), and environmental protection (4). Agriculture holds third place (88 total) among the major focuses, a testament to the role of INGOs and donors in attempting to rebuild networks of the rural economy, support local food production, and alleviate some of the difficulties brought upon the rural and peri-urban populations most affected by the war.

Figure 17 - Total Number of NNGO activities (2006-2012)



Source: Author's compilation.

For NNGO activities, the sheer number of activities compared to their international counterparts attests to a much higher number of registered NGOs. Both health and education follow the trends of INGOs as being the top two focuses, though they are notably switched. Education is the overall priority for NNGO activities (and has held that place in every year recorded). Given that INGOs have been so focused on health services since the beginning, that has 'freed up' NGOs to focus more heavily on education. Agriculture is similarly in third place after the principal social services of health and education. This is again not surprising given how many people are dependent on agriculture as their main economic activity, the rudimentary technology used by smallholder and peasant farmers, as well as the overall destitution of these populations after the decades of war destroyed their livelihoods and the government's local presence in support of the sector has remained mostly absent. Social services and human rights follow in fourth and fifth place, following a nearly similar trajectory.

There is no doubt that Angola has witnessed a massive growth in NGOs and CSOs and many of these organizations are making strides in improving livelihoods across the country. Yet, these organizations find themselves in a very tenuous position, caught between carrying out the demands of their international donors, chronic mismanagement, or the co-opting of their actions by local officials. Not only lacking independence but also resources in general, many organizations cannot sustain themselves in such a harsh environment. The

quantitative growth of NGOs and CSOs discussed earlier must be paired alongside its qualitative analysis as well. Foreshadowed by the FONGA example, the raw numbers tell much different stories than those behind the statistics, especially after taking into account the government campaign to undercut any NGOs and CSOs that attempt to maintain a certain degree of independence from the ruling MPLA. Between the internal quarrels and the fierce outside pressures, the civil society organizations in Angola face an extremely difficult terrain in their pursuit for development.

As these actors take on more service roles, “[m]any ordinary Angolans have begun to see the NGOs and their donor patrons rather than the state as the main provider of basic social services, humanitarian relief and resources for rehabilitation”.¹⁰¹⁵ This holds true to the extent that the population disassociates the actions of the NGOs and CSOs from the government itself. Where that disassociation exists, the weakness of the state in providing for its populations has effectively morphed Angolans’ perception and meaning of the state itself, diluting notions of accountability in governance.¹⁰¹⁶ We have seen that data on NGO operations give a further glimpse into the deep disparities between the provinces where NGO aid and assistance programs are themselves contributing to furthering the territorial divide between provinces, as INGOs are “least active in provinces that have been extremely inaccessible due to war (such as Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul and Kuando Kubango)” while NNGOs “follow a similar pattern”.¹⁰¹⁷ As mentioned earlier, if anything the data behind these numbers appear to be exaggerated, not undercounted. The provinces that barely register in these graphs are likely even more underserved than the data describe.

Given the realities behind these data sets, clear weaknesses exist behind the visual images created throughout this section. This data confusion is a feature, not a bug, of the Angolan government as efforts to improve the construction of databases and publish them are frequently interrupted and abandoned.¹⁰¹⁸ Nevertheless, these data reveal an important reality about the vision that both the government and the actors promoting development have had on the activities that were being declared to be undertaken throughout the

¹⁰¹⁵ Clover, “The role of land”, 149.

¹⁰¹⁶ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 3.

¹⁰¹⁷ Nina Bowen & Douglas Steinberg, *Food Security Challenges in Post-Conflict Angola*, Food Security in Southern Africa, Causes and Responses from the Region, Pretoria, Human Sciences Research Council, March 2003, 71. <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00793066/document>.

¹⁰¹⁸ Vidal, & Andrade, (eds), *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento em Angola* (Luanda: Chá de Caxinde, 2011), 170. <http://www.africanarenas.net/docs/2011-economia%20politica.pdf>.

provinces. Furthermore, given that the NGO sector was for a time considered as a replacement for the state's abandonment¹⁰¹⁹ as the government chronically underfunded (and continues to do so) its social agenda, lacking the capacity to fulfill many of the basic service delivery activities or enact the development programs that the NGOs have undertaken, it is important to acquire an idea as to what extent this state 'replacement' observation truly spans throughout the territory.

4.4 Between abandon and substitution: a people in limbo

The idea that the state has effectively 'abandoned' the peasantry has been noted by various researchers.¹⁰²⁰ This study has attempted to develop the evidence of this 'abandonment' in §1.2 discussing the different trends in the continuity of rural marginalization in Angola's history, in §1.3 discussing the selective reconstruction of the periphery, as well in the previous chapter's discussion on how the state went about selectively institutionalizing strategic rural spaces, notably those linked to economic production, while leaving other spaces paradoxically controlled through the absence of a functioning state and thus a lack of resources offering any alternative options but subsistence strategies.

If we accept the premise of the MPLA-led government having effectively 'abandoned' the peripheral populations,¹⁰²¹ the official NGO statistics described above are especially alarming if one considers the discourse about the NGO sector 'replacing' or 'substituting' the state having 'abandoned' its responsibilities to provide public services¹⁰²².

¹⁰¹⁹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 79.

¹⁰²⁰ Messiant, "Angola, les voies", 176, 183-184, 189, 199; Messiant, 1961. *L'Angola colonial*, 17; Pereira, "The Neglected Tragedy", 10; Manuel José Alves de Rocha, *Desigualdades e Assimetrias Regionais em Angola – Os Factores de Competitividade Territorial* (Luanda: Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica, Universidade Católica de Angola), 2010; Mónica Rafael Simões & Fernando Pacheco, "Sociedade Civil e Ajuda Internacional em Angola", in *Sociedade Civil e Política em Angola, Enquadramento Regional e Internacional*, (eds), Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade, (Luanda: Media XXI/Lisbon: Edições Firmamento, 2008), 280; Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 183.

¹⁰²¹ The concept of 'abandonment' is present in the national press as well. See: [n.a.], "Governo abandona Zaire", *Folha* 8, Luanda, 28 Jan. 2006: 11-12, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação e Informação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Jan. 2006.

¹⁰²² Christine Messiant, "La Fondation Eduardo dos Santos (FESA) À propos de « l'investissement » de la société civile par le pouvoir angolais", *Politique africaine*, 1, no. 73, (1999): 91. Cesaltina Abreu notes a more fundamental critique of this 'substitution' discourse stemming from a neo-liberal perspective of civil society and NGOs replacing the inefficiencies of the State unable to provide services as efficiently as this "third sector" (Abreu, *Sociedade Civil em Angola*, 2006). For clarity's sake, the idea of 'substitution for the State' in this section is arguing for a stronger presence of the State in service provision and delivery, not that (I)NGOs should take up even more space.

Tony Hodges, having worked in Angola from 1994-1998 for different United Nations agencies, noted that the end of war was characterized by a government that “failed to allocate more than token budgetary resources to humanitarian assistance, which was effectively abandoned to the international agencies and NGOs”.¹⁰²³ Enrico Pavignani and Aleesandro Colombo of the World Health Organization observed that “the government has shown a decreasing interest in social sectors, abandoning them to NGOs in rural areas and in secondary cities”.¹⁰²⁴ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli note in their Chatham House “Drivers of Change” series that at the turn of the century “church organisations and national and international NGOs played an increasingly important role as subcontractors of humanitarian aid distribution, almost entirely substituting for the state in service delivery in the health and education sectors”.¹⁰²⁵ The data behind this ‘substitution’ discourse reveals that, if the ‘substitution’ concept is accepted, the NGOs have largely replaced the government’s service delivery capacity through extreme concentration in the capital province (Luanda), while vast areas in the outer provinces have neither the state nor the NGO sector to rely upon.

This pernicious discourse of NGOs “substituting for the state” is in reality an enormous disservice to Angolans living in the peripheries. Given the tri-tier territorial divisions exposed through the NGO data above, in reality the third-tier provinces are shown to have neither the state, nor the NGO community (outside of a few localized programs) to rely upon for improving basic service delivery or bringing socio-economic development initiatives down to the local levels. Those groups are therefore left to fend for themselves in the search for socio-economic development, dependent on a strategy of resiliency that has served them since colonial times if not before. Furthermore, seen from a different angle this “substituting for the state” narrative is a paradoxical self-critique. It is often referenced in discourse criticizing the government for ‘abandoning’ parts of the country while doubling-down on its urban-bias agenda. But these same critics of the Angolan government are themselves in part reducing the “state” to the first and second tier provinces, because the NGO sector *is not replacing the state* in the third tier, and its “substitution” in the second tier is dubious at best beyond urban centers. Where the NGOs do set up operations, it is not always in the areas with the greatest needs, and their program-driven agendas “are very rarely

¹⁰²³ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 79.

¹⁰²⁴ Pavignani & Colombo, *Providing health services*, 12.

¹⁰²⁵ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 10.

sufficient to meet local needs”¹⁰²⁶ given that they are effectively tasked with covering for an absent government.

If we are to combine the first and second tier provinces we have identified according to the NGO data (Luanda, Benguela, Huambo, Bié, Huíla), that makes up five provinces out of eighteen total provinces. Of the country’s total area of 1,246,700 km² and population of 25,789,024 (2014 numbers, the most methodologically sound), these five provinces total 225,850 km² (18% of total) and 15,149,003 people.¹⁰²⁷ That leaves 1,020,850 kilometers and 10,640,021 (41% of total) Angolans living within the third-tier provinces. By chance, this number is only slightly higher than the entire rural population at that time of 9,635,037.¹⁰²⁸ While this “substituting for the state” discourse is surely a turn of phrase attempting to explain extremely complex phenomena, it is clear that it is an unrealistic concept, even if they do temporarily provide specific needs for specific areas that should otherwise be assumed and occupied by the state.

Furthermore, the quality and effectiveness of the INGO work likewise needs to be taken into account, which according to Fernando Pacheco was in many cases “worse than the Angolan state itself” in their authoritarian methods, imposing their donors’ agendas and having their beneficiaries work for them, rather than with them.¹⁰²⁹ As Aline Pereira notes in her analysis of developing public policies to assist in the insertion of Angolan women into the workforce, the NGO and CSO sectors are no substitute for the state, despite the important advances their projects can achieve.¹⁰³⁰ Inge Tvedten’s study on the roles of NGOs in Angola notes that these structures “cannot replace national public policies and structures”.¹⁰³¹ These findings provide concrete examples within Angola of a broader reality, as “writers on state-building assert that the international community is *not* a major player in the reconstruction of the state”.¹⁰³² Through the state’s deficiencies, the NGO sector made an effort to pick up the slack, using its influence to pressure the government to relax its

¹⁰²⁶ World Bank, *Angola Country Economic*, 124.

¹⁰²⁷ Angola, *Anuário de Estatísticas*, 124.

https://www.ine.gov.ao/images/Populacao_Sociedade/ANUARIO_ESTATISTICA_SOCIAIS_2011_2016.pdf.

¹⁰²⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰²⁹ Personal interview with Fernando Pacheco, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

¹⁰³⁰ Pereira, *Desenvolvimento de políticas públicas*, 1, 15.

¹⁰³¹ Tvedten, Inge, *Angola 2000/2001*, 19.

¹⁰³² Zoe Scott, *Literature Review on State-Building*, Working paper prepared for the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre, Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 2007, 7. <http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/hd528.pdf>.

authoritarian tendencies and spurring the capacity of the civil society itself to become further involved in political issues. The engagement of the state remains essential, though the government has not proven its willingness beyond laudatory discourse and meager efforts of engagement. That equation leaves the peripheral spaces both abandoned and dominated through the paradox of the engineered absence of resource allocation.

4.4.1 NEW 'PARTICIPATORY' SPACES

The disruption of the war and the ensuing rural flight to the cities provoked a serious breakdown of the traditional family (household and extended), community structure, and local networks (villages, local associations).¹⁰³³ The establishment of NGOs and CSOs offers new opportunities while simultaneously presenting potential challenges in recreating and strengthening social networks at the local level. They represent new hybrid social networks with the traditional communities organized around 'outsider' initiatives, whether it be urban-based nationals supporting rural development projects or foreign workers sent to the countryside to implement donor projects. Adding to the hybrid nature of the groups is the reintegration process of "3-4 million IDPs and almost half a million refugees, often to areas with weak state administrative capacity, and serious constraints on access to areas of resettlement".¹⁰³⁴ This mass reintegration occurred in rural communities across the countryside, in some cases mixing new families and new ethnicities, although many ex-soldiers returned to areas they had previous family or community links.¹⁰³⁵ Building on these new potential social networks depends heavily however on the organizing initiative of CSOs or NGOs leading the charge, especially given the fact that the "long-lasting war and the constant search for security by Angolans have contributed to predominantly 'bonding' rather than 'bridging' networks".

Furthermore, according to Fernando Pacheco's experience accompanying the growth of the NGO and CSO sector, in the post war evolution of Angolan social organizing, the tendency has leaned more towards inter-organization dialogue, rather than an institutional approach of merging organizations, which allows for broader discussions, more

¹⁰³³ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 6.

¹⁰³⁴ Parsons, "Beyond the silencing", 43.

¹⁰³⁵ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 121.

willingness to engage, and less structural constraints on the participants.¹⁰³⁶ The difficulties inherent to rural society mean the durability of building and maintaining such networks confronts enormous structural disadvantages, making them much more fragile compared to urban counterparts and adding a further layer of difficulty to endogenous rural social organizing.

When referencing this ‘participatory sphere’ in Angola as theorized by Andrea Cornwall and Vera Schattan P. Coelho, we are describing spaces in “contexts where post-authoritarian regimes, fractured and chronically under-resourced states services and pervasive clientelism leave in their wake fractious and distrustful relationships between citizens and the state”.¹⁰³⁷ In this context, this hybrid sphere of participation is described as an “interface between the state and society; they are also, in many respects, intermediary spaces, conduits for negotiation, information and exchange” with some of the events in this process merely “fleeting one-off consultative events; others are regularized institutions with a more durable presence on the governance landscape”.¹⁰³⁸ It is important to take into consideration the experimentation and the lack of experience in the interplay between the government and the populations when considering the primary exchanges between the government and civil society actors.

Rather than a unilateral arrow or a progressive curve always bending towards more civic participation, these ‘spaces’ should instead be considered as the mercurial center in a thermometer that grows and contracts according to the temperature of the country: “[P]olitical space tends to open only gradually, as the authorities require time to monitor and grow comfortable with new processes, and tend to crack down if events are perceived to be moving too fast”.¹⁰³⁹ It is for this reason that following the regulatory timeline of NGOs and CSOs is deemed important to the study, as it gives precise time indicators as to when the government in power decided to tighten its grip on society, and when it thought it possible to relax restrictions and let these organizations fill the controlled spaces. It is notable that regulations administering the NGO sector were passed nearly every three years in the post-war period, demonstrating a clear uncomfortableness with the direction of the sector and a

¹⁰³⁶ Personal interview with Fernando Pacheco, co-founder of ADRA, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

¹⁰³⁷ Andrea Cornwall & Vera Schattan Coelho, “Introduction: New Democratic Spaces? The Politics and Dynamics of Institutionalised Participation”, in *Spaces for Change? The Politics of Citizen Participation in New Democratic Arenas*, (eds), Andrea Cornwall & Vera Schattan Coelho, (London: Zed Books, 2007), 3.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.* 1.

¹⁰³⁹ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 24.

constant desire to reform and restrict the ‘participatory spaces’ these organizations were involved in.

Many of the civil society-government ‘interactions’ described below could be considered as ‘window dressing’ exercises or even cynical exercises of manipulation and false overtures. With the government’s historical apathy towards inclusive politics, authoritarian tendencies and lack of accountability or transparency, this perception is justified. However, given the unique historical context in which Angola has relatively recently emerged from civil war, the state-building and even notional ‘nation’-building,¹⁰⁴⁰ all of these connections of varying degrees bringing together the government and civil society are significant learning activities, regardless of their outcomes. Part of the value in these activities is therefore in the experience itself gained by civil society actors in their accumulative layers of interactions and connections made between government officials and those citizens willing and desiring to actively engage in the political arena, an arena with surprisingly easy access to a wide variety of officials, at least in Luanda.

4.4.2 FINDING A SEAT AT THE TABLE

The arrival of advisors from allied countries (Bulgaria, Soviet Union, Cuba, etc.) emerging from independence assisted the government’s attempts to establish its control and authority, while largely ignoring and disregarding any advice or attempts at collaboration from other outside actors. The population itself was long governed through an authoritarian paternalistic vision and was too disorganized and fractured by war to attach any concrete influence to governmental affairs. As the war wore on, however, this calculation began to change, accelerated through the engagement of international institutions such as the IMF, FAO, World Bank, United Nations, etc. The major change in approach to the Angolan political system would be in the apprehensive acceptance of the political elite to sit down with civil society actors in horizontal collaboration.

¹⁰⁴⁰ To the extent a ‘nation’ exists, see Michel Cahen “Anticolonialism & Nationalism: Deconstructing Synonymy, Investigating Historical Processes: Notes on the Heterogeneity of Former African Colonial Portuguese Areas”: *in Sure Road? Nations and Nationalisms in Guinea, Angola and Mozambique*, (ed), Éric Morier-Genoud, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2012), 1-28.

The following chart attempts to provide a historical timeline of this collaboration of civil society actors and government officials during the war and the decade after, oftentimes but not only spurred in large part by the inclusion and instigation of foreign and/or international actors. Given the vast variety of ‘collaboration’ efforts and the relatively scant information on these subjects, the timeline only identifies the time the collaborative effort began, but does not list how long each lasted. This CSO and government collaboration does not include the social organizations that have been identified as being led or run by the government itself (‘mass organizations’/GONGOs). Furthermore, the research focused mostly on the beginning years of these collaborative efforts, as they form the foundation of future endeavors.

Because of this, the research is particularly focused on the period until 2010. This is an admittedly arbitrary timeline, but it cuts off shortly after the 2008 Angolan legislative elections, the first held since the 1992 elections that sparked further civil war. The period from the late 1980s until 2010 was therefore prioritized to see what kind of collaborative efforts existed during and shortly after the war, during one of the country’s most authoritarian periods as the MPLA attempted to establish its domination and authority. Some collaborative efforts are listed post-2010, though at that point the foundation had been laid and smaller ‘working groups’ began to collaborate more often as the practice slowly became more generalized, albeit mostly within a small group of select actors. Between 2010 and 2018, the research does not purport to have listed each engagement, but rather those that will be directly significant to the study’s analysis itself.

Tableau 21 - NSA & government ‘collaboration’ (late 1980s-2018)

Time & Event	Government entity	Non-State Actors
Late 1980s – Urban planning workshops in Sambizanga <i>município</i>	Political parties, GoA members (<i>comuna, município, provincial</i>)	Development Workshop, Private sector, local associations, religious groups, residents’ associations
1994-1995 – Seeds and Tools Working Group	GoA members, UNITA representatives	UN agencies, donors, NGOs
1995-1996 – Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG)	MINARS, representatives of different Ministries, UNITA representatives	UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP. Observer status to donors (EU, Portugal, Russia, USA), 1 NNGO, 1 INGO, the International Committee of the Red Cross
1997 – Creation of Association of Businesswomen in Huíla (AMEH) ^a	Local government institutions	Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), national banks, NGOs
1996-2000 – Revision of laws governing NGOs	MINARS, Ministry of Justice	5-7 NGOs through FONGA/CONGA, KPGM (legal advisor to GoA)
1999 – Luanda Urban Poverty Programme	GoA	Care International, Development Workshop, Save the Children UK, One World Action
2000 – LUPP program for children’s rights and development	<i>Comuna</i> administration	Save the Children, created network of NGOs called Alliance for the Promotion and Development of Hoji Ya Henda (APDCH)
July 2000 – Peace Congress four-day conference held in Luanda	GoA representatives, parliamentary officials	CEAST’s Pro Pace [Peace] movement, 22 churches, NGOs, CSOs, political parties
Sept. 2001 – Kilamba Kiayi <i>Município</i> Development Forum	Local administration officials	CARE International, <i>município</i> residents, traditional leaders, religious leaders, private sector
4-9 March 2002 – Provincial training workshop for children’s needs	MINARS	UNICEF, 35 NGO representatives, churches, armed forces
July 2002 – Revision of Land Law	GoA	ADRA, DW, FAO, leading to formation of <i>Rede Terra</i>
2002 – Revision of 1991 electoral laws	National Electoral Commission (CNE)	CSOs
24 Sept. 2002 – Support Group on Return and Resettlement (GAR)	National Directorate for Social Assistance & Promotion (DNAPS), representatives from 8 government ministries	UCAH, 8 UN agencies, 22 NGOs
2003 – Angolan Micro Enterprise Network	Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women and Family, National Bank of Angola	Development Workshop, local banks, NGOs
Oct. 2003 – Viana <i>Município</i> Development Forum	<i>Município</i> administration	ACORD, <i>município</i> residents,
2004 – Tchicala Tcholoanga <i>Município</i> Planning for Child Protection	<i>Município</i> administration	Save the Children UK, NGOs, traditional authorities, private sector, political parties, religious organizations
March 2004 – Advocacy campaign “Peace without democracy is fantasy”	Political parties (UNITA)	30 CSOs, sponsored by Open Society-Angola
March 2004 – Caála <i>Município</i> Development Forum (Huambo)	<i>Município</i> administration	NGOs

Nov. 2004 – National Commission for the materialization of the Programme of Action on the illicit commerce of Small Arms and Light Weapons	Ministry of: Foreign Affairs, Defense, Interior, Administration of Territory, Justice, Family & Promotion of Women	<i>Ordem of Advogados</i> (Chamber of Lawyers), <i>Rede Mulher</i> , COIEPA-Inter Ecclesial Committee for Peace in Angola
May 2005 – Aug. 2006 – Public consultation on draft National Forest, Wildlife, and Conservation Areas Policy	MINADER, Ministry of Urbanism and Environmental,	Government of the Netherlands, traditional authorities, NGOs, academics
July 2006 – Program of <i>Município</i> Development	Ministry of Territorial Administration	USAID, Chevron, Lazare Kaplan, CARE International, Development Workshop, Save the Children-UK
Early 2007 – Centre for the Development of Angolan Partnerships (CDPA)	GoA	EU, USAID, NGOs (including Development Workshop [DW], World Learning [WL])
6-8 Nov. 2007 – First Civil Society Forum/ <i>Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i> Luanda. Theme: “Constructing Unity in Diversity”	GoA	FONGA, European Commission, NGOs (DW, ADRA, Angola 2000, Mosaiko, Jubilee 2000-Angola), donors, COIEPA, Christian Council of Churches of Angola, Evangelical Alliance of Angola
Decree n° 2 of 2007 Established <i>Concelhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social</i> (CACS, Councils for Civic Engagement)	New government structure created to promote dialogue between government and civil society actors at <i>comuna</i> and <i>município</i> levels	Civil society actors
25-27 Nov. 2008 Second Civil Society Forum/ <i>II Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i> Luanda Theme: “Constructing Unity in Diversity”	Invited government officials	Church groups, donor representatives
2009 – Formulation of ENSAN (<i>Estratégia Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional</i>)	10 different Ministries	FAO, civil society
2009 – Third Civil Society Forum/ <i>III Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i> Benguela Theme: “Decentralization & Participative Democracy”	GoA	Organized by ADRA (Benguela branch), Ambassador of USA Dan Mozena, representatives of the EU, representatives of NGOs, religious organizations
16-17 Nov. 2010 – Fourth Civil Society Forum/ <i>IV Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i> Huambo Theme: “Constructing Unity in Diversity”	GoA	200 representatives of civil society, NGOs, foreign donor agencies, Catholic Church
28 Nov. 2011 – Fifth Civil Society Forum (<i>V Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i>) Malanje Theme: “Strengthening relations, reinforcing partnerships”	GoA	250 total delegates, NGOs, unions, representatives of Portugal, Spain and Mozambique
Dec. 2012 – Sixth Civil Society Forum (<i>VI Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i>) Cuanza Sul Theme: “Constructing Unity in Diversity”	GoA	Organized by the teachers’ union Sinprof and feminine group GLIF, religious organizations
2013 – Formulation of new Law on Cooperatives (<i>Lei das Cooperativas</i>)	Ministry of Economy, UNACA, National Institute for Support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (INAPEM) ^b , Business	ADRA, members of national cooperatives & associations, including <i>Associação Industrial de Angola</i> (AIA, Industrial Association of Angola), <i>Associação dos Avicultores de Luanda</i>

	Development Institute (IFE) ^c , Institute for Public Sector Enterprises (ISEP) ^d	(AAVIL, Avicultural Association of Luanda)
23 Sept. 2014 – Conference on Food Security in Angola, Lubango	GoA – Inaugural address given by Dr. Lutero Campos, Huila provincial director of agriculture, rural development and the environment.	Organized by AAC, supported by Open Society, Rede Terra
14-15 Dec. 2014 – Seventh Civil Society Forum (VII <i>Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil</i>) Zaire	GoA	172 total delegates, including from 9 provinces; UN agencies, NGOs, researchers
19 Jan. 2018 – Proposal for national budget 2018 Parliament, Luanda	GoA	More than 100 civil society organizations
22 May 2018 – Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation, Luanda (Hotel Diamante)	GoA, UNACA	IFAD, NGOs (ADPP, ADRA, World Vision), CSOs, researchers, FAO, World Bank, EU, UNDP

a In Portuguese: *Associação das Mulheres Empresárias e de Negócio da Huila*

b In Portuguese: *Instituto Nacional de Apoio às Pequenas Empresas*

c In Portuguese: *Instituto de Fomento Empresarial*

d In Portuguese: *Instituto para o Sector Empresarial Público* (ISEP), replaced by the *Instituto de Gestão de Activos e Participações do Estado* (IGAPE) in June 2018 (IFC, *Creating Markets*, 25).

Source: ACC, *Relatório da Conferência Regional sobre “Segurança Alimentar em Angola”*, Lubango, 23 Sept. 2014; ACTUAR, *Mobilização Social para a Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional: A experiência de trabalho em redes multi-temáticas da REDSAN-PALOP*, Coimbra, ACTUAR/REDSAN-PALOP, 2012, 8. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/righttofood/documents/project_m/cplp/REDSAN_PT.pdf; Angop, “Decorre terceira Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 17 Nov. 2009. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2009/10/47/Decorre-terceira-Conferencia-Nacional-Sociedade-Civil,a9162fd5-5574-483f-8d42-a5fe03118fb5.html; Angop, “Iniciaram debates na IV Conferência Nacional da Sociedade”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 16 November 2010. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2010/10/46/Iniciaram-debates-Conferencia-Nacional-Sociedade,cac4fd06-ce31-4d16-a3b1-2c41ec20885c.html; Angop, “Conferência aborda papel da comunicação social no desenvolvimento”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 10 Dec. 2012. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2012/11/50/Conferencia-aborda-papel-comunicacao-social-desenvolvimento,b1375568-ff10-44fb-87ca-d3fc6f417794.html; Angop, “FESA e FAO firmam seguimento de cooperação imediato”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 31 Jan. 2013. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2013/0/5/FESA-FAO-firmam-seguimento-cooperacao-imediato,ec9f5cdd-e786-4d0a-9ee6-5d077622332e.html; Biting the Bullet, *International Action*, 59; Allen Cain, “Housing microfinance in post-conflict Angola. Overcoming socioeconomic exclusion through land tenure and access to credit”, *Environment & Urbanization*, 19, no. 2, (2007): 375. DOI: 10.1177/0956247807082819; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 196; Club-K, “Uíge: Conclusões da Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil Angola”, 20 Jan. 2017, Club-k.net. https://club-k.net/~clubknet/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=26784:uige-conclusoes-da-conferencia-nacional-da-sociedade-civil-angolana&catid=2:sociedade&Itemid=1069&lang=pt; Comerford, “Alternative voices”, 34; IFAD, *Country Strategy*, 2018; JMJ International, *Improving Local Governance*, 2006; Lanzer, “The UN Department”, 28-29, 39; Filomeno Vieira Lopes, “The challenge of democratization”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process* (ed) Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), 57; OCHA, *Angola Update on Humanitarian Activities as of 26 Sep 2002*, 26 Sept. 2002. <https://reliefweb.int/report/angola/ocha-angola-update-humanitarian-activities-26-sep-2002>; Rodrigues, “A descentralização”, 126; Schubert, “Democratização”, 37-38; Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 31; Vidal, “International development”, 11-12; Vidal & Andrade, (eds), *O Processo de Transição para o Multipartidarismo em Angola* (Lisbon: Edições Firmamento, 2006); Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral*, Relatório de Progresso 2004/2009, Lisbon, Editora Firmamento/Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Media XXI, Nov. 2009. http://www.africanarenas.net/docs/MP2-Relatorio2_bilingue_final.pdf; Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral*, 2º Quinquénio 2009/2010 – 2014, Relatório de Progresso, Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Editora Firmamento/Lisbon, Media XXI, Jan. 2015; UNICEF, *Angola Situation Report*, Feb. 2002.

The first identified collaboration was between the Canadian INGO Development Workshop beginning in the late 1980s in partnership with the Sambizanga *município* (Luanda province) officials working on urban planning issues, principally water and sanitation. This activity brought together a wide array of disparate groups including “governmental actors, political parties, service providers (EPAL, ELISAL, EDEL that are public companies), the private sector, local associations of active citizens, religious groups and residents’ associations”.¹⁰⁴¹ The overall positive response of so many different CSOs, in the middle of the civil war, demonstrates the willingness and desire for collaboration among actors and organizations that otherwise find themselves marginalized from such processes and oftentimes working in their own separate sectors.

The second identified collaboration effort was led by the United Nations UCAH coordination program between 1994-1995 known as the Tools and Seeds Working Group. Instigated through United Nations efforts, the working group combined members of the government (including those working in the Ministry of Agriculture), donors, NGOs, and even UNITA officials beginning in January 1995. The group collaborations aimed to “analyse the needs for Angola’s two planting seasons and agree on roles and responsibility of the various actors” and “provided the opportunity for interested parties to communicate with each other, and come to decisions on the allocation of available resources”.¹⁰⁴² The early intervention and will to provoke collaboration around the agricultural sector are a clear sign of the reigning importance of the sector in the everyday lives of Angolans throughout the territory, and therefore one of the most pressing issues to coordinate and collaborate on at such an early juncture.

The Humanitarian Coordination Group (HCG) was indirectly born out of the Lusaka Protocol of 20 November 1994 and its Joint Commission set up to oversee the process of transitioning to peace. In order to separate the humanitarian issues from the political process, HCG was set up shortly afterwards in 1995. Civil society actors were mostly sidelined during

¹⁰⁴¹ JMJ International, *Improving Local Governance in Angola Strengthening the Links between Decentralization and Community Driven Development*, Case Studies, Phase II, 70424, May 2006, 18. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/12708>.

¹⁰⁴² Lanzer, “The UN Department, 28.

this collaboration effort, as was common throughout the war, though they did have a token presence. Overall, this collaborative working group

was headed by the Minister of Social Affairs and the UCAH director, included members from Angolan governmental ministries, UNITA, and UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP. Observer status was granted to some donors (European Union, Portugal, Russian Federation and USA), NGOs (one Angolan and one international) and the ICRC.¹⁰⁴³

Two main issues were identified in needs assessments to areas that had not received emergency assistance in prior operations, as well as resolving logistical and technical problems occurring on the frontlines.

The ensuing identified collaborations focused on socio-economic development programs including further economic revitalization efforts of businesswomen in 1997 in Huíla province led by the Netherland Development Organization (SNV), poverty alleviation and youth development programmes in 1999 and 2000 led by a group of INGOs including Save the Children, Development Workshop, and One World Action as well as local governance issues with the Kilamba Kiaxi Município Development Forum. The inclusion of national actors (NGOs, associations, neighborhood committees, etc.) began to become more prominent and involved, even forming a national network known as the Alliance for the Promotion and Development of Hoji Ya Henda (APDCH).

The Pro Peace Congress in July 2000 bringing together CEAST's Pro Pace [Peace] movement, 22 churches, NGOs, CSOs, political parties and government officials was another demonstration of the mobilizing force behind the pent up demand to have the voice of the people recognized in the political arena. Despite these desires, civil society remained marginalized during official negotiations. However, as the number and diversity of government-civil society 'collaborations' accelerated after the end of the civil war, this level of marginalization was unsustainable as a practice of the government and the pressures mounting would push the government to cede participatory spaces, lest the population's demands break the wall down or have the new system collapse in on itself. Nelson Pestana points to this Pro Peace Congress as a turning point in the collaborative movement for the burgeoning civil society, representing "a progressive change in the means of political

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*, 39.

production that also mark[ed] the moment of quick rupture with the bipolarization between two armed powers that lost their monopoly on political initiative for the first time”.¹⁰⁴⁴ The push for peace mobilized social forces like no other.

Advocating for a ceasefire became the central motivator for coalescing different Non-State Actors including churches, private media, civic organizations, associations and NGOs.¹⁰⁴⁵ However, even if there was considerable movement and organizing initiatives at the local level in the push for peace and the end of the civil war: “At no point in the negotiation of any of the peace agreements (*Bicesse, Lusaka, Luena*, and indeed the earlier *Alvord Accords*) has there been a mechanism for civil society involvement either as negotiators or observers”.¹⁰⁴⁶ Direct interactions of the civil society with the MPLA-led government would prove a laborious process tinged by fear and mistrust. The advocacy and pressure of the UN-backed UCAH and its focus on bringing the humanitarian crisis to the forefront of the conflict helped in moving the national dialogue toward a discussion of the human toll of the war. UCAH’s systematic attempts at raising the issue of the Angolans’ plight in the war with both the MPLA and UNITA representatives paid off: “Suddenly, humanitarian concerns were raised on the two main nation-wide radio networks, *Rádio Nacional de Angola* and *Voz do Galo Negro (Vorgan)*, and in the pro-government daily, *Jornal de Angola*, and UNITA’s monthly publication, *Terra Angolana*”.¹⁰⁴⁷ As the discourse moved towards the human toll of the war, so would the urgency to respond to these needs.

The second phase of collaborations with the government began to revolve around legislative matters that would have direct impacts on the participatory spaces that the NGOs and CSOs could act within. Examples of these efforts include (1) the revision of the laws governing NGOs that took place between 1996-2000 and in which the NGO input was largely “disregarded” by the government¹⁰⁴⁸ (2) the revision of the Land Law between 2001-2004, in which the experience will be developed in detail later in chapter 6, and (3) the revision of electoral laws in 2002, ultimately a minimally ‘participative’ experience as the government held the entire process under strict control.¹⁰⁴⁹ Besides being a more comfortable political position, the government’s persistent reluctance to open up formal dialogue

¹⁰⁴⁴ Pestana, *As Dinâmicas*, 38-39.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Comerford, “Alternative voices”, 32.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Lanzer, “The UN Department”, 18.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 32.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Schubert, ““Democratização””; 83.

channels with the civil society is likely attributed to the realization that such collaboration potentially opens it up later to further demands for accountability.

Apart from these initial forays into legislative matters, NGOs and CSOs mostly focused on more concrete issues of refugee resettlements through the Support Group on Return and Resettlement (GAR) on 24 September 2002 and attempts at rebuilding the local economic base through the 2003 Angolan Micro Enterprise Network. Furthermore, a major focus was put on rebuilding more ‘inclusive’ local governance systems including various collaborative forums (Kilamba Kiayi Município Development Forum in Sept. 2001; Viana Município Development Forum in Oct. 2003; Caála Município Development Forum in March 2004) promoted by the *Fundo de Apoio Social* (FAS, Social Support Fund) all financed and supported by the World Bank and the European Commission. The Tchicala Tcholoanga Município Planning for Child Protection in 2004 and the Program of Município Development in July 2006 also focused exclusively on developing local urban governance.

The cumulative effects of these vast experiences culminated in the First Civil Society Forum in 6-8 November 2007 mentioned previously bringing together a litany of groups to discuss the overall theme of “Constructing Unity in Diversity” including government officials, donors, FONGA, the European Commission, NGOs (DW, ADRA, Angola2000, Mosaiko, Jubilee 2000-Angola), COIEPA, the Christian Council of Churches of Angola, and the Evangelical Alliance of Angola. The need to bring more NSAs into dialogue with the government was important given that at the time only a limited number actually participated in such events, though the space for dialogue was gradually opening.¹⁰⁵⁰ This forum was marked by “a strong weakness in the level of coordination and sharing of information that is reflected in the lack of coordinated decision-making, in the insufficient intervention in public life and in the weak ability to influence the political process of decision-making”.¹⁰⁵¹ To put into context the weak organizational capacity of the emerging civil society actors, this 2007 forum took nearly five years after the ceasefire of the civil war to launch, putting an end to over forty-one years of nearly constant war. The country was still heavily fractured socially, geographically, and economically. Organizing a national conference and mobilizing populations across the country was no small endeavor, and also represented an important

¹⁰⁵⁰ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 165.

¹⁰⁵¹ Nuno Vidal, *Sociedade civil angolana: Veículo democrático de participação pública 2008/2009*, II Conferência Angolana de Sociedade Civil, Construir Unidade na Diversidade, Lisbon, Edições Firmamento, 2009a, 2.

show of force of the MPLA in its demonstration of its reconstruction efforts of the state itself.

Despite its weaknesses, this forum was exceptional in its truly national reach with preliminary gatherings held in 17 provinces (Cuanza-Norte being the only exception) having collected ideas from local NGOs, associations, unions, churches and state institutions to help set the agenda for the Forum in Luanda which ultimately gathered around 150 participants, including provincial representatives of local NGOs, NGO officials, donor representatives and public officials from various levels of the government.¹⁰⁵² This first national Forum demonstrated “the existence and size of the sector and legitimated NSA vis-à-vis the authorities”.¹⁰⁵³ However, according to some civil society actors such as Luiz Araújo of the NGO SOS-Habitat, the genesis of the forum was actually born from the European Commission (EC) attempting to form a social hierarchy of civil society “representatives” that could be counted on to build relations between donors and the government, effectively selecting which privileged groups with links to the EC would become “representative” of Angolan civil society.¹⁰⁵⁴ Through its financial clout, this neo-colonial reach could effectively play a distortionary role in Angola’s endogenous development by creating its own stratified class of privileged partners. Nevertheless, the first forum was successful in bringing together a national dialogue that had been disjointed and heavily fragmented until then.

The second forum was intended to rectify some of these deficiencies, which is precisely the importance of continuing to organize these gatherings in the first place, bringing together different people and different organizations around a similar forward-leaning agenda. The Second Civil Society Forum from 25-27 November 2008 came together under the general banner of “*Construir Unidade na Diversidade*” (Creating Unity in Diversity) and the specific theme of “Angolan Civil Society: A Democratic Vehicle of Public Participation” with the goal of harnessing Angolan civil society as a democratic vehicle through public participation.¹⁰⁵⁵ The central emphasis on ‘democracy’ brought the group’s focus to a nascent concept in the war-torn country. All the dimensions of public life were not available to the participants in the forum in a context where freedom of speech and freedom of assembly were discouraged under a thin veil of threats and violence. This second effort opened the

¹⁰⁵² *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁰⁵³ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 165.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Vidal & Andrade, *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação*, 22.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Vidal, *Sociedade civil angolana*, 2-3.

participatory sphere even larger by expanding the preliminary provincial conferences, this time involving each province except Bengo and Zaire, counting over 1,000 people and electing 60 provincial delegates to represent their provinces in the capital, invited government officials, donor representatives, and church officials, attesting to the overall mobilization efforts of the civil society actors across the country.¹⁰⁵⁶ The overall goal of both initiatives was “the necessity to affirm a central position of civil society for the edification of a democratic system, based on wide participation of citizens in public life, in all its dimensions”.¹⁰⁵⁷ By the time of the second forum in November 2008, the country had only held two national multiparty elections in its history and was still tightly controlled by an authoritarian regime. These national forums were key building blocks in the construction of these ideals.

The third forum, held in Benguela, came together under the banner of “*Decentralização e democracia participativa*” (Decentralization and participative democracy). This forum was interesting organizationally as it sought to bring the discussions to an even lower level, attempting to organize events at the *município* level of each province as well.¹⁰⁵⁸ The main themes discussed were land issues, HIV/SIDA, decentralization, participative democracy, and elections.¹⁰⁵⁹ The fourth forum was held in Huambo from 16-17 November 2010, returning to the themes of “Constructing Unity in Diversity” and discussing similar themes as the year prior, emphasizing the strengthening links between the government and the civil society organizations.¹⁰⁶⁰ In November 2011, the fifth forum was held in Malanje under the banner of “*Estreitando relações fortalecendo parcerias*” (Strengthening relations, reinforcing partnerships) with an emphasis on bringing debate to the local levels through development of *municípios*.¹⁰⁶¹ The sixth forum held in Sumbe, the provincial capital of Cuanza Sul, returned

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 11

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁰⁵⁸ According to Priest Bernard Duchêne of the Catholic Church (Congregation of the Holy Spirit, *Espiritanos*), who worked in the development of the civil society in the province of Cuanza Norte. Video available at: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xf1f9p> (accessed 11 June 2020). Father Duchêne notes that prior to the III Forum in Benguela, it was preceded by 80 municipal conferences on various matters concerning civil society.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Angop, “Decorre terceira Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 17 Nov. 2009. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2009/10/47/Decorre-terceira-Conferencia-Nacional-Sociedade-Civil,a9162fd5-5574-483f-8d42-a5fe03118fb5.html.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Angop, “Iniciaram debates na IV Conferência Nacional da Sociedade”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 16 November 2010. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2010/10/46/Iniciaram-debates-Conferencia-Nacional-Sociedade,cac4fd06-ce31-4d16-a3b1-2c41ec20885c.html.

¹⁰⁶¹ Angop, “Malanje acolhe V Conferência Nacional da Sociedade Civil Angolana”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 21 Nov. 2011. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2011/10/47/Malanje-acolhe-Conferencia-Nacional-Sociedade-Civil-Angolana,fa4786e0-a3b8-4809-9d47-30d773a6a009.html.

to the message of “Constructing Unity in Diversity” emphasizing the diversity of Angolan civil society and focusing on the role of communication in social development.¹⁰⁶² The final forum was held in December 2014 in Zaire, though the organization of the events had been experiencing increasing difficulties to secure the financing to put these events together, being likely the source of the disappearance of the annual national Forum cycle in 2014.

4.4.3 COALESCING CIVIL SOCIETY: THE (RELATIVE) POWER OF NETWORKS

One significant outcome of the entrance of a growing number of foreign organizations in the country was not only their own influence in shaping civil society initiatives by slowly eroding the symbolic authoritative wall between the public and the ruling government, but also the cumulative effect of their ability to supercharge the growth of national organizations in the country (many dependent on their foreign partners) and coalescing the vibrant energy of civil society into networking organizations. These collaborative efforts often underwhelmed while succeeding in others. Legitimate criticism is pointed at the divisive nature of the NGO sector overly reliant on foreign financing and dependent on donor agendas that do not necessarily translate to meeting the pressing needs on the ground. Furthermore, the inflexible donor-led agendas lead to “[a] dominant characteristic of strategic actions [that] privilege individual and isolated strategies at the expenses of an organizational culture based on dialogue and cooperation”.¹⁰⁶³ Regardless, for better or worse, the weight these international organizations brought to the national scene in organizational, financial, and technical capacity, as well as their consequential efforts to coalesce collaborative efforts between the Angolan population and government officials while the national government was at its weakest and the population at its most vulnerable undoubtedly created an accelerant to bringing together civil society actors and the government around the same table.

If privileged access to government officials has always been a fundamental obstacle for the civil society and NGOs working in the country, the democratic deficit of Angola due

¹⁰⁶² Angop, “Conferência aborda papel da comunicação social no desenvolvimento”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 10 Dec. 2012. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2012/11/50/Conferencia-aborda-papel-comunicacao-social-desenvolvimento,b1375568-ff10-44fb-87ca-d3fc6f417794.html.

¹⁰⁶³ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 164.

to its colonial and ‘socialist’ past, as well as its young civil society represented just as much of a challenge to social organizers. According to Christine Messiant, the inability of the emerging civil society to form a “common front” to make their voices heard was their inherent position of weakness, instability of land tenure, the disinformation of government media sources and the blocking of all others.¹⁰⁶⁴ The population was caught in its quest for growth and development between a government that not only provided hardly any assistance in the form of concrete resources and an international donor community that had its own visions of reconstruction. Despite the accumulating collaborative initiatives between civil society actors and the government, the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos actively undermined the larger civil society development while engaging in specific spaces designed for controlled dialogue. The collaborations rarely moved beyond superficial consultations. Benjamin Castello of ADRA put together a list of the different ways the civil society found itself marginalized and lacking opportunities for democratic growth:

Box 3 - Impediments to civil society growth

Instrumentalization and partisanship of the public functions
Lack of an alternative local market for employment
Absence of a climate of a university movement marked by an anti-establishment, reformist and entrepreneurial tradition
The spirit of exclusion
Radicalism and systematic opposition
The vicious cycle of fear
The fragility of the independent private sector

Source: Benjamin Castello, “A Força e o Papel da Sociedade Angolana em Busca da Paz em Angola” in *O momento para a renovação dos compromissos da Comunidade Internacional para a Paz em Angola: Lições Aprendidas e Caminhos Futuros*, Maputo, 19-20 June 2000, 6.

The overall hostile atmosphere that the engaged civil society actors faced in trying to receive official recognition and find their seat at the table with public officials was a major impediment to self-organizing, overcome in part through a power in numbers approach through the formation of nascent networks.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Christine Messiant, “L’Angola ? Circulez, il n’y a rien à voir !”, *Lusotopie*, (2000): 19.

Box 4 - Defining Nascent Networks

In analyzing networks, they can be defined by (1) objective (2) structure (3) and geography, and classified into different typologies based on the objective of the network such as (1) communities of practice, (2) knowledge-sharing, (3) sectoral, (4) advocacy, and (5) service delivery.¹⁰⁶⁵ The civil society networks below fit into different broad categories (women's empowerment, debt relief, socio-economic development, land issues, food security, children's rights, etc.), are formed through various structures (loose thematic organizations, umbrella coordinating organizations, 'think tanks'), and have different geographical reach (provincial, national, multinational). We will therefore need a broad definition to describe these networks, followed by their principal characteristics that distinguish them from others. The chosen definition, proposed by the Overseas Development Institute describes "formal or informal structures that link actors (individuals or organisations) who share a common interest on a specific issue or who share a general set of values".¹⁰⁶⁶

As seen in the chart below, the diversity in structure and mission attests to the creativity and spontaneity of their creations, as such little precedent existed, but the need for their existence revealed itself more and more each year as the numbers of NGOs grew, technical know-how and experience strengthened, and resources strained. Furthermore, the formation of NGOs and CSOs did not easily translate to horizontal relationships. The potential power in networking could come, theoretically, through social organizational capacity inherent through the multiplier effects of increased access to resources (financial, informational, human, material), extended reach facilitating greater geographical impact, solidarity and support mechanisms, and increased visibility brought through network creation.¹⁰⁶⁷ Given the lack of precedent, the initial attempts at building networks between NGOs often lacked the ability to overcome the structural difficulties they faced and were thus unable to take advantage of the benefits functioning networks could provide. Yet, as with the collaborative efforts, each attempt presents important opportunities to learn and adapt. As with the previous table on collaborations, the compilation of the creation of civil society networks

¹⁰⁶⁵ Claudia Liebler & Marisa Ferri, *NGO Networks: Building Capacity in a Changing World*, A Study Supported by Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, Summer of Peer Learning Event, Nov. 2004, 16-17.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Perkin & Court, *Networks and Policy*, 2.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Liebler & Ferri, *NGO Networks*, 5.

will again focus on the key years between the late 1980s when NGOs began arriving to Angola and 2007 when the CSO and NGO sector had begun to establish its presence and horizontal partnerships became more commonplace.

Tableau 22 - Evolution in the creation of civil society networks (Late 1980s-2010)

Founding Date	Name	Actors/Purpose
1988	CONGA – The committee of international NGOs in Angola	INGOs maintained close contact and coordinated with UTCAH and UNOA.
1991	FONGA – Forum of the Angolan NGOs	450 NNGOs, 4 offices in Cabinda, Benguela, Huíla and Cuanza-Sul.
Oct. 1996	<i>Pastoral da Criança</i>	Catholic Church, acting through 18 dioceses, mobilizing public institutions, churches, NGOs, provincial direction of MINARS.
1998	Women's Network/ <i>Rede Mulher</i>	Active in 12 provinces, 80+ participating organizations.
July 1999	Jubilee 2000	Designed for debt relief, now focused on socio-economic rights. In 2006 comprised around 45 NGOs. Members include <i>International South Group Network</i> of Southern Africa.
1999	Angolan Reflection Group for Peace (GARP)	American Friends Society, FONGA, Open Society, Filomeno Vieira Lopes (politician from <i>Frente para a Democracia</i>).
1999	Angolan network of the organisations against HIV/SIDA (ANASO)	107 organizations in 18 provinces, members of Congregational Evangelical Church of Angola network.
2000	Peace Network/ <i>Rede Paz</i>	Created through COIEPA ^a , collection of members of NGOs, churches, private media, women's organizations, traditional authorities, elders.
Jan. 2003	<i>Rede Terra</i>	Eight INGOs and four NNGOs, supported by three donors: NOVIB (Great Britain), OIKOS-INTERMON (Portugal) and World Learning (United States).
2004	Electoral Network/ <i>Rede Eleitoral</i>	42 members and associates across 12 provinces, FONGA. Supported by National Democratic Institute (USA), works alongside Ministry of Territorial Affairs and National Election Commission (CNE).
Dec. 2005	CCDH – Human Rights Coordination Council	Formed by several human rights organizations from Angolan civil society; coordinates 25 human rights orgs., also linked to public bodies and international partners.
2007	REDSAN-PALOP ^b – Civil Society Regional Network for Food Security & Nutrition in the PALOP	FAO, Ministry of Agriculture, CSOs.
2007	The National Council for Children (CNAC)	Consultative, multi-sector body monitoring public policies promoting & defending children's rights; includes representatives of ministries and public agencies, professional associations, NGOs, churches & other civil society bodies.

^a Recall from §4.2.2 that the creation of COIEPA itself was an unprecedented coming together of disparate religious groups (Messiant, "L'Angola ? Circulez", 20).

^b In Portuguese: *Rede Regional da Sociedade Civil para a Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional nos PALOP*.

Source: Actalliance, *Norwegian Church Aid Angola Strategy 2016-2020*. Oslo, Norwegian Church Aid, 24 Sept. 2015. <https://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/contentassets/5db71340e22646538b66a1b6e9d33edf/angola-nca-strategy-2016-2020.pdf>; Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society”, 34-36; João Pinto, *Sociedade Civil e Segurança Alimentar nos PALOP: Desafios da Articulação em Rede*, International Food Security Network/ActionAid, Jan. 2008, 30. https://www.redsan-cplp.org/uploads/5/6/8/7/5687387/sociedade_civil_e_seguran%C3%A7a_alimentar_nos_palop_-_desafios_da_articula%C3%A7%C3%A3o_em_rede.pdf; UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 31, 42; United Nations, *Core document forming part of the reports of states parties: Angola*, International Human Rights Instruments, HRI/CORE/AGO/2008, 16 April 2008, 35. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=HRI%2fCORE%2fAGO%2f2008&Lang=en; Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 16.

It is true that many of these network-building and collaboration efforts did not last long and may have had minimal impacts in their actions themselves, but we argue that it is in the accumulation of these actions, through their organizing successes and failures, that stronger organizations would later arise. Angolan ‘civil society’ would need to reengage with its different facets of itself in order to nourish its roots. Each endeavor to reach out, build links, network, collaborate and exchange undoubtedly strengthened the foundations of the reemergence of a ‘civil society’ that would, in time, advocate for its own representation. Even the organizing initiatives that fell flat, failed to take off, or ended in disorganization, all serve as learning experiences, building one on top of the other. If the lessons are learned, which is a big if, then the experiences are net positives for the long term vision given that “all of these initiatives had pushed forward the process of public debate and created new space for a wider range of civil society agents to become involved in peace work and other public issues”.¹⁰⁶⁸ Further research on the effects (both positive and negative) of civil society networks will be necessary as the practice is accelerating with the growth and strengthening of NGOs and CSOs, but specific academic research on the topic remains limited.¹⁰⁶⁹

¹⁰⁶⁸ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 16.

¹⁰⁶⁹ One important such study was identified, conducted in 2009 by PAANE. The opening of its report mentions that no other such study had been conducted previously. Its study identified 59 networks operating in the country. The geographical reach of the networks is left unclear as it mentions 12 of them are national (10 based in Luanda, 2 in Huila province), while 28 out of the 59 identified networks were based in Luanda and only 5 of the remaining 31 were based outside of a provincial capital, and of the 59 total only 19 (32%) are legally established (JM] Angola, *Mapeamento de Redes*, 5, 16, 22). Beyond the basic service provision that most NGOs are most commonly involved in, the study found that human rights (32%) was the most common subject taken up by the identified networks, followed by education (27%), health (24%) and children (24%) (*Ibid.*, 17). Along the lines of ‘mass organizations’ and ‘GONGOS’, it is questionable if another category should be established of government-initiated networks, as the study identified a number of networks that have their headquarters in space ceded by local government, though the study leaves open the question whether this partnership is based upon control or cooperation (*Ibid.*, 25). The principal partnership established with the networks were firstly INGOS (44), the government (32), embassies/donors (22), NGOs (18), UN agencies (15) and companies (3) (*Ibidem*). Strangely, USAID is included in the same category of UN agencies. Unfortunately, the information provided of the networks themselves are only the title, contact person, and contact information. The founding date of each network was not provided to cross-check the dates with the initial nascent networks listed above.

4.4.4 THE EMERGENCE OF 'GRASSROOTS ELITE' NGOS

As mentioned in §1.2.5, the notion of 'grassroots elite' NGOs was inspired by Inge Ruigrok's 2010 article developing the idea. Though lacking an explicit definition, the article characterizes the 'elitist' roots as contingent on being educated, urban, identifying with specific geographic regions, having representatives in positions within the state, and able to draw upon collective memory and symbolism in the defense of its interests. We take this definition a step further, categorizing the emergence of 'grassroots elite' NGOs characterized by (1) having official direct or indirect connections to the government officials, similar to Ruigrok, but also, and just as importantly, (2) having established official connections and recognition with reputable international organizations or institutions. Being merely supported or funded by an international organization does not qualify for this 'grassroots elite' category, as the connection must come in an enduring form, such as being an official member, having observer status, or demonstrating a prolonged track record of collaborating partnerships. This last requirement is the least clear, but comes through time and the accumulation of donor contracts.

The revealing and identification of this further category of these 'grassroots elite' organizations, particularly the international connection, came directly through my fieldwork experience. The two case studies that will follow in part III of this study both encompass the dynamics of these 'grassroots elite' organizations confronting state power. The first one will be developed in the following chapter revolving around the *Rede Terra* (Land Network), while the second case study will include the *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Constructing Communities) founded in part by Padre Pio, developed in §6.3.6. *Rede Terra* comprises one of the first collaborative networks described above, made up of a mixture of 12 NGOs (8 INGOs and 4 NNGOs). The four NNGOs included ADRA, Caritas de Angola, *Mosaiko – Instituto para a Cidadania* (Mosaiko – Institute for Citizenship), and the *Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento* (NCC, National Counselling Center). These "grassroot elite" connections provided vital institutional support to their missions and exponentially increase their agency and room to maneuver. The following is a non-exhaustive list of certain 'grassroots elite' NGOs in Angola whose work influenced the present study:

Tableau 23 - Examples of ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs

Name (year created)	International Support	Area of interest
ACC (2003)	Catholic Church, Observer member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), tasked with Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council in Geneva (2010)	Human rights, land issues, community development, legal assistance
ADRA (1990)	EU, UNICEF, Open Society Institute	Rural socio-economic development
AJPD (2000)	Observer status in the African Commission for Human and Peoples’ Rights; member of the International Human Rights Federation	Legal issues, human rights
Caritas Angola (1957)	Catholic Church, Caritas network	Institutional capacity building, public policy, healthcare, literacy, agriculture
Mãos Livres (2000)	United Nations Human Rights Division, Open Society Institute	Human rights defense, justice advocacy
Mosaiko (1997)	EU, UNICEF, the Embassies of the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and Great Britain	Human rights, legal matters
NCC (2000)	Observer status before the African Commission for Human and Peoples’ Rights of the African Union (2008)	Democracy, citizenship, legal and community development, and human rights.
Omunga (1998)	Official partner of Médecins du Monde; Observer status before the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights of the African Union (2008)	Human rights, advocacy, civic engagement, journalism
SOS-Habitat (2003)	Headed by Rafael Moraes, award-winning journalist. Won award in 2018 ^a from EuropeAid (EC) for protection and respect of human rights, partnered with Human Rights Watch & Christian Aid	Human Rights, Law, Housing

^a See the Development Aid website:

<https://www.developmentaid.org/#!/organizations/awards/view/121266/caminho-para-a-justica-lot-3> (accessed 6 Oct. 2020)

Source: Author’s compilation.

The *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Building Communities) was founded in 2003. Its co-founder, the Catholic Priest Jacinto Pio Wacussanga, better known as “Padre Pio”, has had his NGO officially recognized with observer status before the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) and has been recognized internationally¹⁰⁷⁰ for his work fighting for human rights in Southern Angola, having won¹⁰⁷¹ as recently as 2018 the “Human Rights Defender Award” of 2018 presented by the Southern

¹⁰⁷⁰ Participant of the Sixth Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders, an organization with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The organization seeks to promote human rights’ defenders worldwide and provides temporary protections when possible and necessary. See: www.frontlinedefenders.org (accessed 12 Sept. 2020).

¹⁰⁷¹ See: Club-K, “Padre angolano Pio Wacussanga ganha prémio ‘Defensor de Direitos Humanos de 2018’”, Luanda, 16 Nov. 2018. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33956:padre-angolano-pio-wacussanga-ganha-premio-defensor-de-direitos-humanos-de-2018&catid=2&Itemid=1069&lang=pt.

Africa Human Rights Defenders Network. In 2010 ACC was one of three NGOs (along with OMUNGA) tasked with Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council in Geneva to assess the overall human rights record within Angola, further demonstrating its international standing.¹⁰⁷²

The **Associação Justiça, Paz e Democracia** (AJPD, Association for Justice, Peace and Democracy), founded in 2000, is a relatively small organization with 8 full time employees and 23 total members providing free legal advice and representation in the defense of human rights, particularly regarding prison conditions and the legal process. Its ‘elite’ status comes from its observer status in the African Commission for Human and Peoples’ Rights, as well as being a member of the International Human Rights Federation.¹⁰⁷³ It also collaborated with Human Rights Watch a report “Struggling Through Peace: Return and Resettlement in Angola”.¹⁰⁷⁴ Given its legal focus, it is in constant contact with the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, Parliament and the courts.

Combining these two ‘elite’ organization, in April 2015, both the AJPD and ACC, in partnership with the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), organized an unprecedented conference on The Right to Truth and Collective Memory as Human Rights in Building the Democratic Rule of Law. The conclusions of the dialogue found that “disrespect for human rights” impede “national reconciliation and the full exercise of citizenship”, and that, “citizens are frequently intimidated by claims that human rights are a threat to democracy and the country’s hard-won peace”.¹⁰⁷⁵

Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development), founded in 1990 (legalized in 1996) in part by Fernando Pacheco, is both arguably the ultimate ‘elite’ NGO in Angola, with deep connections to both the MPLA and international institutions, as well as the most advanced and well-equipped national NGO dedicated to rural socio-economic development. Politically connected, Fernando Pacheco was both a senior official of the MPLA within the Ministry of Agriculture before leaving politics and moving towards advocacy. Internationally, it has multiple international partnerships including the European Union, UNICEF, and the Open Society

¹⁰⁷² Faria, *The Post-War Angola*, 171.

¹⁰⁷³ Actalliance, *Norwegian Church Aid*, 43.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Struggling Through Peace: Return and Resettlement in Angola*, XV (16), New York, Aug. 2003. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2003/08/15/struggling-through-peace/return-and-resettlement-angola>.

¹⁰⁷⁵ USAID, *2015 CSO Sustainability*, 4-5.

Initiative for Southern Africa (of which Fernando Pacheco is the current President). ADRA's long history and institutional strengths allow it to have a wide geographic reach, assisting 139,183 families, 808 villages, 60 *comunas* and 25 *municípios* in over seven provinces.¹⁰⁷⁶

Mãos Livres¹⁰⁷⁷ (Free Hands), formed in 2000 as a justice advocacy organization, is an 'elite' organization in both perspectives: Internationally, it counts on the support of the United Nations Human Rights Division, the Open Society Foundation¹⁰⁷⁸ and has observer status in the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights¹⁰⁷⁹ while nationally, it is directly connected to the inner political elite through its founder "David Mendes, a former secretary of state for the environment".¹⁰⁸⁰ While headquartered in Luanda, Mãos Livres has a provincial secretaries in Cuanza Norte, Cuanza Sul, Huambo, Huíla, Malanje and Benguela, as well as a strong presence on independent radio and newspapers and even a weekly column in the state-owned *Jornal de Angola*.¹⁰⁸¹

Mosaiko – Instituto para a Cidadania (Mosaiko – Institute for Citizenship) was founded in 1997 by Dominican missionaries and often works in partnership with CEAST on the principal missions of promoting human rights. It is even considered "one of the most progressive human rights organizations in Angola" and hosts the most frequented "library on social and human science literature in Luanda".¹⁰⁸² Given its long history, the organization has a vast list of international partners such as the EU, UNICEF, the Embassies of the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and Great Britain.

The **Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento** (NCC, National Counselling Centre) was founded in 1999 and works in the areas of democracy, citizenship, legal and community development, and human rights. It has observer status before the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights of the African Union since 2008.¹⁰⁸³

¹⁰⁷⁶ According to the NGO's website: <https://www.adra-angola.org/quem-somos-adra> (accessed 24 April 2020).

¹⁰⁷⁷ Also known in Portuguese as: *Associação de Juristas e Jornalistas na Defesa e Difusão dos Direitos Humanos e da Cidadania*/ Association of Jurists and Journalists in the Defense of Human Rights and Citizenship

¹⁰⁷⁸ The Open Society Institute was created in 1993 by the philanthropist George Soros, working in collaboration with the Soros Foundation in supporting political transitions to democracy.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Actalliance, *Norwegian Church Aid*, 43.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 12.

¹⁰⁸¹ Amundsen & Abreu, "Civil Society", 22.

¹⁰⁸² Søren Kirk Jensen & Nelson Pestana, *The Role of the Churches in Poverty Reduction in Angola*, CMI Report no. 1, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2010, 17. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3626-the-role-of-the-churches-in-poverty-reduction-in>.

¹⁰⁸³ African Union, "Final communique", 2008.

OMUNGA, meaning “union” in the local Umbundu, was founded by José António Martins Patrocínio in 1998 in partnership with the activist Sónia Serafim Ferreira and the NGO OKUTIUKA-APAV. A decade later, OMUNGA would become independent. The NGO was principally focused on human rights issues and particularly those of street children in Lobito. Also, it was focused on developing civic engagement through journalism by creating its own Center of Information and Documentation (CID) and the *Jovens da Brigada de Jornalistas* (JBj, Youth Journalist Brigade) filming the daily realities in Angola. In 2008, it became an official partner of *Médecins du Monde* and obtained observer status before the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights of the African Union. It is also a member of the World Campaign to Prevent Child Abuse. As a representation of its national stature, when João Lourenço was elected President and held a national dialogue of civil society actors, José Patrocínio was present. He died on 1 June 2019, but the NGO continues to operate.

SOS-Habitat was formed in 2003 as an advocacy group for human rights focused on the right to proper housing. Its head director, the award-winning Rafael Morais, is one of Angola’s best known journalists for his work on uncovering corruption and human rights abuses. The organization has the institutional support of Human Rights Watch and Christian Aid. The latter has provided public support to SOS-Habitat as it has come under constant pressure and criticism for “inciting unrest and promoting land invasions” from the government as the NGO mediatizes and denounces forced evictions and demolitions in urban and peri-urban areas with due compensation.¹⁰⁸⁴

4.4.5 SETTING THE SCENE FOR CONFLICTUAL SPACES

This chapter has attempted to explore the multi-faceted roles that foreign influences (neutral, allied and enemy) have had on the vision and understanding of the MPLA in its attempt to rebuild the periphery after emerging victorious in the civil war and what role it envisioned that the rural populations would play in this reconstruction. It raises the question

¹⁰⁸⁴ Christian Aid, *Prime minister of Angola accuses Christian Aid partner of inciting unrest*. Reliefweb, OCHA, 12 May 2006. <https://reliefweb.int/report/angola/prime-minister-angola-accuses-christian-aid-partner-inciting-unrest>.

as to what extent the MPLA has been able to compartmentalize the actions of these foreign influences between those attempting to undermine the MPLA and those focused on providing benevolent assistance, further complicating matters as some of these foreign actors have been shown to switch sides and allegiances during the years of conflict.

He we theorize that the MPLA continues to hold deep-seated grudges and paranoia against most Western actors, especially the United States, and this position has led it to take significant measures to reduce Western influence among the populations in the peripheries. This has led Angolan authorities to keep a careful watch over NGOs with Western links, though the assistance and resources they provide are too crucial to entirely cut out. Rather, the government attempts to tamp down their influence through burdensome regulations and monitoring requirements, though the increase of groups claiming human rights support and advocacy indicates that these ideas supported by the West have been cemented through endogenous growth and development. Besides social control, the authorities have advanced a state-centric rural economic development policy to ensure control over rent distribution as leverage for the state's institutional weakness in these areas. While this position could be perceived as a legitimate protection of national sovereignty, in the case of rural Angola it has been particularly detrimental to the rural communities given the documented absence of the government in the role of basic service delivery. Not only has the government largely failed to fill the positions of local officials in *municípios* throughout the periphery beyond the provincial capitals, it has simultaneously undercut the foreign and international organizations set up to provide the resource allocation and development assistance it is unable to provide itself.

The main vehicle transmitting Western influences to the local level comes in the form of NGOs, making them a principal target in the government's campaign to reduce and control its propagation, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter. In the emergence, development, and solidification of Angola's civil society, NGOs quickly became a central vehicle to organize resources which were otherwise unavailable, though the lack of civic culture and horizontal partnerships drastically reduced these activities to a relatively small group of engaged actors as the vast majority struggled to make a living. The next chapter will focus on the conflicting interests as these new NGOs began to expand their influence and move into spaces previously wholly dominated by the state itself.

Chapter 5 Colliding interests

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the 1990s was a period of major disruption coinciding with a massive expansion of national and international organizations actively engaging with wide areas of an emerging civil society and expanding government. This amalgam led to the creation of new experimental connections and collaborations which, at times, led to the formation of civil society based organizational networks. This phenomenon was not unique to Angola, as it represents a natural process of “democratizing” states entering into the international system among the “third wave” (1974-1990) of transitions to different forms of democracy and their consolidating “democratic” processes.¹⁰⁸⁵ However, given Angola’s unique history, this experience was both compressed in time and exponentially accelerated in the building of new civil society infrastructure, thereby creating a whole new paradigm that the government would be thrust into as it emerged into peacetime. An authoritarian regime historically hesitant to concede any substantial spaces of power or authority, and with only a minimal political will of cooperation and outreach to any independent civil society actors or organizations, suddenly found itself under pressure from a whole new set of actors right at the moment its impulses sought to consolidate power and extend its own control networks. Keeping this unique historical timeline in mind throughout this chapter will be key to understanding the dynamics pushing apart and pulling together these vast sets of actors. In this case, the underlying factor motivating these positions is the omnipresent issue of land.

5.1 Land conflicts amid rising rural tensions

This chapter primarily concentrates on a very sensitive issue of the modern Angolan State: the prevalence of land conflicts generated through contrasting economic motivations and social practices. This subject has been chosen as an analytical instrument because it can be considered as one of the most critical social issues provoking conflict, especially when the

¹⁰⁸⁵ Samuel Huntington, “Democracy’s Third Wave”, *Journal of Democracy*, 2, no. 2, (1991): 12. DOI: 10.1353/jod.1991.0016.

presence or obtention of official land titles is low, thereby creating a permanent bedrock of instability. Whether it be in urban or rural areas, land occupation has severely stirred social conflict in Angola¹⁰⁸⁶ due to the decades of war, millions of internally displaced people, and a regulatory clash between customary land practices with a complex power structure and the modern government's 'socialist' decree nationalizing land while lacking the proper instruments, laws, and procedures to distribute and regularize it. This issue has been identified by the Catholic Church, one of the longest serving institutions in modern-day Angola, as being potentially the biggest threat facing the continued stability of Angolan society¹⁰⁸⁷, provided that these problems become even more pronounced in periods of post-armed conflict¹⁰⁸⁸ and weapons of war continue to circulate among the population. The economic expansion led by the attempted liberalization of the economy has led to large swathes of land dispossession throughout rural Angola since 2002, being perhaps the most pivotal factor in provoking "economic, social, and cultural transformations" among the peripheral populations.¹⁰⁸⁹ In the relationship between the government and the governed, questions over land access and use have continued to rank among the most pressing issues in the periphery as land conflicts, each unique in form and potential resolution, reappear with consistent frequency.¹⁰⁹⁰

As previously mentioned in §3.2.4, by the turn of the 21st century, the Ministry of Agriculture had legally conceded over two million hectares of land, amounting to half of that owned by the colonial commercial.¹⁰⁹¹ This two million hectare figure is widely cited by researchers. However, the different attributions to whom this land was conceded demonstrates well the difficulty in defining which actors are actually (re)occupying these rural spaces amid the overall opaque nature of this resource allocation process. Fernando Pacheco refers to them as *empresários* or "businesspeople".¹⁰⁹² Both Jeannette Clover and Conor Foley describe them as "commercial farmers".¹⁰⁹³ A *Rede Terra* action plan refers to them as the

¹⁰⁸⁶ Clover, "The role of land", 150; Cain, "Housing microfinance", 366.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 28.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Pain, "A questão da terra", 82.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 26.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Lourenço Bule, "Conflitos de terra são muito frequentes", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 10 May 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/provincias/conflitos-de-terra-sao-muito-frequentes>.

¹⁰⁹¹ Pacheco, *A questão da terra*, III; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 125.

¹⁰⁹² Pacheco, *A questão da terra*, III.

¹⁰⁹³ Clover, "Land reform in Angola", 358; Conor Foley, "Land Rights in Angola: poverty and plenty", in *Uncharted Territory: Land, conflict and humanitarian action*, (ed), Sara Pantuliano, (Warwickshire: Practical Action, 2009), 147.

“new Angolan bourgeoisie”.¹⁰⁹⁴ An Oxfam report identifies them as the “elite”.¹⁰⁹⁵ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, advancing the date of these same dynamics to 2011 by citing a World Bank report, characterized these land recipients as “regime cronies”.¹⁰⁹⁶ Aharon de Grassi identifies the recipients as “agribusiness units” through his translation of the same 2011 World Bank report.¹⁰⁹⁷ Among this wide variety of attributions (businesspeople, commercial farmers, agribusiness units, new bourgeoisie, elites and regime cronies), they all share in common the fact that these millions of hectares were not attributed to peasants and smallholders. Such marginalized actors would likely be too resource poor to set up their own businesses, would likely lack access to and knowledge of how to engage with the Ministry of Agriculture and are clearly not an active part of the regime, finding themselves instead on the opposite end of the social hierarchy from these privileged ‘elites’.

Nevertheless, much of this land was likely once part of the peasantry, given that they were systematically dispossessed from their communal lands by the colonizers. In the central plateau between 1960 and 1974, for example, a typical rural family went from working on average 8.9 hectares down to 4.1; in Malanje, from 5.6 to 2.¹⁰⁹⁸ In referring to those who later took over these reclaimed lands, Fernando Pacheco later enlarges his description of businessmen having obtained land concessions as “basically MPLA leaders, current and former government members, high-ranking state officials and members of the armed forces and businessmen – in short, all social groups with access to the ruling or developing elite (or at least those who know their way around the relevant institutions”.¹⁰⁹⁹ Jeanette Clover goes on to describes the process of state patronage:

[T]he highly controversial process of privatization of the previously large state sector that was carried out during this period (and in a poorly conceived and disorganized way) made it possible for the powerful politico-military elite to use their positions to obtain concessions for newly divested state farms, as well as potentially lucrative property and land in rural and urban areas.¹¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁹⁴ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual de Actividades*, Luanda, 18 Feb. 2005, 6.

¹⁰⁹⁵ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 125.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 180.

¹⁰⁹⁷ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories”, 117.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Fernando Pacheco, *A Terra e a Constituição*, paper presented at Intervenção da Sociedade Civil no Processo Constitucional, Instituto Nacional Democrático para os Assuntos Internacionais, Cacuaco, 5 July 2000, 4.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Pacheco, *et al*, “The Role of External”, 46.

¹¹⁰⁰ Clover, “The role of land”, 152.

Land and natural resources began to consolidate within the elite network as growing rumors of land appropriations began to resonate among the budding networks of civil society actors¹¹⁰¹ and NGOs.¹¹⁰² These power relations playing out across a finite resource have created a recipe for colliding interests between the communities historically linked to the land socially, culturally, spiritually, and economically, and the arrival of outsiders with much more short-term interests. Rather than any deep spiritual or cultural connection, they see it through a modern capitalist lens as an asset vehicle with which to exploit and extract its resources. These tensions are exasperated by the reality that little if any land in Angola is truly ‘unoccupied’ and therefore ‘conflict free’. Even if each land takeover or land transfer is not explicitly documented, it can be assumed that each one either provoked some level of local discontent or required negotiations through either traditional authorities or public officials.

This inherent tension follows along the theme of ‘continuity’ proposed by Christopher Cramer mentioned in chapter 1 and 2 as the lack of data and transparency on the distribution and recipients of land, of the quantity and capacity of the country’s active economic agents working in the agricultural sector, as well as a database on the distribution network of agricultural goods from field to market present major empirical weaknesses in studying Angola’s rural economy and its actors. In fact, the entire land administration system

suffers from an incomplete design, incomplete (or nonexistent) data on land holdings, a lack of records; cumbersome, time consuming and imperfectly understood transaction processes; high transactions costs; lack of information and processes to determine land values; and lack of institutional capacity to create and maintain records and manage transfers.¹¹⁰³

While the aforementioned USAID report was published in 2007, qualitatively-speaking little has changed since. The lack of improvement in transparency and effectiveness in land

¹¹⁰¹ Pedro Kalweyo, “Camponeses e generais desentendem-se por terras,” *Agora*, Luanda, 2003, 13; Ricardo Marques de Morais, “General Awards Himself More Than 300 Square Kilometers of Land”, MakaAngola, Luanda, 21 Nov. 2014. http://www.makaangola.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11495:land-grabbing-general-awards-himself-a-territory-larger-than-monaco&catid=26&lang=en; Rafael Marques de Morais, “Abuse of power in Angola (part 1): How the MPLA elite clears land for their own use”, MakaAngola, 23 Aug. 2016. <https://www.makaangola.org/2016/08/abuse-of-power-in-angola-part-i-how-the-mpla-elite-clears-land-for-their-own-use/>.

¹¹⁰² Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle’s Paradise*, 2018.

¹¹⁰³ USAID, *Strengthening Land Tenure and Property Rights in Angola. Land Law and Policy: Overview of Legal Framework*, Washington D.C., 31 May 2007, 31. https://www.land-links.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/USAID_Land_Tenure_Angola_Gender_and_ODG_Profile_and_Planning_Tool.pdf.

management in the last decade is by design. It is not by accident or a cause of incompetence. In other words, the lack of clear policy *is the policy*, as it gives the MPLA elites cover to engage in widespread state patronage and clientelism without providing the growing civil society clear mechanisms to hold officials or beneficiaries accountable. A secondary yet direct effect of this policy of intentionally blurring the lines and muddying the waters of land management leaves the country without a strong statistical basis for understanding the social and economic dynamics flowing through the peripheries. Attempting to grasp its undercurrents is left to sparse reports, anecdotal evidence, and the accumulation of acquired knowledge.

Reliable data do not exist on rural entrepreneurs, who majoritarily live in informality and thus are not registered and often do not pay taxes. The Angolan government has long held a discourse of the desire to open up economic diversification towards the agricultural sector, but that would require significant foreign investment and a competent tracing system that would bring light into spaces kept intentionally dark. The attractiveness to foreign investors is likewise actively undermined by these same policies spreading uncertainty throughout one of the key resources (land) needed to convince investors that long-term stability protects their investment.

As previously mentioned, in 2008 only “a few dozen ‘intermediary’ rural entrepreneurs” were registered.¹¹⁰⁴ Given that economic development plans, generally in the form of modern farms or ranches, are often the source of the various cases of land conflict throughout the country, these “few dozen” rural entrepreneurs and businessmen appear to either be considerably undercounted today or have outsized influence across the peripheries. In some of the key areas of land conflict in Huíla province that will be outlined below, according to the government itself 46 commercial ranches are occupying 2,629 km² within the areas of Tunda dos Gambos and Vale de Chimbolela in the Gambos *município*.¹¹⁰⁵ The owners of most of these ranches are not listed,¹¹⁰⁶ but this is strong evidence that the number of the “few dozen” rural businessmen noted above has expanded considerably, with these nearly four dozen ranches operating on the outskirts of Bicular National Park alongside

¹¹⁰⁴ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 126.

¹¹⁰⁵ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 39.

¹¹⁰⁶ In Nov. 2018, the government of João Lourenço launched a website, *O Portal de Divulgação da Produção Nacional* (Portal of National Production Promotion) identifying the different farms and ranches according to the different good produced. Any producer or cooperative group is allowed to add their activity to the list. This constitutes one of the first public-facing initiatives identifying the country's commercial sector. The official portal can be found at: <http://www.ppn.gov.ao> (accessed 1 Oct. 2020). The farms are localized to the *município* level.

traditional grazing grounds for local cattle herding communities. Again, due to a lack of data and reliable news sources, information on Angola's land conflicts remains incomplete, except for a few clear examples that have been researched in detail. However, with the wider spread and access to mobile technology and a strengthening civil society base, the situation is beginning to change.

5.1.1 THE SCRAMBLE FOR LAND

The economic transition of the 1990s set off a 'scramble for assets' among the military, political elites and the emerging entrepreneurial class, placing land as a foundational asset for building wealth accumulation. The burgeoning cities made urban and especially peri-urban land conflicts a central issue as the city limits constantly expanded. Beyond the swelling limits of the sprawling informal shantytowns, or *musseques*, two major historical events led to the overall increase in rural land conflicts. The first is found within the transition into the 1990s alongside the official discourse of 'liberalizing' the economy, crafting the perceptions necessary to promote capital investment (both foreign and national) into the country and to spur endogenous entrepreneurship among the privileged groups or individuals with the means to do so.

The transition to a liberal economic model through privatizations meant that the 1975 nationalization of the country's resources needed to be modified to allow for the development of a private sector able to attract foreign investment, provoking "a run of the members of the 'nomenklatura' and bureaucratic bourgeoisie on urban lands, principally next to the main urban consumption centers and in the provinces least affected by war".¹¹⁰⁷ This transitional period was "characterized by legal ambiguity" which "set the precedent for 'land grabs'" perpetrated by "the political elite, members of the armed forces and businessmen".¹¹⁰⁸ Secondly, land is clearly worth much more as an asset in peacetime as economic activity needs a certain level of social and political stability in order to develop sustainably, unless of course the business model is based on selling goods or services that profit off of chaos itself.

¹¹⁰⁷ Fernando Pacheco, *A Terra: Factor de Desenvolvimento ou de Conflito*, ADRA, Lubango, 1996, 3.

¹¹⁰⁸ Clover, "The role of land", 152.

Many of the few initial mediatized reports we have of rural land conflicts occurred alongside this time period.¹¹⁰⁹

The coupling of these two transitions opened the door to a type of “emerging capitalism”¹¹¹⁰ wherein the country’s elites attempted to diversify their strategies of wealth accumulation beyond the overreliance on oil and diamond rents. As these two central resources were dominated by the *nomenklatura* of insider elites with then-President José Eduardo dos Santos as the central nexus of patrimonial distribution in exchange for loyalty and regime continuation, those not privy to this network were forced to look for other economic opportunities or even job opportunities as the war waned. Few simple options existed for alternative wealth accumulation strategies. Land quickly became one of the most coveted resources, serving as a springboard for future entrepreneurial endeavors. Yet, the lack of unused and unclaimed productive land ensured that colliding interests would ensue.

Beyond the role of political insiders, after the end of the war the source of land conflicts shifted to include ex-soldiers and generals in their transitional roles toward ‘businessmen’ amid the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process, previously described in §3.4.5, as the agricultural sector became a key component of this process. This is explained by the fact that many of the demobilized soldiers already had experience in agriculture, its practice allows at least a minimum of subsistence living in otherwise uncertain times, and the sector was identified by governmental officials, donors and NGOs as an ideal practice to rebuild both the social and economic links devastated by war.¹¹¹¹ Oftentimes, the land conflicts provoked by DDR are the result of ex-soldiers in peri-urban spaces trying to search out ways to make a living after demobilization.¹¹¹² In unstable environments with a dearth of housing, humanitarian aid or employment opportunities, conflicts over land can easily occur in situations of prolonged displacement and opportunistic

¹¹⁰⁹ For some examples: [n.a.] “Tremor de terras nos Gambos. Padre Pio e sua esqupa estão em risco de vida”. *O Independente*, 21 July 2001, [n.a.]. “Conflito de terras toma proporções alarmantes”, *O Independente*, 11 Oct. 2003: 2-3, Kassinda, N. “Conflito de terras provocou guerra e morte nos Gambos”, *Folha 8*, Sept. 2003: 11-12, “Conflito de terras no sul de Angola mata quatro pessoas”, *Angonoticias*, 8 Sept. 2004.

¹¹¹⁰ Ovadia, “The Reinvention”, 2013.

¹¹¹¹ Porto & Parsons, *Sustaining the Peace*, 78-79.

¹¹¹² [n.a.], “A nova guerra dos soldados angolanos”, *Angolense*, Luanda, 10 Sept. 2005, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação e Informação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Sept. 2005, 13-4; [n.a.], “Os militares que ocupam terrenos sabem o que lhes aguarda”, *Angolense*, Luanda, 17 Oct. 2005. <http://www.angonet.org/article.php?story=20061116120936362>.

economic actors.¹¹¹³ For the returning soldiers “[t]he vast majority (87 per cent) obtained land, either through loan or inheritance, from their family. Much smaller numbers bought (4 per cent), rented or loaned (3 per cent) or were awarded by village elders (3 per cent), while the remaining 3 per cent had no land”.¹¹¹⁴ While largely a peaceful process, some forced resettlements were placed on land belonging to pastoralist communities using the area for transhumance¹¹¹⁵ as the ‘empty’ grazing lands were considered unoccupied.

In rural areas, oftentimes the opportunistic occupation of land is rooted in the setting up of fencing that blocks access to certain areas, rather than the actual exploitation of the land itself, leaving land dormant that would otherwise be worked or exploited. This became *modus operandi* of the large-scale cattle herding ranches and modernized farms that emerged post civil war. Large swathes of unused land thus become inaccessible to locals who either previously worked parts of it or, where cattle raising is a common practice, used it for transhumance practices. The end of the war allowed the commercial farms to restart production, provoking conflicts with the populations that had settled on the seemingly abandoned land or had been using the land’s resources for their own communal activities during the war.¹¹¹⁶ Alongside the DDR process, the reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) was another source of land occupations used by pastoralist communities as the land was considered unoccupied by those establishing the resettlements. Cattle herding provinces in the south, especially in Huíla and Cunene, are particularly impacted by this category of land conflict, as will be described below.

5.1.2 THE NEED FOR REFORM: A TYPOLOGY OF LAND CONFLICTS

One major weakness on researching the issues of land conflict is the absence of a centralized database or study that compiles the different conflicts across the territory to allow for a more thorough understanding of the study. According to the Land Matrix database, it counts 20 different cases of potential land grabbing cases, including 55 investors.¹¹¹⁷

¹¹¹³ Foley, “Land Rights in Angola”, 133.

¹¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹¹¹⁵ Clover, “The role of land”, 157.

¹¹¹⁶ USAID, *Strengthening Land Tenure*, 12.

¹¹¹⁷ Land Matrix. Retrieved from: <https://landmatrix.org/data/investors/by-fk-country/angola/> (accessed 8 May 2020).

Undoubtedly more exist, often on smaller scales, but their nebulous nature makes their documentation difficult. Some events are dramatic enough to garner national or international attention, but the vast majority of these events go uncovered by media sources for multiple reasons: the geographic isolation of the incident and of those affected, the fear of threats or reprisals for speaking out, the ‘hidden’ nature of land takeovers themselves as offenders try to clamp down dissent, the dearth of journalists able and willing to transmit the information outside of the immediate locality, the drawn out nature of compensation ‘negotiations’ that often never bear fruit, etc.

With such a vast array of actors, new and old, engaging in different land use activities in areas where the traditional authorities have been undermined by state authority that is itself hardly physically present, the potential sources of land conflicts are multitudinous and the search for resolutions complicated through these circumstances. A summary of the typology of land conflicts arising in Angola can be found in the table below, produced by *Ação para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente* (ADRA, Action for Rural and Environmental Development), an NGO specialized in rural development issues. The research behind this typology was based in part by the field experience gained through the Support Program for the Agro-Pastoral Communities of the Gambos headed by ADRA and *Agência de Cooperação e Pesquisa para o Desenvolvimento* (ACORD, Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development) in 1993, described below, working in the area of social services of education and water sanitation, as well as veterinary services, agriculture and land issues in general.¹¹¹⁸ The major conflicts arising in Angola generally originate from legal ambiguities or clashes of interests described by the latter half of the typologies listed below:

Box 5 - Typology of land conflicts

I) Intra-family (between members of the same family)
II) Intra-communitarian (between members of the same community)
III) Inter-communitarian (between members of different communities)
IV) Extra-communitarian (between communities and external actors)
V) Between private interests and other private interests
VI) Between private and public interests
VII) Between community and public interests
VIII) Conflicts with establish law (customary and modern)

Source: Santos & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 21.

¹¹¹⁸ The article was uncovered in ADRA’s library in Lubango during fieldwork in the summer of 2017: [n.a.], *O que é o Programa dos Gambos e como se deu a abordagem da componente terra*, [n.d.].

Private and public interests have long been a major source of friction because of a lack of clarity in the legislation governing land laws. This friction has become further engrained in Angola due to the ambiguity between the laws established by the Constitution and the customary laws that had been respected before the arrival of the Portuguese and remain operational, though weakened and undermined by often-ambiguous modern law. Today, the differences between the two types of laws are blurred and often left up to interpretation: “In fact, the legislative history of Angola, especially during the last 40 years, has resulted in a succession of injustices against the rights of traditional communities”[.]¹¹¹⁹ Historically, the role of resolving land conflicts had been left up to the traditional leaders, known as the *sobas*. With the modernization of the Angolan political state however, the *soba* has seen his power and prestige reduced.

Furthermore, as a USAID manual on preventing land conflicts points out, another potential source of rural land conflicts can also be the *soba* himself. Instead of resolving such conflicts, they can create them by conceding land to outsiders often in exchange for some type of incentive (monetary or otherwise) without consulting with the local community first.¹¹²⁰ An example in Cuanza Sul was reported in 2006 when a *soba* sold off the house and farm of César Bastos, the owner, to Brigadier Luís Adelino of the 2nd Command Unit of the Presidential Guard. The owner was chased off his farm and the Brigadier General sent in troops to guard the farm he ‘purchased’, refusing to give the farm back to the owner even after an intervention of the *município* administration of Cela.¹¹²¹ The reported incident fails to investigate why the *soba* would have taken such actions, whether because of social and political pressures put on the *soba*, monetary incentives, or perhaps personal strains between the *soba* and César Bastos.

What is clear, however, is that this ambiguous line between the modern state and the manipulation of traditional customary practices, with the addition of increasing privatization practices, has created an environment of instability and precariousness for the rural

¹¹¹⁹ Clover, “Land reform”, 348.

¹¹²⁰ USAID, *Direito a Terra e Resolução de Conflitos na Terra Urbana e Rural no Província de Huambo: Manual de Divulgação*, Washington D.C., Feb. 2008, 42. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335397157_Direito_a_Terra_e_Resolucao_de_Conflitos_na_Terra_Urbana_e_Rural_na_Provincia_do_Huambo.

¹¹²¹ [n.a], “Soba causa conflito de terra”, *Cruzeiro do Sul*, Namibe, 14 Oct. 2006, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Oct. 2006, 32.

populations. The liberalization of the economy alongside its emerging capitalism, coupled with the winding down of the war and increasing cases of land conflicts, led the government in 2002 to pursue legislation updating the nation's land laws. Influencing the approach of this legislation would be key to determining the future foundation of livelihoods across the country.

Wendy Wolford summarizes the two broad visions of land reform: Neoliberal versus popular. In her article, Wolford specifies the word “populist”, which is incorrect in our vision. ‘Populism’ denotes the idea that the formulation of the land reform was crafted for and by the people, whereas this is clearly not the case in Angola. Here, the term ‘popular’ assumes a land reform policy that is aimed at addressing issues pertaining to a clear majority of those directly affected: those working the land. The neoliberal vision, termed Market-Led Agrarian Reforms (MLAR), “attempts to create or restore private rights to property for the purpose of improving the smooth functioning of rural markets (usually markets in land, credit and agricultural inputs) and increasing efficiency and production through security of title”.¹¹²² In contrast, the popular vision “attempt[s] to create or restore the connection between peasant communities and the land, improving social justice by distributing resources to the poorest who will then contribute to balanced development and food sovereignty”.¹¹²³ Angola's agricultural policy is firmly guided by a MLAR ideology with only minimal support for the peasantry.

One of the main problems leading to rural land conflicts consists in the utmost importance of the recognition of land tenure for a rural population of more than 10,612,670 people, a number that continues to increase even as it slowly diminishes as a part of the total population, from nearly 80% of the entire population in 1975 to approximately 34% today.¹¹²⁴ Furthermore, 64% of Angolans living in poverty reside in rural areas, representing one in two residents compared to one in six in urban areas.¹¹²⁵ It has been previously established that the government of Angola has been pursuing the above-mentioned neoliberal ideology and vision of agrarian reform with the objective of attracting national and foreign investment into a highly selective modernization effort of the agricultural sector, privileging the well-

¹¹²² Wendy Wolford, “Land Reform in the Time of Neoliberalism: A Many-Splendored Thing”, *Antipode*, 39, no. 3, (2009): 550-551.

¹¹²³ *Ibid.*, 551.

¹¹²⁴ According to FAOSTAT. See: <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country/7> (accessed 19 Aug. 2020).

¹¹²⁵ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 30.

connected and well-endowed through an opaque process of state patronage.

In ideology, the peasantry is set apart from this policy, considering that traditionalist practices are incompatible with their plans for large-scale commercialized agro-business. In vision, this exclusion is by design. This process of patronage and clientelism “has been one of the key strategies for conserving political power” whether it be oil, diamonds, or commercial farmland.¹¹²⁶ The future land reform program looked to codify these land transfers. However, the current Land Law would have a notable blind spot through the absence of an explicit expropriations law clearly describing the procedures to be followed in the event of land expropriation. This ambiguity written into the law poses the prospect that the lack of clarity was constructed through purposeful intent¹¹²⁷ allowing the government plausible deniability against charges of corruption or favoritism in the expropriations process.

According to the second popular vision of land reform, to the extent that the newest Land Law would correspond to the interests of rural peasant communities would largely be the result of ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs assisted by a cadre of international actors, resulting in the unprecedented formation of a national NGO network designated *Rede Terra*, discussed in detail below. The ‘grassroots elite’ NGO organizations involved in the historic process were the best positioned politically, socially and geographically “to lend support and organizational capacity to such a consultation phase in their areas of operation”.¹¹²⁸ But how exactly did this unprecedented event come to be? What evolutionary line did this event take to culminate in such a historic fashion? Which actors were involved and how were the links forged? What does the construction of this story tell us about power dynamics in Angola involving land issues? How has this experience shaped rural agency? The key to answering these questions begins in the Southwestern edges of Huíla province in the Gambos *município*.

¹¹²⁶ Tony Hodges, “The role of resource management in building sustainable peace”, in *From military peace to social justice? The Angolan peace process*, (ed), Guus Meijer, ACCORD, no. 15, (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004a), 52.

¹¹²⁷ Clover, “The role of land”, 162-163.

¹¹²⁸ Jon Unruh, “Humanitarian approaches to conflict and post-conflict legal pluralism in land tenure”, in *Uncharted Territory: Land, conflict and humanitarian action* (ed) Sara Pantuliano, Warwickshire, Practical Action, 2009, 63.

5.1.3 HUÍLA TAKES THE LEAD

One of the principal reasons of choosing Huíla province for my fieldwork research was the emergence of large-scale land conflicts between 1996-1998 that first gained national attention, notably in the Gambos area. At the time, land conflicts were “very frequent in the region”.¹¹²⁹ The fragility of this space originates from a number of diverging social and economic interests, interethnic tensions, a delicate ecosystem vulnerable to global warming including the recurring propensity of droughts, as well as the presence and arrival of powerful political elites and army generals all encroaching on the traditional lands of rural communities historically connected to their lands and ways of life. Furthermore, the arrival to the area of ACORD, ADRA, the FAO and a limited number of local NGOs described below working on these issues contributed to increasing the scale of the mediatization of these conflicts, which became a central spark to the debate on the need for updating the country’s land law to better conform to the liberal economic transition the government was trying to incentivize in certain sectors of the economy.

Three notable examples of other influential organizations working on rural development programs at the time were: *Associação de Desenvolvimento Luther King* (The Luther King Association of Development) led by Marcolino Tavares in the Gambos, though it was said that this organization’s work conflicted with that of the *Associação Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola* (ALSSA, Association of Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola)¹¹³⁰, a religious-based organization led by Padre Pio of the *Espiritanos* congregation of the Catholic Church. ALSSA was named after a Catholic priest who was presumably murdered by the government for his activism, thus projecting in its title itself a remembrance and defiance in the face of state violence. ALSSA was known for its steadfast commitment to supporting peasant communities, regardless of similar threats posed. Speaking with Cecilia Cassapi of the *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Building Communities) they recounted a series of episodes of threats and intimidation by unmarked agents sent by the government¹¹³¹. Driving back from the Gambos to Huíla, for security measures Padre Pio

¹¹²⁹ André Amaro, “Huíla reduz casos de conflito de terra”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 9 July 2010. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/politica/huila_reduz_casos_de_conflito_de_terra.

¹¹³⁰ Personal interview with NGO worker, Lubango 17 Aug. 2017. Interviewee requested anonymity to speak freely. Confirmed by the director of ADRA’s Huíla/Cunene branch Simione Chiculo. Personal interview, 21 Aug. 2017, Lubango.

¹¹³¹ Personal interview, 2 Aug. 2017, ACC headquarters, Lubango.

turned off his cell phone and took out its battery to ensure that no one would be tracing our way back to the Catholic Mission of Huíla. Another influential organization was the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA), operating in the Northern part of Huíla, particularly active in its Agromarket program specialized in assisting in the production and commercialization of peasant cooperatives. CLUSA played the implementation role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs organized by Chevron in partnership with USAID. A third organization was the INGO Center for Common Ground (CCG), funded by various entities including “the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Humanitarian Agency, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Cooperation, UNESCO, USAID, SIDA and the Portuguese Government”.¹¹³² Arriving in 1999, the organization was focused specifically on conflict resolution. It assisted ALSSA in negotiating “a settlement over land access disputes between large land owners and semi-nomadic pastoral groups” in the Gambos.¹¹³³ Unprecedented social organizing initiatives emerged from these colliding interests, leading to the foundation of the Huíla Land Forum and the *Consórcio de Terras de Huíla* (Huíla Land Network), both detailed below, ultimately laying the groundwork for the future *Rede Terra* (Land Network) and its subsequent national land campaign. The combination of these centripetal forces converging on Huíla province made it the focus of my fieldwork and key to understanding both the strengths and the weaknesses of rural agency and social organizing initiatives among parts of the populations living in the periphery.

That said, a caveat must be made in the strength and effectiveness of the events of the Huíla Land Forum and Huíla Land Network. While some documentation of their existence and activity was gathered during this research project, first-hand information was surprisingly sparse once on the ground. Multiple inquiries were left unanswered or with vague details as to how the Huíla Land Network came to be and which actors were specifically involved. The sparse primary documentation and vague personal recollections of the Huíla Land Network made it appear to be a more informal network of local activists and

¹¹³² Center for Common Ground, *Programme Evaluation*, Luanda, 6 Dec. 1999, 3. https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/ANG_EV_Dec99_Center-for-Common-Ground-Luanda-Programme-Eval.pdf.

¹¹³³ *Ibid.*, 11.

organizations joined together through an ideological motivation of supporting the traditional practices of the rural populations.¹¹³⁴

Nevertheless, Huíla province proved to be pivotal in understanding the underlying dynamics influencing both the presence and absence of rural social organizing activities and methods. Ultimately, the focus on Huíla permitted the research project to get a better grasp on the motivations (economic, ideological, cultural) behind rural social organizing, unveil important nuance in the representations of the main organizing actors and the roles they have played in the process, as well as clarifying the origins of what would later become the national land network *Rede Terra*. The question that presents itself then is essentially: why Huíla? Why was Huíla province the first to produce an unprecedented civil society network dedicated exclusively to land issues?

5.1.4 BUILDING A RURAL LAND NETWORK

As we will see, the province was particularly well-positioned for its central role as a launching pad for what would become the national *Rede Terra* network. According to the FAO, Huíla province “has the highest level of awareness on land issues. Its provincial department for rural development has the highest number of employees dedicated to land issues, compared with other provinces, and their activities extended to all surrounding municipalities”.¹¹³⁵ As was discussed previously, given the relatively big size of Huíla province comprising 14 *municípios* and 52 *comunas*¹¹³⁶ and across 79,022 km², this statement does not extend to all the province’s *municípios*, but rather attests to the concentration of trained workers in the area surrounding the provincial capital. However, the qualification of the FAO bestowing Huíla province with “the highest level of awareness” linked to its “highest number

¹¹³⁴ The people asked specifically about the subject, some more informative than others, were interviews and discussions with: Padre Pio, Cecília Cassapi and Domingos Francisco Fingo, director of ACC, previously of ALSSA, Aniceto Rosario, executive director of Prazedor, NGO specialized in health issues based in Lubango (personal communication, 31 July 2017), the director of ADRA’s Huíla/Cunene branch Simione Chiculo, the director of the Benguela antenna of ADRA Maria Victoria; an NGO worker active in rural development programs for over 20 years (who asked to remain anonymous).

¹¹³⁵ Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure*, 2004.

¹¹³⁶ According to the National Institute of Statistics and the 2014 national census, the province has 52 *comunas* (Angola, *Resultados definitivos*, 28). 52 is also noted in the 2010 ADRA report on land conflicts (Santos & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 61). However, some government documents also claimed 39 *comunas*. See for example *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 5, Luanda, 9 Jan. 2012: 50.

of employees dedicated to land issues” brings to the fore the theoretical foundation of this study’s premise, notably, that the MPLA-led government has sought to dominate rural Angola through a political strategy of resource scarcity in order to better control and dominate the economic and social development of the periphery.

Coupling the fact that Huíla province has been among the best equipped to respond to land issues and is the geographical source of the first bottom-up rural NGO network, focused exclusively on rural development matters with land issues at the forefront, the effects of this process of privation can be theorized, though not confirmed, given the significant number of separate factors that were necessary to establishing the Huíla Land Network. According to this theory of domination through resource privation, a main objective of withholding resources is to avoid similar experiences such as the creation of civil society forums and networks that would later contest authority, starting at the local level before expanding upward. Theoretically, given that the accumulative resources afforded to Huíla province effectively led to the creation of influential civil society networks, their presence would incentivize the government to avoid repeating a similar formula for other provinces.

The relatively high degree of concern and attention paid towards rural development in Huíla province turned out to be a foundational key to attracting further outsider actors interested in the topic. In what was to become a sort of pioneering effort in the province, one of the earliest significant outsider arrivals to the area was that of ACORD, first arriving in Angola in 1987. ACORD was a British-based international consortium of INGOs that had come to Angola specifically in search of establishing programs promoting rural economic development. Initially it set up in Uíge province promoting peasant associations, but the programs were significantly hampered due to the war conditions. This led the group to scale back and begin another program in the settlement of Viana outside Luanda in 1988 in a more controlled environment. However, the INGO sought to bring its focus back to the development of rural peasant associations and searched for other opportunities.

This led ACORD to create a partnership with the nascent NGO ADRA with a key initial study on peasant associations in the provinces of Huíla, Huambo and Malanje intitled *Diagnóstico das Associações de Camponeses em Angola* “Study on Peasant Associations in Angola” (1991) by Fernando Pacheco and Júlio de Moraes.¹¹³⁷ This study began a lasting partnership

¹¹³⁷ Júlio Moraes & Fernando Pacheco, *Diagnóstico das Associações de Camponeses em Angola*, Luanda, ADRA, 1991.

in researching the local rural economy and development strategies of rural populations, leading ACORD to turn its focus to Huíla in 1991. ACORD began a Basic Social Services Project in Chibia *município* alongside staff from the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Agricultural Development Institute), with support from UNICEF, but the project was cut short due to a conflict with the FAO working alongside the *Ministério da Agricultura e do Desenvolvimento Rural* (MINADER, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) and their pilot *Programa de Extensão Rural* (PER, Rural Extension Programme) that was not compatible with ACORD's approach to socio-economic development.¹¹³⁸ The PER sought to build a rural development network that would be assisted and directed externally at the regional level, rather than focusing on building local community capacity development.

PER finds its colonial legacy in the *Extensão Rural de Angola* (ERA, Angolan Rural Extension) in 1969 as a pilot project to expand smallholder coffee production in the Andulo-Nharea region (Bié province) supported by the German *IFO-Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung* (Institute of Economic Research of Munich).¹¹³⁹ The PER pilot program (ANG/89/012 FAO), in collaboration with the FAO, would be the precursor to the *Programa de Extensão e Desenvolvimento Rural* (PEDR, Extension and Rural Development Programme). Implemented in 2005 by the IDA in collaboration with the *Estações de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (EDA, Agricultural Development Station)¹¹⁴⁰ the program centered on three central pillars: community organizing through the creation of peasant associations and cooperatives, technical assistance through incentivizing the adoption of modern farming techniques, and the development of rural markets.¹¹⁴¹ The PEDR program was ultimately undermined by the weak capacity of the local EDAs to provide adequate assistance.¹¹⁴²

This issue with ACORD, FAO and MINADER represented the beginning of a whole new set of complex conflicts as more and more actors, many foreign-based with little experience in Angola, poured into the periphery in search of setting up programs of assistance and development animated by benevolent foreign donors but not necessarily arriving with agendas compatible with local needs and practices. This initial encounter would

¹¹³⁸ ACORD, *Development in Conflict: The Experience of ACORD in Uganda, Sudan, Mali and Angola*, Network Paper 9, London, Overseas Development Institute, 1995, 52. <https://odihpn.org/resources/development-in-conflict-the-experience-of-acord-in-uganda-sudan-mali-and-angola/>.

¹¹³⁹ Angola, *Programa de Extensão*, 15.

¹¹⁴⁰ For a reminder on the difference between the separate roles of the IDA and the EDA, see §3.2.2 & §3.3.4.

¹¹⁴¹ CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2014*, 182.

¹¹⁴² CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2012*, 79.

later bring together a mix of conflicting economic interests, social practices, and methodological approaches to socio-economic development, adding to the potentially explosive case of the Gambos explained below.

In 1992, ACORD founded its own five-year program intitled the “Support Program for the Agro-Pastoral Communities of the Gambos” in the village of Vissapa Iela, as well as the villages of Moinho and Tchitungo. The program later expanded into the northern Caluquembe *município*. The ambitious program encompassed 752 *chumbos*, or family units, divided into 76 *povoados*, or villages, with a total of 9,024 direct beneficiaries spread out over 8,420 km².¹¹⁴³ Due to the war and UNITA’s occupation of the area, the villagers had been forced to flee and wanted to return and regain their livelihoods. During the program “ADRA was to receive training and organizational and institutional building support” and acquired “first-hand field experience”.¹¹⁴⁴ The partnership with ACORD in Huíla turned out to be a central reason why the province became the “laboratory of ADRA’s field work”.¹¹⁴⁵ This laboratory has led today to Lubango hosting the Huíla/Cunene branch of the organization. Beyond creating alliances with local populations and local NGOs, the need to manoeuvre around the complex politics during the war further complicated the groups’ relationship with the government.

Initially ACORD sought a partnership with the ‘mass organization’ *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola) given its official central role in organizing and providing assistance to cooperatives and peasant associations, “but UNACA proved unsuitable and far from representative of the Angolan peasantry”.¹¹⁴⁶ This was further demonstrated in the introduction to their 1991 report where Pacheco and Morais explain that UNACA was to be a partner in the project, but their representative disappeared after only the first few days.¹¹⁴⁷ Likewise, ACORD suspended its programs between August and October 1992 prior to the elections of September 1992 in order “to prevent them from being hijacked by political groups” in part because “ADRA’s perceived association with the

¹¹⁴³ Guilherme Santos (coord), *Avaliação de fim de fase: Termos de referência*, Programa de apoio as comunidades agro-pastorais nos Gambos, May 1997, 3.

¹¹⁴⁴ ACORD, *Development in Conflict*, 55, 57.

¹¹⁴⁵ ADRA, *Relatório da Actividade Desenvolvida Durante o Ano de 1996*, Luanda, ADRA, 1996, 3.

¹¹⁴⁶ ACORD, *Development in Conflict*, 50.

¹¹⁴⁷ Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 2-3.

MPLA prevented it from working in UNITA areas”.¹¹⁴⁸ The return to warfare post-election led ACORD to suspend its programs. The culmination of these activities however represented key steps in the NGOs commitment to pursuing rural economic development as a central objective of their work.

Focusing on the rural economy, it was revealed that the prevalent traditional practice of goat and cow herding in Southern Huíla was coming under increased threat by the establishment of fences laid by outsiders arriving and expanding their demarcated lands in the region. Who precisely laid the fences and what was to become of the land are often unanswerable questions, as described above in §5.1. The result of this process begun in the 1990s was “[t]housands of hectares of land, once solely the territory of pastoral people and their cattle, were fenced in, becoming the private property of wealthy new landowners, including government officials”.¹¹⁴⁹ These fences cut off important traditional transhumance grazing routes and led to mounting social tensions. As the issues of land concessions and land use became increasingly urgent while land conflicts continued apace between economic actors, peasant farmers and cattle herders, more NGOs began to become interested in land issues, widening their interests and activities beyond service delivery and humanitarian assistance. A pivotal workshop was then organized on 28-29 August 1996 in Lubango focusing on two main issues: *A Terra e o Poder* “Land and Power” and *Maneamento dos Espaços Pastoris [sic]* “Range Management of Pastoral Spaces”¹¹⁵⁰ organized by ADRA, ACORD, and OXFAM (Canada) which also provided the funding.

The workshop covered a wide range of the pressing issues impacting land practices and use in Huíla province, notably discussing the role of land as a source of development and conflict, specific land problems linked to herding communities including in the Gambos, the hydrological cycle of the area to identify its sustainable carrying capacity, defining strategies to defend traditional land rights, and a study of Mozambique’s experience in land issues. As the conference was held in the *Casino da Senhora do Monte* in Lubango, it is unlikely many of the peasants being discussed were able to be physically present, though the full list attendees and participants was not found. This practice however, of holding conferences on

¹¹⁴⁸ Fernando Pacheco, a founder of ADRA, was a senior official of the MPLA working for a time within the Ministry of Agriculture before moving to the NGO sector. See §4.4.4 for a brief description on ADRA and why it is categorized as a ‘grassroots elite’ NGO.

¹¹⁴⁹ Clover, “The role of land”, 159.

¹¹⁵⁰ The Portuguese title on the original document contains spelling errors. “*Maneamento*” is assumed to mean “*manuseamento*”, roughly translating to “handling” in English.

rural issues in major urban areas, began the practice which would become a central critique of the *Rede Terra* movement itself, i.e. building a rural network through urban bias. That said, it is only through bringing local rural issues outside of the countryside and to the urban masses that their message will be heard by decision-makers capable of enacting meaningful, structural change.

Reflecting upon this important August 1996 workshop, the organizers came together again on 14 September 1999 in order to build upon the foundation that had been laid, as the initial discussion had been promoted as a first step in a debate that would grow larger in space and time.¹¹⁵¹ In this vision, the NGOs participating in this latest meeting ALSSA, the Fund for Development Cooperation (FOS, Belgian), the Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development, British (ACORD, British), ADRA, and the *Associação para o Desenvolvimento e Progresso dos Gambos* (Association for the Development and Progress of the Gambos, also known as “Grupo Estrela”), established in 1994 with support from ADRA¹¹⁵² proposed the assemblage of a semi-formal network (not constituted as a legal entity) working specifically on the complex issues of land.

This new civil society network would engage with the following specific objectives: (1) Create a network (involving people of the community, NGOs, the government, etc.), (2) Take on the issues of land in sub-categories (land and gender, etc.), (3) Find a balance between customary and modern law, (4) Organize lobbying and advocacy activities, (5) Improve the mechanisms of communication between beneficiaries and external actors, (6) Create a network bulletin, (7) Organize specific training sessions (8) Widen the approach to the region, with the involvement of specialists/researchers and international NGOs, (9) Create a monetary fund for the network, (10) Strengthen CSOs, and (11) Implement sustainable programs.¹¹⁵³ Through this social organizing initiative, the *Consórcio Terras da Huíla* (CTH, Huíla Land Network)¹¹⁵⁴ began its consolidation into a thematic network, becoming

¹¹⁵¹ ADRA, *Síntese do Encontro sobre “Questões de Terra”*, Lubango, 15 Sept. 1999

¹¹⁵² Maliana Serrano, *Strengthening institutions or institutionalizing weaknesses? Interactions between aid and local institutions in Huíla Province, Angola*. PhD dissertation, Wageningen, Wageningen University, 2012, 232.

¹¹⁵³ ADRA, *Síntese do Encontro*, 1-2.

¹¹⁵⁴ There is debate as to when the Huíla Land Network officially began working under this title, rather than operating as an informal network. In my interview with Simeone Chiculo, director of ADRA’s Huíla/Cunene branch, he mentioned that the Huíla Land Network began working after the passage of the 2004 Land Law (personal interview, Lubango, 21 August 2017). In Oxfam’s 2008 country assessment, a major donor of *Rede Terra* and land-based programs in Huíla, it claimed 2003 as its beginning (CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 195). Either way, the first mention found of the intention to create the network was found in the 15 September 1999 document. Also, Simeone Chiculo claimed that the major turning point in the Huíla Land Network’s activities was when the Network’s coordination was moved from ADRA’s responsibility under Mariana Soma, then-

the precursor to the national *Rede Terra*. The Network would initially operate as an informal mechanism through a Huíla Land Forum (1999-2002) to coordinate and collaborate on land issues being raised specifically in Huíla province.

One of the first major events these NGOs put together was a Land Forum conference organized in Lubango on the 19 October 1999. The extensive list of invitees attests both to the significant engagement of civil organizations throughout the 1990s, as well as the ambitious nature of the agenda set forth: the governor of Huíla, vice governors, MINADER, two pastors, local administration officials of the Gambos, Quihita and Chibia, six civil society representatives of the peasant communities (Chimbolelo, Chibemba, Viriambundo villages), two religious instructors, a pastoral secretary, a soba, representatives of Rocha e Veiga ranchers, two representatives of Grupo Estrela and two of ACORD.¹¹⁵⁵ The inclusion of the ranchers, with their practice being a central source of the local tensions, was a clear influence of the Catholic Church's approach to dialogue in conflict and an important step in bringing together the main opposing social and economic actors around the negotiating table in constructive dialogue. Notably absent from the invited list was the FAO for reasons that will be explained further below.

This Land Forum follows on the experience of the previous forums set up through the *Fundo de Apoio Social* (FAS, Social Support Fund)¹¹⁵⁶ promoted by the World Bank and the European Commission, except that this Forum's central focus on land and its location outside of Luanda separated it significantly from the other prior experiences. The accumulation of these key criteria symbolically marked Huíla province as a major incubator of ideas, bottom-up social organizing initiatives, and foreshadowed the strength of these specific local populations when faced with the dispossession of their communal lands.

director of the Huíla/Cunene branch to another NGO Adelcapa, led by Marcelino Tavares, around 2010. The handover was reportedly a source of tension within the Network as Adelcapa wanted to take over the reins of the organization from ADRA. At the time the coordination was handed over to Adelcapa, Novib ended its financial support and Adelcapa also ceased to function as an NGO (Simeone Chiculo, personal interview, Lubango, 21 August 2017). These two events combined to ground the network's activities to a halt, though it would later regroup. The network remains active today.

¹¹⁵⁵ ADRA, *Tópicos para o Encontro sobre a Terra do Dia 19.10.99*, Lubango, 1 p. [n.d.].

¹¹⁵⁶ For a review of the history of the FAS, see §4.2.4.

Image 8 - Communal agricultural lands, *comuna* of Huíla I



Source: Communal fields with rudimentary irrigation ditches, located between Lubango and the Catholic Mission of Huíla, Huíla province, Personal photo, Aug. 2017.

Image 9 - Communal agricultural lands, *comuna* of Huíla II



Source: Photo of workers in communal fields, located between Lubango and the Catholic Mission of Huíla, Huíla province, personal photo, Aug. 2017.

5.1.5 COLLIDING INTERESTS, CONFLICTING MISSIONS

At the same time of the accelerating social organizing and local engagement ongoing in Huíla province, back in Luanda the FAO was called upon by the *Direção Nacional de Desenvolvimento Rural* (DNDR, National Directorate of Rural Development) in 1999 to provide technical assistance in formulating a new regulatory approach to the myriad land issues affecting the country's urban and rural areas. The FAO was seen as an apolitical organization that could be counted upon to provide technical assistance without putting the government in uncomfortable positions. It was therefore tasked with attempting to operationalize the privatization policies set in place by the 1992 *Lei sobre a concessão da titularidade de uso e aproveitamento da terra*, known as the Land Law 21 C-92, leading the FAO Land Program to facilitate “the elaboration of a participative land delimitation methodology for communal lands”.¹¹⁵⁷ The 1992 Land Law was conceived amidst the backdrop of civil war and a lack of technical and historical precedent to rely upon.

This law, instead of updating the legal framework better adapted for a liberalized land model, instead “reflected the old ideals of state central-planning principles. Furthermore, it was not so much a land law as a set of regulation for access and titles that failed to include community traditions or customary law rights of small farmers, or recognize squatter rights in the urban areas”.¹¹⁵⁸ According to Allan Cain, the founder and director of the INGO Development Workshop, the effect of the 1992 was to consolidate the colonial distribution of land and thereby weaken the traditional land claims of “peasants’ families who had been pushed off their land in the colonial era or had been displaced by the [civil war] conflict”.¹¹⁵⁹

Through the new version of the otherwise abandoned ‘socialist’ central planning policies, new commercial farms were to replace those previously (mis)managed by the state, with small-scale peasant farmers essentially abandoned to their own ways and means besides a few nominal support programs and the work of outsider organizations. Through this recipe,

¹¹⁵⁷ Francisco Carranza & Jordan Treacle, *Land, Territorial Development and Family Farming in Angola: A holistic approach to community-based natural resource governance: The cases of Bie, Huambo, and Huíla Provinces*, Land and Water Division Working Paper 9, FAO, April 2014, 20. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mk753e.pdf>.

¹¹⁵⁸ Clover, “Land reform”, 357.

¹¹⁵⁹ Allan Cain, personal interview, Luanda, 27 July 2017.

land conflicts began to reemerge shortly after its passage and continued throughout the decade, as commercial ventures began to encroach on communal lands while legal ambiguities left the problems to fester. This environment of precariousness was a major source of destabilization for the many affected communities, on top of the hardships already endured by the seemingly indeterminable war:

It is clear that the lack of clear policy frameworks within government institutions related to property and natural resources has encouraged spontaneous occupation and encroachment of prime agricultural areas (many of which were State owned or managed), uncontrolled logging of hillsides, and unscrupulous exploitation of other natural resources.¹¹⁶⁰

Attempts at land grabs by community outsiders, at times escalating to physical violence and even death, provoked the ire of the local communities, with some colonial comparisons of these new illegal land acquisitions from outside organizations as being led by the new ‘colonizers’.¹¹⁶¹

In response to the government’s request, the FAO organized field activities in the form of meetings and debates set up to gather information on the most pressing issues, with pilot activities implemented in the provinces of Huíla (based in Caconda and Chipindo *municípios*) and Bengo carried out “in collaboration with two NGOs: the Angolan NGO ADRA and the Dutch NGO ZOA”.¹¹⁶² The FAO’s work in Huíla later integrated the Land Forum, which, according to the FAO “is the main arena for discussion among all concerned stakeholders, i.e. members of government institutions, NGOs, civil society and international community representatives”.¹¹⁶³ It is important to note here that the Land Forum and the Huíla Land Network were initially conceived and functioned without the initial aid and assistance of the FAO, which arrived in Angola in 1999 and adhered to the Land Forum space afterwards. These were therefore networks and forums of discussion born out of local activist and both national and international NGO initiative. The delayed partnership with the FAO was partly because of ideological differences in methodologies of the respective

¹¹⁶⁰ Carranza & Treacle, *Land, Territorial Development*, 10.

¹¹⁶¹ Interview with Cecilia Cassapi of ACC, Lubango, 1 Aug. 2017. The referral to ‘colonizers’ was made in reference to a land grab in Curoca (Cunene province) linked to the “Horizonte 2020” project. For further information, see: <http://quintasdedebate.blogspot.com/2016/08/gtmdh-effectuou-visita-de-acompanhamento.html> (accessed 26 May 2020).

¹¹⁶² Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure*, 2004.

¹¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

approaches to land use and land reform between the founding members of the Huíla Land Network and the FAO.

The Huíla Land Network practiced a localized consultative approach, guided in large part by its affiliations with the Catholic Church, in attempts to find creative solutions to the conflicts emerging through diverging economic activities being developed in the province, with an emphasis on respecting traditional practices and methods of socio-economic development. The impetus of this bottom-up perspective of rural development in the nineties found its methodological structure a decade earlier alongside the emergence of participatory models in development projects, putting the local populations at the center of the dialogue and the debate.¹¹⁶⁴ The FAO on the other hand had been assisting MINADER in a modernized approach of land demarcation.

In 1999 it began attempts to resolve simmering large-scale land conflicts occurring in the Gambos region between 1996-1998 between local herding communities and newly installed ranchers. This FAO and MINADER partnership led to the “first titles being granted in March 2001 to communities [in Tchicala] that recognized land defined in social terms, not narrowly in topographical terms”.¹¹⁶⁵ Fernando Pacheco notes that the involvement of this partnership allowed for a negotiated reorganization of the communal lands as the newly-installed farmers had expanded their land beyond what was registered or needed for their production scales. This allowed the local “communities to recover more than 5,000 hectares for their collective use”.¹¹⁶⁶

According to Paolo Groppo, the head of the FAO Land Tenure program at the time, the reasoning “for using the negotiated and participatory land delimitation methodology was based on the need to involve several social actors with multiple interests in order to achieve a lasting solution for such a complex situation.”¹¹⁶⁷ The project’s methodology was based on the FAO’s previous experience in Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. However, the opposing project methodologies to conflict resolution and socio-economic development clashed with some of the diverging interests of the local populations, as well as the other NGOs already

¹¹⁶⁴ Robert Chambers, *Rural development: putting the last first*, (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, British Library for Development Studies), 1983; Michael Cernea, (ed), *Putting People First: Sociological Variables in Rural Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), (2nd ed).

¹¹⁶⁵ Clover, “Land reform”, 359.

¹¹⁶⁶ Pacheco, “The land issue”, 46.

¹¹⁶⁷ Groppo, *et al.*, Land tenure, 2004.

present on the ground. This led to a situation where “there is more radicalism on both sides” as ideological beliefs clashed with the search for accommodating solutions.¹¹⁶⁸

A report written by Guilherme Santos and Belisario dos Santos noted that on 27 August 2001 representatives of ADRA and ACORD were asked by the Provincial Governor to explain reports on a land conflict occurring in Chimbolelo¹¹⁶⁹ and Tunda dos Gambos, a traditional grazing area in the Gambos *município* near Bicular National Park, between their own NGO development program and the demarcation work led by the FAO in partnership with MINADER.¹¹⁷⁰ According to reports on the ground, the modern demarcation process did not translate well to the Angolan context, potentially cutting off communities from their traditional grazing lands, which led to increasing local tensions quickly moving the encounters from a local issue to the national agenda through the mixture of new outside actors arriving and subsequent media exposure.¹¹⁷¹ In order to calm the tensions, the FAO and MINADER solicited the help of ADRA, ACORD and ALSSA, given their experience and earned legitimacy in the areas, but they refused, considering that the demarcation project was both too forced and lacked preliminary discussions, defined rules, objectives and established relations, which eventually spiraled into an environment of tension and mistrust.¹¹⁷² This position was made more difficult for ADRA as it had been previously recruited to partner with the FAO.

According to the leader of ALSSA, the local Catholic priest Padre Pio, the FAO even went to the extent of writing a letter to MINADER and the President of the Republic accusing ALSSA of intentionally obstructing the demarcation program, putting it at risk and of threatening the FAO staff, which led Padre Pio to call for the removal of ALSSA’s team

¹¹⁶⁸ Pacheco, “The land issue”, 46.

¹¹⁶⁹ Many references will be made to the area of Chimbolelo in this chapter and the next, given its central role in providing the necessary natural resources to aliment the populations living in the area, both locally and regionally. The first native groups discovering this area designated it “tchambolela” meaning “land of abundance” in Olungambwe. The area thus took on that name until the arrival of the Portuguese colonizers who changed its pronunciation to today’s Valley of “Chimbolelo”. See: Inácio Zacarias, *Justificativa. Delimitação e Reconhecimento de Terra para Utilização Comunitária na Tunda dos Gambos – Vale do Chimbolelo* (Município dos Gambos). Associação Construindo Comunidades (ACC), Jan. 2015, 3.

¹¹⁷⁰ Belisario dos Santos & Guilherme Santos, *Síntese do trabalho do programa na componente das questões fundiárias – terra*, Programa de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Sustentável no Município dos Gambos, Chiange, 27 Aug. 2001.

¹¹⁷¹ ADRA/ACORD, *Uma Visão dos Últimos Eventos Sobre as Questões Fundiárias na Região dos Gambos*, Programa de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Sustentável no Município dos Gambos, [n.d.], 2.

¹¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 6.

from the area for security reasons out of fear of reprisals.¹¹⁷³ A report written by ADRA and ACORD dated 17 August 2001 reflecting on a land debate organized in Chiange mentions that after the discussions, the head of MINADER's Huíla division admitted that the demarcation process needed to be put on hold and the strategies and methods revised, given that the local communities, the traditional leaders and administrative authorities did not agree with the process, even though active resistance had not yet emerged.¹¹⁷⁴ Personal fieldwork in the Gambos revealed a clear rift between Padre Pio and his organization ACC¹¹⁷⁵ and the FAO's methodology of land demarcation seen as cutting off communities from their traditional herding lands. Padre Pio made it clear that he believed the FAO's methodology was not adapted or implemented according to the local realities, heightening tensions among the local populations.¹¹⁷⁶ The land titling program in Huíla enacted by the FAO and MINADER produced six land concessions recognizing communal lands against hundreds of titles conceded to private actors, though the conflict was ultimately reduced through

a process of mediation and negotiation between the concerned parties (community, ranchers, traditional and administrative authorities, MINADER, social actors (CSO)) that culminated with the opening of a corridor for the pastoralists to herd their cattle through and by ceding a part of the ranch's property to the community.¹¹⁷⁷

The provincial government wrote directly to ACC in March 2011 to inform them about the negotiations realized between the ranchers and the local officials. Though this issue appeared resolved, the end of the war accelerated the arrival and expansion of ranching operations, returning the same issues to the forefront as local cattle herders sought out watering holes and grazing lands amid shrinking productive spaces.

Given the national exposure of this event, the involvement of high government officials potentially including the president, the FAO, NGOs and local populations around such a heated issue, one would imagine that the FAO would include the incident in its subsequent thematic reports on its work in the country. Paulo Groppo was the FAO Land

¹¹⁷³ [n.a.], "Tremor de terras nos Gambos Padre Pio e sua equipa estão em risco de vida" *O Independente*, Luanda, 21 July 2001.

¹¹⁷⁴ ADRA, *Memoria do encontro de avaliação do Debate sobre terra Realizado no Chiange – Gambos*, Lubango, 20 Aug. 2001

¹¹⁷⁵ At the time the fieldwork was executed in August 2017, ALSSA had shut down and was replaced by the *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Constructing Communities).

¹¹⁷⁶ Personal communication, Lubango, 2 Aug. 2017.

¹¹⁷⁷ Santos & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 71, 83.

Tenure System Analysis Officer at the time, and his FAO report in January 2004 intitled *Land tenure support in post-conflict Angola* completely neglects to mention the confrontation raised by its demarcation project. In the report, the only reference to its work in 1999 mentions that “the initial activities had the direct objectives of solving a land conflict problem in Bengo and of initiating a broad reflection on the land issue in the country”.¹¹⁷⁸

A 2008 report by Carolina Cenerini produced for the FAO Land Tenure Collection focusing on a similar land titling process in Huíla province from November 2003 to June 2004 designed specifically for the minority San ethnicity similarly neglects to mention the Gambos conflict. In the acknowledgements, Paulo Groppo is mentioned for his contribution to the study.¹¹⁷⁹ In reference to the 1999 work in the Gambos, Cenerini simply notes that its result was that “in collaboration with a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) [...] various communities were able to establish their territorial rights according to the existing law”.¹¹⁸⁰

Another 2014 FAO report from the Land and Water Division produced by Francisco Carranza and Jordan Treacle, under the supervision of Paolo Groppo, reviews the approach of the FAO to territorial development and Angolan family farming in the provinces of Bié, Huambo, and Huíla. Again, the local conflicts linked to the FAO’s land titling methodology were unaccounted for, instead solely highlighting conclusions such as “[t]he elaboration and testing of a methodological approach to delimit communal lands” and “[a]n Angolan society better informed about their rights on land issues”.¹¹⁸¹ In none of these documents is the incident mentioned.

The FAO was called in to manage a difficult situation and its involvement in Angola has been expansive and a net positive by bringing in pivotal technical expertise and resources into areas otherwise lacking in these crucial areas. However, given its stature and international standing, it should also recognize and report on conflicts and missteps in order to inform the broader development community on the proper implementation of best practices when operating similar programs, whether in rural Angola or any other areas. The FAO’s non-

¹¹⁷⁸ Groppo, *et al.*, Land tenure, 2004.

¹¹⁷⁹ Carolina Cenerini, *Access to Legal Information and Institutions. Tales From Angola: San Land Rights in Huíla Province*, LEP Working Paper #, Legal Empowerment in Practice...Rome: FAO, 2008, 1. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/kagera/Documents/Suggested_readings/Cenerini2008Angola.pdf.

¹¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹⁸¹ Carranza & Treacle, *Land, Territorial Development*, 25.

confrontational positioning vis-à-vis the government has advanced to the extent that it has essentially taken on the role of an extension of the government itself, though its desire to stay in the good graces of the government has limited its ability or willingness to engage in some difficult realities.

Amid the increasing social tensions brought on through the partial liberalization of the economy and the country's ambiguous land tenure policies, the country found itself at the turn of the 21st century at the cusp of an historic moment: the first officially sanctioned dialogue between the MPLA-led government and a civil society network, *Rede Terra*, over a pressing legislative issue: a reform of the Land Law. In 2001, President José Eduardo dos Santos had made various references to the formulation of an updated land law, and the NGO sector began pushing for its inclusion into the process in order to provide important local and national perspectives and avoid the process from being too influenced by purely economic incentives through market-based reforms.¹¹⁸² In July 2002, the government announced its first intentions to host a public consultation period to modify the existing Land Law (21-C of 1992) after a multi-pronged lobbying campaign led by ADRA, the most prominent national NGO on rural land issues, the Canadian NGO Development Workshop,¹¹⁸³ led by Allan Cain, which specializes in urban and peri-urban land issues, ACORD, one of the most engaged actors thus far in Angola, led by Guilherme Santos, and the Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO) led by Dr. Paulo Groppo, later integrating into the process given its direct access to the government and its privileged apolitical status.

The administration of José Eduardo dos Santos had been lobbied by the NGOs Development Workshop, ADRA and ACORD after they teamed up to publish an "Action Research Proposal" intitled *Land access in Angola: its role in conflict resolution, reconstruction and development* (October 2001) in order to advocate for their inclusion in the process by laying out the different themes they saw as vital for new potential land legislation. The multiple pressures weighing on the government appear to have created the opportunity to further open this space of civic political discourse by bringing the public, private, and donor spheres

¹¹⁸² Development Workshop, *Action Research Proposal. Land access in Angola: its role in conflict resolution, reconstruction and development*, DW, ADRA, ACORD, Centre for Environment & Human Settlements, Luanda, October 2001, 6.

¹¹⁸³ Development Workshop was a natural ally and participant as it was already involved in social organizing initiatives such as FONGA and CONGA, and had already begun studying land reform projects in post-socialist African and Latin American countries (Personal interview, Allan Cain, founder and director of DW, 27 July 2017, Luanda).

together around the negotiating table. Among these mounting pressures was the building peace movement and the rewriting of the Constitution¹¹⁸⁴ to establish the foundation of Angola's peacetime character.

Since December of 1988, national NGOs including the aforementioned ADRA, *Ação Angolana para o Desenvolvimento* (AAD, Angolan Action for Development), and the Mosaiko Cultural Center began proposing position papers to the commission dedicated to modernizing the Constitution. Directly related to these proposals on "rights, freedoms and fundamental guarantees" lied another key concern to achieve sustainable peace: the issue of land rights¹¹⁸⁵. As land access and peace go hand in hand, the organization of NGOs seeking to influence the future land laws originated from the dual goals of both consolidating the peace process while also establishing the necessary delivery and implementation infrastructure for the humanitarian projects that would be essential to maintaining a sustainable peacetime character. According to Allan Cain: "The idea of the Rede Terra was to use the NGO networks that had been involved in humanitarian work during the conflict years and had a presence and had done work in different parts of the country to facilitate a debate and discussion around the draft land law".¹¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, the presence, availability and development of organizations with technical knowledge and experience in land issues opened the administration to the reality that it did not have the technical capacity to manage such a complex issue alone.¹¹⁸⁷ A detailed summary of the events leading up to the formation of the *Rede Terra* follows below.

¹¹⁸⁴ On the subject of land and the Constitution, see: Fernando Pacheco, *A Terra e a Constituição*, paper presented at Intervenção da Sociedade Civil no Processo Constitucional, Instituto Nacional Democrático para os Assuntos Internacionais, Cacuaco, 5 July 2000.

¹¹⁸⁵ Comerford, "Alternative voices", 35.

¹¹⁸⁶ Personal interview, Allan Cain, director of Development Workshop, Luanda, 27 July 2017.

¹¹⁸⁷ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 August 2017.

Tableau 24 - Timeline of the incubation of *Rede Terra*

Date (location)	Event	Actors
1993 (Gambos)	Study: <i>Programa de Apoio às Comunidades Agro-Pastorais dos Gambos</i> /Support program for the agro-pastoral communities of the Gambos	NGOs: ADRA, ACORD, local populations
28-29 August 1996 (Lubango)	Workshop: <i>A Terra e o Poder; Manemento dos Espaços Pastorais</i> /Land and Power; Range management in pastoral spaces	Organized by ADRA, ACORD, financed by OXFAM (Canada)
1 July 1998 (Lubango)	Debate: Constitution and Civil Society	Union of Angolan Writers, ADRA
1999 (Luanda)	Debate: Initial reflections on land issues, solving land conflicts in Luanda	GoA, FAO Land Tenure Service, National Directorate of Rural Organization within MINADER
14 September 1999 (Lubango)	Workshop: Land Issues, brainstorming for Land Forum	NGOs: ADRA, Grupo Estrela, ALSSA, INGOs: ACORD, FOS, SNV
15 September 1999 (Lubango)	Debate: Reflections on 1996 workshop	ALSSA, FOS (Belgian) ACORD, ADRA, Grupo Estrela
19 October 1999 (Lubango)	Land Forum: Meeting on the Problem of Occupation, Use and Management of Land in Southern Angola	Governor, vice-governor, MINADER, NGOs (ADRA, FOS, ACORD) pastors, communal administration (Gambos, Kihita, Chibia), civil society representatives (Chimbolelo, Chibemba, Viriambundo villages),
October 2000 – December 2003 (Quihita town/comuna, Huíla)	Program: <i>Terra para todos</i> /Land for all	NGO: ALSSA, USAID, World Learning
May 2001 – (Gambos, Huíla)	Project: Support Program for Sustainable Development in the Municipality of the Gambos ^a (Chimbolelo)	Delimitation of land by MINADER & FAO
8 July 2001 (Chibemba, Gambos)	Meeting: Discussion on project of May 2001	ADRA, ALSSA, ranchers (first integration of ranchers in participatory dialogue)
8 August 2001 (Chiange, Gambos)	Debate: <i>Programa de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Sustentável no Município dos Gambos</i> /Program of Support for Sustainable Development in the Gambos <i>município</i>	FAO & MINADER; NGOs: ADRA, ACORD, OKUSSOKA, Grupo Estrela, local activists
17/20 August 2001 (Lubango)	Meeting: Reflections on 8 August Debate	ADRA, ACORD
27 August 2001 (Chiange, Gambos)	Meeting: Discussion on land demarcation issues with FAO/MINADER	ACORD, ADRA, ALYSSA, Provincial governor of Huíla
October 2001 (Luanda)	Paper: Action Research Proposal: Land access in Angola: its role in conflict resolution, reconstruction and development	DW, ADRA, ACORD, Centre for Environment & Human Settlements (UK)
26 November 2002 (Tivoli Hotel, Luanda)	Press conference: Announcing <i>Rede Terra</i>	<i>Rede Terra</i>
5 February 2003 (Luanda)	Workshop: The Social Function of Land	<i>Rede Terra</i> , 60 participants, members of the secretariat of the Ministry of Councils
8 July 2003 (Luanda)	Workshop: Local power and natural resource management	<i>Rede Terra</i> , 30 participants, 3 deputies present, presentation by Dr. Carlos Feijó

August – December 2003	Consultation campaign with rural communities	<i>Rede Terra</i> and public at large
30 October 2003 (Luanda)	Seminar: Land as a Source of Socioeconomic Stability and Development	FAO, international specialists, MINADER, provincial government representatives, parliamentarians, EU, NGOs, more than 200 attendees
20 February 2004 (Luanda)	Workshop: Land as an important factor in combating poverty	<i>Rede Terra</i> , attended by Graciano Domingos, deputy minister for Environment and Urbanism.
10 July 2004 (Luanda)	Land Law approved by the National Assembly, debate effectively stopped	GoA

Source: Author's compilation.

5.2 Rede Terra: The emergence of Angola's first land network

This unprecedented civic dialogue can be explained by the desire of the government to present itself to the international community as a legitimate actor, as much as to its national audience by demonstrating that it was responsive to its people's needs and looking to take on its role as a positive force for national unity. The demonstration of this desire would take place by opening up a highly controlled democratic space, with land policies at the heart of the process. The acceptance of a semi-consultative process represents a clear marker on how much the government had changed in relation to the public and the political process in the decade of the 1990s, given that the previous Land Law 21-C of 1992 had been formulated and promulgated while the People's Assembly (the previous Parliament) had ceased to gather, thereby bypassing any political participation.¹¹⁸⁸ The public debate was initially fixed by the MPLA for a period of three months,¹¹⁸⁹ but was later extended indefinitely after lobbying by various NGOs and the FAO and its campaign "*Por uma Justa Lei de Terras*" (Towards a Fairer Land Law), which had agreed to participate in the campaign of public consultation for the new law.¹¹⁹⁰ This time extension represented a first major victory for the civil society participation in public policy formulation by considerably opening up the opportunities for dialogue between the government and its constituents. Had the government stuck with the initial three-month window, the whole exercise would indeed have been little more than a symbolic gesture to the international community and the few participants of the activist civil society that advocated for a participatory approach.

¹¹⁸⁸ Fernando Pacheco, *A Terra: Factor de Desenvolvimento ou de Conflicto*, ADRA, Lubango, 1996, 7.

¹¹⁸⁹ Jeannette Clover incorrectly states it as being initially set as "six months" in her 2010 article (Clover, "The role of land", 154), while she correctly states the "three month" period in her 2005 article (Clover, "Land reform", 359).

¹¹⁹⁰ *Ibidem*.

5.2.1 FORMING A 'GRASSROOTS ELITE' NETWORK 'BOTTOM-UP'

After securing the time extension, different NGOs began to put together their own ideas, mostly revolving around strengthening the defense of agrarian rights, land use and protection of customary rights, as well as managing the peri-urban *musseques* sprouting up around cities throughout the country. The informal discussions eventually led to a consortium that became known as the Land Network (*Rede Terra*) on 26 November 2002 in Luanda at Tivoli Hotel, with a group of twelve national and international NGOs making up the initial group. The network declared their intention to officially begin their national campaign of public consultations in January 2003 and work for an initial period of nine months.

In March 2003 it defined and approved its regulations and elected ADRA as the coordinator of its executive committee.¹¹⁹¹ The network would have three principal projects: (1) *Observatório da Terra* (Land Observatory) (financed by the EU (80%), *Pão Para o Mundo* (Bread for the World), a German Protestant group, (10%) and Misereor, a German Catholic group (10%); (2) An advocacy program for the new land law (financed by the *Organização Intereclesiástica para a Cooperação ao Desenvolvimento* [ICCO Cooperation, Netherlands], Popular Help of Norway, and the British Embassy); (3) the *Rede Terra* project (financed by the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB)).¹¹⁹² The Land Observatory, which was a monitoring mission bringing responses to questions asked about the land laws, had a two year mandate planned to finalize in 2005. After the Land Law debate was closed in July 2004, the network had to ultimately modify its schedule. The draft law was adopted by the National Assembly on 10 August 2004 and Land Law n° 9 of 9 November 2004 was finally published into the State Gazette on 18 December 2004.¹¹⁹³ While the government allowed for public consultation, the unexpectedly hurried timeline undercut *Rede Terra's* efforts.

¹¹⁹¹ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, Luanda, Sept. 2004.

¹¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹⁹³ Clover, "Land reform", 361.

Tableau 25 - List of forming members of *Rede Terra*

Name of organization	Origin	Main activities
ACORD (Agência de Cooperação e Pesquisa para o Desenvolvimento)	International (U.K.)	Human rights, food security, rural development
ADRA (Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente)	National	Rural development, social justice, democracy, organization of civil society
APN (Norwegian People's Aid)	International (Norway)	Post-conflict reconstruction, humanitarian help, human rights and democracy
Caritas de Angola	National	Post-conflict reconstruction, institutional capacity building, literacy and vocational training, and agricultural development
Centro Cultural Mosaiko	National	Contribute to establishment of culture and education of human rights
DW (Development Workshop)	International (Canada) (1 st international NGO, 1981)	Policy and program development for human settlements and housing, support for civil society
INTERMON/OXFAM	International (England)	Support for social inclusion and human rights, gender justice, creating sustainable food systems and poverty reduction
NCC (National Counseling Centre)	National	Democracy, human rights, community support
NDI (National Democratic Institute)	International (U.S.A., founded by Madeleine Albright)	Citizen participation, democratic governance, gender equality, youth political participation
OIKOS	International (Portugal)	Social mobilization and participation, democracy, transparency, and development
SNV (Netherlands Development Organization)	International (The Netherlands)	Food security, gender equality, sustainable agricultural practices
WL (World Learning)	International (U.S.A.)	Government accountability, education, women empowerment, poverty eradication

Source: Author's compilation.

The *Rede Terra* network was dominated by international NGOs by 66% (8 out of 12 total), which demonstrates the heavy influence that Western organizations had in founding the umbrella organization and in securing foreign financing for its work. However, the four national NGOs have all been identified in the previous chapter as being 'grassroots elite' NGOs as they are each individually officially supported and/or recognized by international bodies. At the time of formation, ADRA (Fernando Pacheco coming from MPLA elite), Caritas de Angola (arm of the Catholic Church), Mosaiko (years of established bilateral donor relationships with European countries), all could be considered to have earned an 'elite' status. Only NCC had not achieved 'elite' NGO category at the time, given that it gained its

observer status before the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights of the African Union in 2008.¹¹⁹⁴

The network was initially supported by three main donors, all coming from Western sources: NOVIB (Netherlands), OIKOS-INTERMON (Portugal) and World Learning (United States). This Western funding of the organization and the heavy influence of Western NGOs supporting democratic initiatives and human rights will turn out to be very significant in the network's relationship with the government, as described later in this study. Organizationally, *Rede Terra* was initially headed by an executive committee formed by five different organizations, two international NGOs (Development Workshop and World Learning) and three nationally based (NCC, ADRA, and Caritas de Angola), all coordinated by the ADRA engineer Manuel Antonio da Silva Neto.

5.2.2 BRINGING THE CAMPAIGN TO THE PEOPLE

As a network, the group decided on a list of five main activities in the preparations for influencing the new Land Law legislation, including the organization of an informational campaign to advise citizens about the potential changes in the government's proposed draft law, the collection of testimonies attesting to needs for the new land law, and the engagement in social advocacy campaigns to protect populations from infringement on their rights. These activities were diverse in their attempts to get their message out across the country. Below is a summary of the principal actions undertaken during the campaign.

Box 6 - Main activities of the *Rede Terra*

I.	Develop actions to divulge information presenting the government's new Land Law proposal and its reorganization of the territory.
II.	Foment civil debate around the Land Law proposal and land issues affecting rural and peri-urban communities.
III.	Collect citizens' contributions and recommendations in order to elaborate a global document that reflects the position of the civil society, in its diversity, leading up to the Land Law.
IV.	Enact activities of social advocacy and other activities that directly or indirectly relate to issues of land or in defense of citizen's rights.
V.	Post-passage of the new Land Law, establish advocacy networks in defense of rural communities negatively affected by changes, ensuring those affected will receive proper compensation.

Source: Augusto Neto, *Breve Historial da Rede Terra*. [n.d.], 2.

¹¹⁹⁴ According to the final communiqué of the 44th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Retrieved from: <https://www.achpr.org/sessions/info?id=119> (accessed 15 Aug. 2020).

National Mobilization

One of the most consequential activities the group undertook in the peripheries was the creation of a pamphlet used by its group of activists during their initial ground campaign, attempting to educate the local populations on the planned proposals being considered by the government, while simultaneously documenting the needs and desires of the rural communities themselves to bring their voices into the debate for potential changes to the draft Land Law under consideration.

Image 10 - Rede Terra activist guide “Our Land Rights”



Source: ADRA's library, Huíla/Cunene branch, Lubango. Personal photograph.

The pamphlet was translated into five national languages (Umbundu, Kicongo, Kuanhama, Kimbundi, and Nhaneca Umbi) to reach a maximum audience, and the activists were present in ten of the eighteen total provinces throughout the country, including Bengo, Bié, Huíla, Kuanza-Sul, Luanda, Malange, Namibe, Uíge and Zaire. In the first year between August and December 2003, the network spoke directly with more than 2,000 citizens in these 10 provinces.¹¹⁹⁵ Numbers for subsequent years were not found. In expanding their activities to include dialogue on specific land-related questions, regarding gender relations *Rede Terra* also

¹¹⁹⁵ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 11, 13.

held three training sessions in Huambo, Malanje and Huíla.¹¹⁹⁶ Gender issues, and particularly that of rural women peasants, was a consistent focus of the different activities.

Popular Communication

The *Rede Terra* informational and advocacy campaign was multi-faceted, organizing seminars, meetings, concerts, theatrical performances, and engaging volunteers across the country. One example of the different ways the *Rede Terra* brought the national debate to the people was through street theater. For example, a show was organized on 16 April 2004 in Luanda featuring the theatric group Muindi intitled “For a just land law”, accompanied by the singer Ângela Ferrão and the group Apocalipse.¹¹⁹⁷ Theatrical plays were also held outside of the capital. The *Rede Terra* project received a considerable amount of national press as well¹¹⁹⁸, another sign of its considerable weight in mobilizing social actors and mass media. It took to the airwaves in radio programs on the National Radio of Angola, *Rádio Eclésia*, *Rádio Morena* of Benguela, Huíla and Cabinda.¹¹⁹⁹ Land conflicts and the Land Law were put on the national agenda, clearly registering as central issues in the country and having received significant coverage in the national press.¹²⁰⁰ The information campaign was seen as a critical component to the overall strategy of the project itself.

¹¹⁹⁶ [n.a.], “A Lei de Terra e o género-perspectivas”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 14 Jan. 2005: 18-19, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação e Informação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Jan. 2005.

¹¹⁹⁷ [n.a.], “Lei de Terra esteve em cena”, *O Independente*, Luanda, 17 April 2004: 15-16, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação e Informação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, April 2004.

¹¹⁹⁸ See for example: “Lei da Terra já esta [sic] no parlamento com a contribuição de populares”, VOA, 22 Jan. 2004; “Rede-Terra defende legalização de terrenos”, *Jornal de Angola*, 25 Aug. 2004; “Lei de terras preocupa liga da mulher Angolana”, *Terra Angolana*, Sept. 2004; “Polémica aprovação Lei de Terras”, *Terra Angolana*, Sept. 2004; “Gala teatral sobre a Lei de Terras realize-se sexta-feira no teatro avenida”, *Jornal de Angola*, 1 Dec. 2004; “Tempo é demasiado curto para o debate sobre a Lei da Terra, alertam organizações” *Agora*, 6 Aug. 2002; Graça Campos, “A terra em miúdos”, *Semanário Angolense*, 24-31 July 2004.

¹¹⁹⁹ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 7.

¹²⁰⁰ For some examples leading up to the passage of the law and the period shortly thereafter: “Lei da terra vai beneficiar uma minoria”, *Agora*, 7 Feb. 2004; “UNITA Analisa projecto de Lei de Terras”, *Jornal de Angola*, 23 March 2004; “Lei de Terra esteve em cena”, *O Independente*, 17 April 2004; “Guia prático da terra”, *Semanário Angolense*, 24 April 2004; André Amaro, “Huíla reduz casos de conflito de terra”, *Jornal de Angola*, 9 July 2010; “Parlamento discute hoje projecto de lei de terras”, *Jornal de Angola*, 27 July 2004; “Deputados revelam-se preocupados na discussão da proposta de lei de terras”, *Angop*, 28 July 2004; “A Lei de Terra e o género-perspectivas”, *Jornal de Angola*, 14 Jan. 2005; “Questão da expropiação por utilidade particular”, *A Capital*, 19 Aug. 2006; “O respeito pelos direitos fundiários das comunidades rurais”, *A Capital*, 18 Nov. 2006. Articles identified through the Development Workshop documentation center Centro de Documentação e Informação (CEDOC) available at: <http://dw.angonet.org/pt-pt/cedoc> (accessed 14 Aug. 2020).

Privileged Political Access

Rede Terra's 'grassroots elite' network permitted them special political access. For example, in 2003 the network had a high-level meeting with the coordinator of the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Ministers for the Land Law, Dr. Carlos Feijó, who led the group responsible for the elaboration and divulgation of the Land Law's pre-project, a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Alves Primo, as well as direct discussions with various politicians from different political parties.¹²⁰¹ Throughout 2004, *Rede Terra* was in contact "with the first, second and fourth vice presidents of the National Assembly, notably João Lourenço (MPLA), Jaka Jamba (UNITA), and João Francisco (FNLA); with the parliamentary bench of UNITA, with the president of the MPLA parliamentary group Bornito de Sousa, and with the Vice-Minister of Urbanism and the Environment Graciano Domingos".¹²⁰² Researchers of Angola know how relatively easy it is to access certain levels of politicians, ministers and public officials in Luanda given its concentrating effect. *Rede Terra* having such extensive political contacts, whether formal or informal, is therefore notable but that caveat should be included. The inclusion of João Lourenço on the contact list is notable for further research expanding on his specific role, if any, in the Law Land process and his interactions with the network. Likewise, the network organized various workshops, described below, each assisted by different levels of government officials.

Seminars

One of the first seminars that the group participated in demonstrated its international reach when it participated in an international conference on women and land access in Southern Africa, supported by Oxfam and the FAO, alongside NGOs from Mozambique (*Associação Rural de Ajuda Mútua*, ORAM, Rural Association for Mutual Support), Uganda (Land Alliance), Zambia (Land Development Association) on the 17-19 July 2003 in Pretoria, South Africa.¹²⁰³ Returning to Angola, four different seminars were held in Luanda between February 2003 and February 2004. On 5 February 2003, a seminar in Luanda intitled "*The Social Function of Land*" had over 60 participants, including members of the secretariat of the Ministry of Councils. On 8 July 2003 another intitled "Local power and natural resource management" had over 30 participants, three deputies, and a presentation by Dr. Carlos Feijó, one of President José Eduardo dos Santos' closest advisors and his "architect of the

¹²⁰¹ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 4-5.

¹²⁰² Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual de Actividades*, 2005.

¹²⁰³ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 10.

periphery”.¹²⁰⁴ On October of the same year a seminar intitled “Land as a Source of Socioeconomic Stability and Development” recorded over 200 attendees “including parliamentarians, and representatives of provincial government and the international community (e.g. the European Union, embassies, technical cooperation agencies and NGOs”.¹²⁰⁵ Finally, on 20 February 2004 the last seminar “Land as an important factor in combating poverty” was inaugurated by Graciano Domingos, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment.

Scientific Studies

One of the most important contributions of the *Rede Terra* was its scientific and academic production. The dearth of studies on land issues has been widely noted, so the considerable production that the organization produced will be a major contribution for understanding these issues across the territory. One of the studies was unable to be procured during our research.¹²⁰⁶ The rest of them are briefly detailed below.

One of the major studies concluded was the *Levantamento sobre Concessões de Terras na Província do Kuanza-Sul no período de 1992 a 2002* (Survey on Land Concessions in Kuanza-Sul Province in the period of 1992 to 2002), prepared by the AIP consulting group. The study found that land concessions in the province effectively began in 1992 with the new land law, but did not reach its highest volume until after the Luena peace accords in 2002. It was one of the first scientific studies to confirm that the data provided by the provincial government and the *município* administrations exhibited serious discrepancies. It found that the difference in data led to land title concessions doubling up in certain areas, thereby provoking conflict.¹²⁰⁷ Its results provided a clear warning to the potential for further conflicts amid the accelerating process of post-war land concessions.

The campaign produced two manuals designed for its informational campaign educating both urban and rural residents about their rights concerning land issues. The first, *Que política de Terras para Angola?* (What land policies for Angola?), had 4,820 copies distributed in the 10 provinces *Rede Terra* was active, translated from Portuguese into

¹²⁰⁴ Oliveira & Taponier, “O governo está aqui”, 179.

¹²⁰⁵ Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure support*, 2004.

¹²⁰⁶ *Direitos constituídos na periferia da cidade de Luanda e o imperativo da expansão e do desenvolvimento económico-social* (Constituted rights in the periphery of the city of Luanda and the imperative of expansion and socio-economic development) (2008).

¹²⁰⁷ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual de Actividades*, 2.

Umbundu, Kicongo, Kuanhama, Kimbundu, and Nhaneca Umbi.¹²⁰⁸ This advocacy document promotes the idea that the future land law should be constructed in a way that takes into account all of the different land practices present in Angola, including traditional methods. The second activist guide was *Os nossos direitos fundiários* (Our land rights), which had 1,500 copies printed at the time that the new Land Law had been approved but was not yet published. It served as a guide manual used by activists and volunteers when visiting the rural communities as part of the land law campaign. It methodologically presents each type of land law, explains the changes proposed by the new land law and its importance to the populations, and finally presents a set of questions to reflect upon regarding each type of land law. The different types of land law covered are: (1) *o direito de propriedade privada* (right to private property), (2) *o domínio útil consuetudinário* (the domain of customary law), (3) *o domínio útil civil* (the domain of civil law), (4) *o direito de superfície* (surface rights), and (5) *o direito de ocupação precária* (right to land occupation).

The study *Acesso à Terra pelos Reassentados e Ex-Militares (estudo de caso realizado na província do Bengo)* (Access to Land for Returnees and Ex-soldiers (case study realized in the province of Bengo)) (March 2006), was presented in a conference in Caxito presided by Vice-Governor of Bengo province, Elvira Van-Dunem. The principal conclusion made from this study is the fact that both planning and coordination are essential conditions in order to improve land access and assure the durability of its occupation to returnees and ex-soldiers given their massive numbers and the limited resources available to the responsible bodies managing the reintegration process.¹²⁰⁹

That same year, Rede Terra produced the *Estudo sobre gestão de terras nos municípios do Bailundo, Caála, e Longonjo na província do Huambo* (Study on the land management in the *municípios* of Bailundo, Caála and Longonjo in Huambo province) distributing 500 copies both in Huambo and in Luanda. The study sought to provide a contrasting image of land management systems in rural Huambo with the simplified ideas held by most policymakers in Luanda, in order to influence their thinking when considering modifications of the newly approved Land Law.¹²¹⁰

¹²⁰⁸ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual de Actividades*, 3.

¹²⁰⁹ Rede Terra, *Relatório. Assembleia-geral 12 de Setembro de 2008*, Luanda, 2008, 10.

¹²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

The next 2006 case study was directly linked to land management connected to the national park system, specifically that of Quiçama just south of the capital. *Gestão das terras no parque nacional da Quiçama (Land Management in the Quiçama National Park)* was presented in a conference in the *município* of Quiçama in the presence of the *município* administrator and the different traditional leaders of the different local villages. The study intended to provoke the national park authorities to shift their focus to the socio-economic and demographic conditions of the communities living along the park's perimeters amid a larger discussion of modifying the limits of the park.

The 2007 case study *Responsabilidade social das empresas extractivas e o direito a terra (o caso da Huíla)* (Corporate Social Responsibility in the Extractive Industries and Land Rights (the case of Huíla))¹²¹¹ further establishes Huíla province among the leaders in *avant garde* social activism and a key source for scientific study. While Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices had already been established with the oil and diamond sectors, it was still relatively new in the sector of mining for precious stones. As high quality black, white and blue granite is abundantly present in the province and multiple mining companies descended on the rock quarries after the war (Metarocha, Rocksul, Rodang, Galiangol, Angostone), local activists and communities began to make claims to protect the communal lands that were located within the perimeters of the mining operations, particularly in the village of Tchikwatite where the study takes place, or, at the least, invest some of its profits into local development projects.¹²¹² The study found that the villages surrounding the mining operations had not benefitted socially from the major economic activity that was taking place alongside their communities. These findings were confirmed by a personal visit to a rock quarry outside of Chibia in the Gambos accompanied by Padre Pio Wakassunga. Notably, the 'guard' at the entrance was living out of a modified shipping container with a woman, seemingly without basic services such as a bathroom or a kitchen.

After the ground campaigns were finished, the local information gathered by the *Rede Terra* representatives was compiled into a document intitled *Posição da Rede Terra Relativo ao Projecto da Lei de Terra de 28 de Novembro de 2003* (Position of Rede Terra relative to the land law project of 28 November 2003), which was then relayed to the president of the National

¹²¹¹ João Bessa, Mariana Soma & Augusto Neto, *A Responsabilidade Social das Empresas Extrativas: Chibia – Huíla*, Rede Terra/NIVA, Dec. 2007.

¹²¹² *Ibid.*, 5, 8.

Assembly and the presidents of the different parliamentary commissions.¹²¹³ During this campaign, *Rede Terra* became a vehicle to directly educate the rural populations about their rights and the current legislation, while also delivering the needs and desires of the affected communities directly to the public officials who would be deciding on the final form of the Land Law. This exercise represented the first time that this type of democratic exercise had been established in Angola, bringing the citizens' voices directly to the legislators through endogenous civil society intermediaries.

5.2.3 FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MOZAMBIQUE

The model for the *Rede Terra* network and activities came in part by the previous experiences of land reform in Mozambique and its civil society mobilization, known as *Campanha Terra* (Land Campaign), launched in June 1998.¹²¹⁴ In order to understand the evolution of Angola's experience in both the government's efforts and the social organizing around the issue of land reform, a quick look at the influence of Mozambique's case is necessary. Importantly, both countries share similar political and juridical inheritances post-independence, a strong national presence of church organizations across the rural landscape, and decades of civil war that destroyed their rural economies. In the late 1990s and early 2000s Mozambique faced a much different economic panorama than Angola as it too was mired in civil war (1977-4 October 1992) until the establishment of the Rome General Peace Accords, but lacked the major oil reserves their African counterparts came to depend upon. Both countries were heavily involved in land reform efforts, though the agricultural sector in Mozambique was seen as arguably more urgent for reform and restart.

In the early 1990s, an "Ad Hoc" Land Commission was set up through the support of the University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center¹²¹⁵ and USAID¹²¹⁶ aimed at addressing

¹²¹³ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 3-4.

¹²¹⁴ Personal interview, Allan Cain, 27 July 2017, Luanda.

¹²¹⁵ The Land Tenure Center arrived in Mozambique in the mid 1980s, creating a "*núcleo*" or "study group" focused specifically on land issues, later partnering with the University Eduardo Mondlane and integrating national researchers and academics (personal interview, João Carrilho, 29 May 2018, Maputo).

¹²¹⁶ For Angola, there was no official Land Commission *per se*. The information collection began within the Huíla Land Network and its loose, semi-formal network, which counted more on the donor support of NGOs than major institutions. This information collection would culminate in the Land Forum held in Lubango in 1999, organized at the initiative of the civil society actors. The relay for information collection would be taken up by *Rede Terra* after its formation in November 2002.

the land issues in Mozambique amid the Structural Readjustment Programs after the end of the war in 1992. This Commission began amassing reports on land issues from throughout the territory, leading to national conferences in 1992 and 1994 to bring together different actors and debate the most pressing issues.¹²¹⁷ Shortly after the first multi-party elections in the country's history held in October 1994, the FAO was engaged by the government to support research on different land issues to build upon the work produced through the already established Land Commission and its own FAO Technical Cooperation Project (TCP).¹²¹⁸

The desire for land reform was brought to prominence in the country backed by three major influences: (1) the support of the Catholic Church through its Caritas mission and the Diocesan Commissions for Justice and Peace (2) through the Christian Council of Mozambique through its Organization of Mutual Aid, and (3) The *União Nacional de Camponeses* (UNAC, National Peasants Union) reporting on the land conflicts surging from the accelerated privatization of state lands and the attempted land grabbings of cooperatives.¹²¹⁹ It must be noted that Catholicism was not the only religious component present, as there was also an active presence of Muslim and African Zionist influences.¹²²⁰ This represents a significant difference from Angola's experience as it was almost exclusively influenced by the Catholic Church with no explicit mention uncovered of other religions participating in the process. The discussions of the new land law brought these influences to the forefront of the national debate, along with its institutional capacities for mobilizing resources.

Officially, the FAO sought an inclusive and participative methodology bringing together all actors connected to the issue, supporting the civil society participation by bringing together national and international NGOs into an NGO Forum wherein two organizations would be representatives of civil society at official Land Commission meetings. The two organizations chosen as representatives were the *Associação Rural de Ajuda Mútua* (ORAM, Rural Association for Mutual Support) an NGO focused on the nexus between

¹²¹⁷ Christopher Tanner, *Law-Making in an African Context: The 1997 Mozambican Land Law*, FAO Legal Papers Online no. 26, 2002, 11. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/legal/docs/lpo26.pdf.

¹²¹⁸ For Angola, the FAO was able to depend on the already established Huíla Land Forum and Network.

¹²¹⁹ José Negrão, *A Propósito das Relações entre as ONGs do Norte e a Sociedade Civil Moçambicana*, article presented at A Globalização Alternativa e as Organizações Não-Governamentais do Espaço de Língua Oficial Portuguesa, Coimbra, Faculdade de Economia, Universidade de Coimbra, Oct. 2003, 6-7.

¹²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

land and community development and the *União Geral das Cooperativas* (UGC, General Union of Cooperatives) which has “a long history of defending small farmer land rights and creating successful independent cooperatives in the Maputo Green Zones and with strong links to the National Small Farmer Association”.¹²²¹ Given the FAO’s recent arrival to the country, it likely had little influence in the initial organizational activities outside of its established relationship with the government.

In order to try to consolidate the different efforts, the government created a new Inter-ministerial Commission in 1995 “with a clear multi-sectoral composition” involving “[n]ine separate ministries”¹²²² and “two representatives each working within the Commission”.¹²²³ In the Mozambican example, it was pointed out that multiple ministries worked on land-related issues, but rarely worked in coordination. Including input from civil society actors was equally rare in both cases. The different seminars organized and launched with FAO support were designed “to help open up debate and focus attention on the considerable pool of national expertise that was in fact available” which “culminated in the National Land Conference of June 1996, when the final draft of the proposed Law was discussed by a wide audience of over 200 government officials, Assembly Deputies, civil society organisations and national and international specialists”.¹²²⁴

In order to bring a stronger voice of the national population to the debate, a National Committee was formed “in order to join forces in the dissemination of information aimed, in particular, at rural families”.¹²²⁵ This Committee, comprised of nine national NGOs,¹²²⁶ formed a network to be known as *Campanha Terra*, choosing to organize a time-specific (six to nine months) informational campaign after the new land tenure bill (Law No. 19/97) had

¹²²¹ Christopher Tanner, *Law-Making in an African Context: The 1997 Mozambican Land Law*, FAO Legal Papers Online no. 26, 2002, 17. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/legal/docs/lpo26.pdf.

¹²²² Including the Ministries of: Agriculture and Fisheries, Environmental Cooperation, State Administration, Planning and Finance, Justice, Natural Resources, Public Works and Housing, Sport and Cultural Affairs, Defense (observer status) and the Institute for Rural Development.

¹²²³ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 18. This National Land Conference is strikingly similar to the Land Forum held in Lubango three years later in 1999, also including a vast array of actors.

¹²²⁵ José Negrão, *The Land Campaign in Mozambique*, text presented at the conference ‘The Associative Movement of Mozambique’, Feb. 1999, 1. http://mokoro.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/land_campaign_in_mozambique_negrao.pdf.

¹²²⁶ The founding members were: UNAC; ORAM; *Associação Moçambicana para o Desenvolvimento da Mulher Rural* (AMRU, the Rural Women’s Union); Action Aid; *Centro de Serviços de Cooperação para o Desenvolvimento* (KEPA, the Centre of Cooperation Services for Development); MS (the Danish Association of International Cooperation); OXFAM UK/Ireland; Oxfam’s Joint Advocacy Program; *Centro de Estudos Africanos* (CEA, the Centre for African Studies), *Centro de Estudos de População* (CEP, the Centre for Population Studies), *Núcleo de Estudos da Terra* (NET, the Núcleo for Studies in Land and Development) of the University Eduardo Mondlane (Maputo).

been promulgated. The *Campanha Terra* was officially launched on 13 June 1998 in the village of Marracuene in Maputo province,¹²²⁷ coordinated by José Negrão of the University Eduardo Mondlane. Its formation brought the people directly involved in “the legislation process into active collaboration with the NGO sector and continues to sustain an effective dialogue and working partnerships”.¹²²⁸ The *Campanha Terra* would mobilize its resources nationally to become a bridge between government action and its effects on the rural populations.

Ultimately the *Campanha Terra* produced 20,000 manual guides for the new land laws, a supporting text about customary rights and women’s access to land, 120,000 copies of six comic books (61.3% of the population being illiterate in 1997¹²²⁹), 15,000 forms for registering land conflicts, producing three thousand audio cassettes of a radio-theatre (to reach the illiterate, recorded in 20 national languages) and video (played by local organizations and national television) to diffuse their message.¹²³⁰ The material was sent out by air and ground travel to the provincial capitals where the local Land Campaign members would bring them to the local village level. A new organization, *Forum Terra*, was formed afterwards to follow on the work done by the *Campanha Terra*.¹²³¹

Tableau 26 - Comparative Timeline on Land Laws & Campaigns (1979-2004)

Time Period	Angola	Mozambique
1979	--	Land Law n° 6
1992	Land Law n° 21-C	End of civil war
October 1994	--	First multi-party elections
1996	First multi-party elections	National Land Conference – discussing final draft of Land Law
1997	--	Land Law n° 19
13 June 1998	--	<i>Campanha Terra</i> launched
April 2002	Draft Land Law announced	
26 November 2002	<i>Rede Terra</i> launched	--
August – December 2003	Consultation with rural communities	--
9 November 2004	Land Law n° 9	--

Source: Clover, “Land reform”, 2005; Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure support*, 2004; Negrão, *The Land Campaign*, 1999; Tanner, *Law-Making*, 2002.

¹²²⁷ Negrão, *The Land Campaign*, 3-4.

¹²²⁸ Tanner, *Law-Making*, 41.

¹²²⁹ According to the World Bank database. See: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=MZ> (accessed 20 Aug. 2020).

¹²³⁰ Negrão, *The Land Campaign*, 3.

¹²³¹ Nazneen Kanji & Carla Braga, *Promoting Land Rights in Africa: How to NGOs Make a Difference*, London, International Institute for Environment and Development, 2002, 46.

While important similarities exist between the Angolan and Mozambican experiences, important differences also existed between *Campanha Terra* and *Rede Terra*. The former did not advocate for defending the rural populations against potential transgressions. While it was active throughout the territory “the Campaign did not consider itself as a new NGO nor as a forum for organisations” and was decentralized at the provincial and district levels.¹²³² This breaks from the Luanda-centric nature of *Rede Terra*’s organization. Overall, the mission¹²³³ of *Campanha Terra* was to mobilize NGOs, churches, associations and cooperatives with the goals of disseminating the new Land Law, promoting justice through its proper application, and stimulating dialogue between the traditional and commercial agricultural sectors in the targeted areas.¹²³⁴

The major difference between the methodology of both of these events was that Mozambique’s *Campanha Terra* was designed to mobilize *after* the passage of the new Land Law (Law n° 19 of 1997) and then inform the rural populations about the legislative changes whereas the Angola’s *Rede Terra* mobilized its national network before the passage of new Land Law (Law n° 9 of 2004) in order to collect information about the different needs for the new law in hopes of influencing the legislation before it was finalized, while maintaining the local engagement afterwards by assisting in cases of land conflicts. Upon further reflection, according to José Negrão whose opinion could be biased due to his role as the head organizer, the *Campanha Terra* experience modified the understanding of Mozambican ‘civil society’, with some key characteristics emerging afterwards.¹²³⁵

¹²³² Negrão, *The Land Campaign*, 1.

¹²³³ The principle themes of the Campaign were the following: (1) Land Rights, (2) Demarcation of Land, (3) Women and land, (4) Land: Together in Partnership, (5) Urban Land Rights, (6) Conflict Resolution (*Ibid.*, 2).

¹²³⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹²³⁵ Negrão, *A Propósito*, 7. An additional point not mentioned by Negrão on the emergence of networks within Mozambique’s civil society mobilized around rural issues came shortly after *Campanha Terra* in the form of ROSA (*Rede de Organizações para a Soberania Alimentar*/Network of Organizations for Food Security) formed in August 2003 following a workshop on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) organized by ActionAid Mozambique and the *Associação para Desenvolvimento Sustentável* (ABIODES, Association for Sustainable Development) alongside representatives from the government. The network is currently still active and includes 20 member organizations. For more information, see its official website: <https://rosa.org.mz> (accessed 15 May 2020).

Box 7 - *Campanha Terra's* effects of strengthening civil society

- (1) The adhesion to common causes independently, from diverse ideologies;
- (2) The possibility of the participation of Community Based Organizations without having urban NGOs facilitate it;
- (3) Full participation of religious groups working together, regardless of religion;
- (4) The opportunity to define strategies alongside the private sector;
- (5) The use of State procedures (the legislative to approve a law or the executive to enforce a law) without having to necessarily take power;
- (6) Equal partnerships with international NGOs.

Source: Negrão, *A Propósito*, 7.

Regarding the definition of ‘success’ of these land campaigns, Tanner takes a popular perspective arguing that the “discussions surrounding the development of the new Land Policy are perhaps even more important than the legislative process itself” given that it was at this point “where other pressures for change – from NGOs, independent specialists, academics – were given a voice”.¹²³⁶ We argue here that the inclusion of civil society actors into these processes has been a pivotal springboard to inclusion in further government-civil society collaborations, though it is certainly debatable to what extent these interactions are constructive if the “legislative process itself” is not considered as a principal measuring stick of success in these collaborations. If the public proposals are disregarded and the opportunity is simply an exercise in ‘window dressing’ for a national and international audience as some critics have deemed the *Rede Terra* effort, then the whole orchestration and energy spent is greatly deflated and could in fact have the opposite effect of stunting momentum for future participatory occasions.

One final observation of the two land networks is the curious absence/presence of the FAO in both processes. In the summaries written by both of the networks’ leaders, Angolan Manuel António da Silva Neto for *Rede Terra* and Mozambican José Negrão for *Campanha Terra*, the FAO is completely absent from the list of participants. Likewise, in the documentation gathered concerning both the Huíla Land Network and Forum, as well as *Rede Terra*, the FAO is not listed as a participating member and is rarely, if ever, mentioned. However, reading the literature and reports done by the FAO, there is the impression that it

¹²³⁶ Tanner, *Law-Making*, 15.

played a central role in the formation of the networks in both countries.¹²³⁷ While each organization presents itself in the best light out of self-interest, more research would be needed to better understand this duality of FAO's presence and absence in the major documentation detailing the establishment of both networks.

5.2.4 VICTORIES AND SETBACKS: STRUCTURAL AND STRATEGIC INTROSPECTION IN ANGOLA

After consulting with the rural communities and bringing their concerns directly to the public officials, *Rede Terra* was able to exert its influence in difference aspects, though most of its propositions were ultimately dismissed. Regarding the new Land Law, *Rede Terra* claimed as its own victories the modification of certain articles of the law, such as in the case of land expropriations, in the time required for the legalization of land titles (from one year to three), proper compensation of lost land, and the introduction of a chapter dedicated to managing land conflicts.¹²³⁸ Arguably the biggest achievement of the *Rede Terra* campaign was the inclusion of an article recognizing communal lands in the final legislation, though it was watered down to create important ambiguities and was not legally operational,¹²³⁹ thus negating in part this supposed 'success'. The customary issues had been at the forefront of the concerns of *Rede Terra* and its recognition is clear evidence of positive measures achieved during these unprecedented discussions now that customary land use is officially part of legal discussions.

The final Law Land n° 9 of 9 November 2004 decreed that all land officially registered as communal cannot be taken by the state as rural communal land is classified as "non-grantable" meaning that "the government cannot expropriate and grant them to someone else without due process".¹²⁴⁰ This theoretically protects communal lands from privatization, as the state cannot privatize land that already has an owner.¹²⁴¹ However, the

¹²³⁷ *Ibid.*; Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure support*, 2004; Cenerini, *Access to Legal*, 2008.

¹²³⁸ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual de Actividades*, 4.

¹²³⁹ Personal interview, Allan Cain, founder and director of DW, 27 July 2017, Luanda.

¹²⁴⁰ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 31.

¹²⁴¹ USAID, *Direito a Terra e Resolução de Conflitos na Terra Urbana e Rural no Província de Huambo: Manual de Divulgação*, Washington D.C., Feb. 2008, 8.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335397157_Direito_a_Terra_e_Resolucao_de_Conflitos_na_Terra_Urbana_e_Rural_na_Provincia_do_Huambo.

reality that most communal land is not officially registered by the traditional communities inhabiting or using it for traditional practices means that the process of privatization remains both active and ambiguous. The state itself can only expropriate communal land in cases where the public interest demands it, whereas those being displaced have the right to compensation.¹²⁴² This represented an important advancement in rural customary protections, although the “public utility” clause created room for serious ambiguities of the law as “public utility” remains undefined by law, leaving room for its potential misuse.

In the case of ‘public interest’ land, concessions are limited to two hectares for urban areas and between two and 10,000 hectares in rural areas, to be administered by the provincial authorities, though “[t]he Council of Ministers has authority to circumvent some of the Land Law provisions, including granting concessions in excess of size limitations”.¹²⁴³ Furthermore, during the drafting process, a last-minute revision included “the legal possibility of land appropriation for ‘private utility’ motives – rather than just for public interest, as before”.¹²⁴⁴ This provision allows that rural land can still “be requisitioned with payment of compensation”,¹²⁴⁵ though a clear framework for establishing just compensation has not been established.

This demonstrates well the lengths that the inner elite circle of José Eduardo dos Santos went to maintain total control over the country’s resources despite the purported rule of law that this entire years-long process had supposedly sought to establish. Furthering recognition of communal lands and making such claims an exception, rather than the rule, is a clear victory for the activism of the civil society. However, the undefined “public utility” statute leaves a considerable margin for the government to choose when to apply the rule, even extending the possibility to private utility motives in certain cases. Furthermore, the blurry lines between public and private interests engineered by the MPLA-led government creates an environment of potentially colliding interests. Once again, the newest Land Law leaves much to interpretation and leaves rural communities still vulnerable to potential

¹²⁴² Foley, “Land Rights”, 144.

¹²⁴³ USAID, *Strengthening Land Tenure*, 17-18.

¹²⁴⁴ Clover, “Land reform”, 360.

¹²⁴⁵ USAID, *Strengthening Land Tenure*, 25.

predatory practices. New discussions are currently underway to further remedy this Land Law given its continued structural deficiencies.¹²⁴⁶

Despite the measured victories, there remains a clear bifurcation between theory and practice. The problems began with “a requirement that everyone must complete the official process of registering their land and securing title within three years”, which was “greeted with dismay as entirely unrealistic”.¹²⁴⁷ This three year deadline for rural areas, far from the administrative centers where the required resources would be procured, was beyond realistic. Even in urban areas, the task would be monumental. Development Workshop did a comparative study in land titles in Luanda finding that only about 10% of the Luanda residents in the studied area had a recognized land title in 2004, while in 2010 the same area recorded around 5% possessing a recognized land title, concluding that essentially no new land titles had been issued during that period, but rather the rapid rate of urbanization to the area actually reduced the percentage of those holding a title.¹²⁴⁸

Concerning the issue of just compensation of land: “Access to the land registration and justice systems is very difficult for poor rural populations while agricultural policy focuses more on promoting large-scale commercial agriculture than on developing the productivity of small family farmers and herders”.¹²⁴⁹ Regarding expropriation of land, while anyone “whose land is expropriated for public use has a right to compensation”¹²⁵⁰, in practice there is “also no principled way for determining just compensation because there is no land market and there is no land valuation function or expertise”.¹²⁵¹ Compensation is negotiated between the two interested parties, leaving the rural populations at a disadvantage. Overall, although “many land rights activists have expressed disappointment with some of the law’s provisions, others feel that it does at least provide some basis for protecting people against the worst excesses of arbitrary expropriations and evictions”.¹²⁵² The positive developments of the *Rede Terra* experience should not however only be

¹²⁴⁶ Angop, “Lei de Terras privilegia particulares e empresas”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 14 June 2020. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2020/5/24/Lei-Terras-privilegia-particulares-empresas,2b5b2dc5-b066-4fe1-a817-f4af716b2410.html.

¹²⁴⁷ Foley, “Land Rights”, 140.

¹²⁴⁸ Personal interview, Allan Cain, founder and director of DW, 27 July 2017, Luanda.

¹²⁴⁹ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 40.

¹²⁵⁰ Foley, “Land Rights”, 140.

¹²⁵¹ Clover, “The role of land”, 164.

¹²⁵² Foley, “Land Rights”, 140.

measured in legislative success, even if that was the main motivation behind it. The secondary, tangential benefits also carry qualitative importance.

5.3 Land Law legacy

Writing in 2006, just as the new Land Law was coming out, Fernando Pacheco notes that generally “few laws are complied with – and that translates into ambiguities and incoherencies, since the relationship between institutions occurs outside the laws, which have little meaning to the common citizen”.¹²⁵³ Not only do these laws have little meaning to the average citizen, the respect of law has been a two-track system where elites operate in near impunity and often weaponize the rule of law to push their own agenda whereas justice for the average citizen is often elusive.¹²⁵⁴ While compliance with the law remains contingent on the enforcement mechanisms and capacity of other government institutions, the process leading up to its creation has had its own concrete effects.

Public involvement in state decision-making in Angola is a rare occurrence. The opening up of the Land Law debate to the public could have produced important reverberating aftereffects on democratic participation in the country, which are only now beginning to bear fruit. One concrete example of this is the expansion of the Huíla Land Forum model into other provinces, such as the Land Forum of Cuanza Sul established in 2007, encompassing thirteen CSOs based in the province.¹²⁵⁵ Developing democratic norms and tendencies is a long-term process filled with fits and starts, which can be just as easily rolled back or eliminated altogether. Combining the overall activities that were undertaken by the Huíla Land Forum, the Huíla Land Network and *Rede Terra*, including their published studies, seminars, workshops, mediatization and ground campaign, one of its most important legacies is its contribution to the accrued knowledge and prominence of land issues across Angola going back to the early 1990s, both for the public at large but also concerning the engagement of the government around these issues.

Furthermore, the participation of the civil society was to such an extent that, according to Fernando Pacheco, its involvement had more influence on the land law debate

¹²⁵³ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 4.

¹²⁵⁴ BTI, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Angola*, Gütersloh: Betelsmann Stiftung, 2018, 12.

¹²⁵⁵ Manuel Tomás, “Posse segura da terra discutida no Sumbe”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 21 Nov. 2013. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/sociedade/posse_segura_da_terra_discutida_no_sumbe.

than the opposition political parties themselves, thereby marking a significant moment in Angola's democratic experiment.¹²⁵⁶ This observation is doubly significant, not just for the growing strength of social organizing in Angola, but also the institutional weakness of political opposition parties. While many of the NGOs and donors have since come and gone, the experience and knowledge gained and built upon have been crucial to strengthening the still weakened social organizing infrastructure that exists today, which in itself attests to the extremely poor capacity that existed beforehand due to the myriad impediments placed on the socio-economic development of rural Angola described in the previous chapter. While this initial collaboration with the government remains a mixed legacy, the consultation space it opened on legislative matters remains active as demonstrated in §4.4.2 and §7.2.5. That said, without a government willing to attribute the same amount of recognition and importance to the socio-economic well-being of the populations' living in the periphery, the numerous interventions of NGOs can never fill the resource gap of an absent administration.

5.3.1 PARTICIPATION OR PROPAGANDA?

According to Aharon de Grassi and Jesse Ovadia, the involvement of the actors that made up *Rede Terra* has “not much changed policy and administrative content and processes [...] allowing for rural community title, though mainly addressing urban issues, and private concessions continued apace”.¹²⁵⁷ This critique is valid, but fails to adequately consider the historic dimensions in which this civic participation took place. It is not surprising that the network was unable to win major legislative concessions considering that never before had the civil society been directly involved in the legislative process. Not only was this a monumental task for the organizers and activists of the network, but the government too had no prior experience on how to manage such an arrangement. Likewise, the network's actions and proposals were mostly sidelined, with their interactions kept in controlled spaces of debates and forums only easily accessible to a privileged few. In fact, the government itself admitted its own failures during a national consultation organized by the President's office

¹²⁵⁶ Personal interview, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

¹²⁵⁷ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories”, 117.

(*a Casa Civil*) in December 2014 on the effectiveness of the Land Law in its ability to stabilize land issues and contribute to the economy.¹²⁵⁸

While the MPLA accepted the work of *Rede Terra* and at least nominally worked in tandem with the network, friction and lack of trust existed throughout the process. In the ‘bottom-up’ collaboration with the network, the government officially sanctioned the dialogue, but in the end collaboration was limited to the availability of only a few administrative contacts.¹²⁵⁹ At the same time that these discussions were underway, *Rede Terra* was unsure who its official references were and where they should take the information they had been compiling on behalf of the public.¹²⁶⁰ Given the lack of transparency throughout the administration of José Eduardo dos Santos, this uncertainty should be seen as willful and purposeful rather than a simple misunderstanding or unfortunate lack of communication. It has been established that rural populations themselves would be incapable of mounting enough of a sustained advocacy campaign to convince the government to dialogue directly with them. Intermediary organizations were thus crucial to fill this gap. However, the ‘Western’ origins of many of the members of the *Rede Terra* network were, in the eyes of the government, a crucial structural weakness to allowing and maintaining this unprecedented dialogue. In a 2008 monitoring report by Oxfam/Novib, a major donor of the initiative, it was noted:

Various of those interviewed, after having had time to reflect, made it clear that they had a firm conviction that after all of this process of consulting/involving the civil society at the national level [...] while the civil society was able to apply pressure, ‘in the end, the process ended up significantly manipulated and wasn’t more than a well set up propaganda operation (...) providing social legitimacy to decisions that had already been taken at the higher levels.¹²⁶¹

Controlling the opening of new participatory spaces is a major priority for the MPLA and their overall strategy of governance, which can be better understood through a confidential document that was leaked to the press in 2016.¹²⁶² The document, diffused by the South African *Mail & Guardian*, exposed the notes of a meeting held by the secretary-generals of

¹²⁵⁸ Personal interview, Allan Cain, founder and director of DW, 27 July 2017, Luanda.

¹²⁵⁹ Interview with Allan Cain, director of DW, 27 July 2017, Luanda.

¹²⁶⁰ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 3-4.

¹²⁶¹ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 197.

¹²⁶² See: Vincent Foucher & Piers Pigou, “Fragment d’une théorie politique ? À propos d’un document interne aux anciens mouvements de libération au pouvoir en Afrique austral”, *Lamenparle*, Hypotheses, Institut d’Études Politiques de Bordeaux, Nov. 2017. <https://lamenparle.hypotheses.org/660>.

the Southern African countries that had led their respective liberation movements and still found their political parties in power. The countries participating in the secretive meeting were Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Tanzania. Only Zambia, whose liberation party experienced electoral defeat in 1991, was not invited.

The commonality of these parties still clinging to power is not a coincidence as the meeting's main discussion points were how to continue remaining in power, specifically by identifying the main threats posed to them. Regime change instigated by Western governments and supposedly supported by Western NGOs and business interests was the most pressing threat identified, describing such organizations as “[t]rojan horses, storm troopers, and force multipliers for their subservice agenda in targeted countries”.¹²⁶³ The regime change strategy was identified as originating from Western foundations and donors which “launder funding and strategic aid to political parties, NGOs, student organisations and other civil society groups abroad that promote the West’s agenda in targeted countries under the guise of ‘strengthening democratic institutions’”.¹²⁶⁴

The government’s reluctance to open up to *Rede Terra* is not surprising given its already embedded authoritarian tendencies towards the population, a position even further engrained given the additional fact that the network was fully financed by Western donors and the overall organization was 66% composed of Western-based NGOs. Moreover, *Rede Terra* also received Western diplomatic support by “the US Ambassador at the time, Christopher Dell, [who] engaged personally in public campaigns and debates”.¹²⁶⁵ Furthermore, in Article 1-2D of *Rede Terra*’s founding document, one of the main stated activities of the network was a declaration to defend the peasants’ rights and pursue a campaign of advocacy for the social justice of the local communities in the event they suffered any injustices related to the land rights, whereas the topic of human rights is considered a highly political issue among Angola’s elite. On the other hand, the fact that the government nominally partnered with an organization thus constituted reveals the extent to which it was willing to experiment with opening participatory spaces, limited in size and scope, right after the end of the civil war.¹²⁶⁶ At its core, *Rede Terra* constituted a

¹²⁶³ REPORT, *Report of the workshop of secretaries general of governing former liberation movements of Southern Africa on the current common political, economic and security challenges they face*, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, 4-8 May 2016, 9-10.

¹²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹²⁶⁵ Vines, *et al.*, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 31.

¹²⁶⁶ Not all Western entities carry the same baggage, obviously. Ironically “the Land Law was to a large degree developed by foreign consultants” (Clover, “The role of land”, 155).

nucleus of ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs and INGOs that was unable to produce sustained rural organizing around the issue of land rights and ended up creating an unprecedented social organizing initiative for the peasantry but not by the peasantry.

5.3.2 WHAT RURAL REPRESENTATION?

Beginning in war time and emerging in peacetime, the trajectory of the Huíla Land Forum and Huíla Land Network can reveal many social and political realities during this unique juncture in Angola’s history. It also reveals how seemingly benign decisions of NGOs choosing to set up operations in specific remote areas, given the correct conditions for incubation, can evolve in time and space to mutate and transform into larger organizations with a national reach. The resiliency of their work and its resonance is attributed in large part to the organizational structure backing the development programs, but just as important are the drive and motivation of the local actors with local knowledge directly engaging with the issues on the ground and motivated with a serious determination for progress. Given that both the Huíla Land Network and *Rede Terra* were heavily invested in by actors directly related to local church organizations, academics and researchers, as well as the budding NGO activists trying to enact change outside of the political system, Aslak Orre identifies a key ideological emphasis motivating these actors as stemming from democratic *participation* rather than democratic *representation* where he notes:

One might suspect that many Angolan activists of the ‘civil society’ have drawn the tacit conclusion that as the state and government cannot be challenged directly through elections and the opposition parties, the civil society has to democratize the party-state through its local engagement through campaigns and alternative, non-parliamentary, forums.¹²⁶⁷

The emergence of Land Forums and different land networks reflects this democratic schism inherent in the Angolan political system, where the lack of engagement with the public minimizes ideals of representation within the Republic, leaving those that remain actively involved with few alternatives. According to Carlos Pacatolo, this has pushed many NGOs to take defensive positions against the government, thereby feeding the government’s

¹²⁶⁷ Aslak Orre, “Who’s to challenge the party-state in Angola? Political space & opposition in parties and civil society”, Conference: Election processes, liberation movements and democratic change in Africa, Maputo, 8-11 April 2010, 15. https://www.iese.ac.mz/~ieseacmz/lib/publication/proelit/Aslak_Orre.pdf

perception of the NGO sector as hostile to its agenda.¹²⁶⁸ Ultimately, the active NGOs turn to the participation in political events spurred by the creation of their own political spaces, which the government retroactively engages with if the conditions require it.

While it was demonstrated in the previous chapter that the numbers of NGOs and CSOs operating across the territory have been somewhat effective in bringing resources to the provinces, it is also important to identify the mechanisms that exist for local communities to achieve recognition and exercise agency in relation to the government. Aslak Orre identifies two main mechanisms as being through either traditional authorities or the *Concelhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social* (CACSeS, Councils for Civic Engagement) system of councils of local representatives, as well as smaller-scale bodies such as women associations, farmer cooperatives, peasant associations, and community-based organizations.¹²⁶⁹ These structures and organizations represent the key sources through which rural populations can exercise the agency they have been afforded by the constrained political system they operate in.

However, opening and (to some extent) occupying these spaces for public participation only goes so far in areas characterized by a democratic deficit: “First, expanding democratic engagement calls for more than invitations to participate. For people to be able to exercise their political agency, they need first to recognize themselves as citizens rather than see themselves as beneficiaries or clients”.¹²⁷⁰ The disengagement of the government in the periphery in the delivery of aid and development assistance has led to a breakdown in this relationship. Furthermore, as noted above, in Huíla province alone only 40% of Huílans have a birth certificate and few rural residents pay taxes due to the high prevalence of informal employment.¹²⁷¹

According to Fernando Pacheco, this question of citizenship recognition is key to the engagement of rural populations by moving their self-perception from “objects” to “subjects” of the state.¹²⁷² To what extent do these rural populations feel like citizens of a Republic? And how far does their engagement with the political process reach beyond occasional elections when they are finally engaged and incentivized by political parties, oftentimes through the possibility to obtain much needed resources? These questions pose

¹²⁶⁸ Personal interview, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

¹²⁶⁹ Orre, “Who’s to challenge”, 11, 15.

¹²⁷⁰ Cornwall & Coelho “Introduction”, 9.

¹²⁷¹ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle’s Paradise*, 17.

¹²⁷² Personal interview, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

serious epistemological questions to the capacity of endogenous rural social organizing wherein the will and energy of political participation is undercut by weak representation. This equation is well suited for a political strategy of divide and conquer.

5.3.3 REDE TERRA'S UNCERTAIN PATH FORWARD

The revelation of the aforementioned leaked document is important when considering the timing in the evolution of *Rede Terra* and its interactions between the government and the public. The organization is still active today, but its activities have been severely limited. After personally visiting some of the main active organizations during a fieldwork exercise in the summer of 2017, including DW's headquarters in Luanda and ADRA's offices in Luanda, Benguela and Huíla/Cunene, the latest primary documents that could be obtained dated from 2008. In a prescient interview before taking the plane to Lubango from Luanda, the DW director Allan Cain mentioned that "there are not many parts of the country where the *Rede Terra* has left local institutions or local networks that are still active", pointing to Cuanza Sul as a notable exception with its provincial land network organized in 2007.¹²⁷³ It quickly became clear that while *Rede Terra* was still operational, its influence and national reach had become considerably limited.

The date of 2008 is significant because the network had decided to consolidate into an officially recognized NGO because of the administrative, organization and financial difficulties coordinating a network lacking legal recognition. The legal process was decided upon in a meeting held on 22 September 2004, in part in order to appease donor concerns about potentially irregularities in financing programs.¹²⁷⁴ The network thus became consolidated into an NGO and officially recognized as such in May 2005.¹²⁷⁵

A year later in May 2006 the MPLA government began implementing a new decree (Decree 84/02) passed to modify the Law on Associations (Law 14/91) that had been set up to regulate the NGO sector. The new decree was designed to severely limit the freedoms of

¹²⁷³ Personal interview, Luanda, 27 July 2017.

¹²⁷⁴ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 2004.

¹²⁷⁵ Bernard Castro, "Em Angola o negócio da terra ganhou proporções assustadoras, denuncia ONG", Club-K, Luanda, 23 April 2013. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14935:em-angola-o-negocio-da-terra-ganhou-proporcoes-assustadoras&lang=pt.

NGOs working within Angola and to regulate their activities through a burdensome system of constant surveillance, with the intention “to reduce the independence of NGOs, and to keep NGOs’ interventions restricted to humanitarian and emergency approaches only”.¹²⁷⁶ Given that *Rede Terra*’s proposed mandate went far and beyond humanitarian work, this organization would have been a prime target for the new decree’s ambitions to bring to heel any NGOs working outside of the MPLA’s accepted areas of influence.

From 2008 until late 2013, *Rede Terra*’s activities largely disappeared, despite having confirmed a strategic plan of 2006-2010 during its 2008 General Assembly. Their continued existence could not even be confirmed during interviews at the time in August 2017 by some of the same organizations and civil society leaders that had been active in the network and land issues more generally. As the network wound down from its major activities revolving around the Land Law, cracks began to appear in its façade of solidarity.¹²⁷⁷ While certain members saw their role as a holistic support network to the rural communities and their connections to the new Land Law, some members of the network wanted the organization to limit its activities to serve only a secretarial role, similar to the initial mission of the *Foro de ONGs de Angola* (FONGA, Forum of National NGOs), solely administrating and distributing donor funds and allowing the member groups to work more independently. Others still wanted to limit activities to only collecting data locally and delivering it to the competent local officials.

This desire for administrative change came from the reality that the smaller NGOs (those besides Mosaiko, NCC, Jubileu 2000 and ADRA) no longer had the financial resources to fulfill their programs, dealing with the inability to pay for office space, a lack of electricity, telephone or internet. The Luanda headquarters also put a serious technical and logistical hardship on the provincial members, unable to attend meetings, or participate in moments of decision-making. Finally, the “disinterest” and even “ill will” or “animosity” of some members was noted as well.¹²⁷⁸ By 2007, *Rede Terra* began to show serious internal structural weaknesses. Administrative and financial regulatory burdens imposed from above would weaken the structure still.

¹²⁷⁶ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society”, 7.

¹²⁷⁷ The following information comes from the unpublished meeting notes of a reunion from 4 Sept. 2007.

¹²⁷⁸ Rede Terra, *Reunião do dia 04 de Setembro de 2007*.

In 2013, it was still advocating for rural land rights with a call to commemorate Earth Day by recognizing the importance of land to peasant farmers across Africa and Angola.¹²⁷⁹ The official Facebook page of *Rede Terra* was then set up in 2014, with only a few sporadic posts in 2014 and 2015. In November 2015 Bernardo Castro officially took up the position of Executive Director.¹²⁸⁰ In 2016, *Rede Terra* went to court and won alongside the *Ordem dos Advogados de Angola* (Angolan Bar Association) and the NGOs SOS Habitat and the *Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento* (CNA, National Counseling Center) by arguing that the government's decree n° 75 of 2015, which imposed significant burdens on CSOs and NGOs operating in the country, was unconstitutional.¹²⁸¹ The Constitutional Court upheld their argument on 5 July 2017, declaring that such decrees must come from the Parliament and not the Presidency, thereby imposing a significant check on the President's seemingly omnipotence.¹²⁸²

More informational posts detailing *Rede Terra*'s activities began appearing in December 2017,¹²⁸³ financed by the European Union and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa. The organization remains active today, with its Executive Director having written an open letter to the deputies of the National Assembly to attract their attention to the continued flaws in the current land tenure legislation, the lack of the government's ability to respond to the land conflicts brooding across the peripheries, and the questions that the plans of administrative decentralization pose to finding adequate solutions.¹²⁸⁴ That same year, the organization produced a video about rural communities losing their land to private interests in Cuanza Sul and Moxico provinces intitled "Geo-historical and cultural patrimony at risk in the communities of Cela".¹²⁸⁵ Furthermore, it remains active in Huíla province alongside ACC (the successor of ALSSA) in denouncing the violation of traditional land rights and the conflicts they engender.¹²⁸⁶ These activities show how the group has

¹²⁷⁹ Castro, "Em Angola", 2013.

¹²⁸⁰ According to the LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bernardo-castro-rede-terra-83569892> (accessed 12 June 2020).

¹²⁸¹ This decree will be detailed in the following chapter.

¹²⁸² USAID, *Strengthening Land Tenure*, 2.

¹²⁸³ Official Facebook account of *Rede Terra*. See: <https://www.facebook.com/Rterra2017/> (accessed 1 Dec. 2018).

¹²⁸⁴ Bernard Castro, "Rede Terra: Carta Aberta aos Deputados à Assembleia Nacional – Bernardo Castro", Club-K, Luanda, 11 Jan. 2019. https://club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34633:rede-terra-carta-aberta-aos-deputados-a-assembleia-nacional-bernardo-castro&catid=41013&Itemid=1080&lang=pt.

¹²⁸⁵ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 26.

¹²⁸⁶ André Kivuandinga, "Conflitos na luta pela terra", *Nova Gazeta*, Luanda, 21 March 2019. <https://www.novagazeta.co.ao/artigo/1323>.

maintained its central focus on rural communities and land issues, but has drastically changed its approach as a more traditional NGO offering expertise, implementing programs, and advocating the government for its causes.

A final important aspect to help understand both the increased participation and contribution of Angolans to the rural development movement initiated by the Huíla Land Network and *Rede Terra* experiences, followed by its diminishing returns afterwards, is the question of pay. It should not be assumed that all of the members of the NGOs involved in different aspects of rural development were as truly committed to the cause as the initial forming members of the founding networks. In reality, for some Angolans these positions simply offered an opportunity at employment with competitive wages compared to the barren job market that faced them coming out of the war. As one of my interviewees stated¹²⁸⁷, after having accrued two decades of experience in the NGO sector working in rural market development, the question of money was crucial to retaining qualified NGO workers and the economic crises of 2007 and 2015 taught most Angolans for the first time multiple personal financial lessons: (1) The value of money, (2) Managing households debts, (3) The cost of living a life based on consumerism, (4) The importance of having savings for difficult times. As the international donor community began to pull out of Angola, these realities moved people from the declining funds in the NGO sector to other employment opportunities, formal and informal, revealing a stronger monetary incentive than an ideological motivation.

This study was unable to find statistics comparing an average salary for an NGO worker and that of the public sector from the turn of the century onwards, but the interviewee claimed that the government had to raise public sector salaries to attract the few qualified workers that had gone to the NGO sector for higher pay. These were later brought back to the public sector through financial incentives and decreasing donor commitments. Fernando Pacheco mentions that the most organized and well-financed NGOs and multilateral agencies competed with the government's ability to recruit the most talented individuals and attracted this limited pool of talent with higher wages of up to 300% that of the public sector.¹²⁸⁸ In fact, according to Luis Monteiro, a director of ADRA to which

¹²⁸⁷ Personal interview with NGO worker, 17 Aug. 2017, Lubango. The name has been omitted as anonymity was requested to speak freely.

¹²⁸⁸ Pacheco, *et al.*, "The Role of External", 8.

Pacheco also belonged, their organization admittedly engaged in the same practice as a pragmatic strategy to both recruit qualified workers and take advantage of the higher salaries themselves.¹²⁸⁹ Pacheco does not mention the exact timeline when this salary increase took place, though he mentions international aid arriving “from 1992 onwards” and his article is written in 2006, so it mostly likely refers to this time lapse.¹²⁹⁰ Tony Hodges takes a broader look at the salaries across the population between educated civil servants, civilian military, and para-military salaries.¹²⁹¹ Between 1991-1998, he notes a huge salary decrease in the average salaries of civil servants with university or technical college qualifications, which would be the key constituency for NGOs to recruit from, though the people making up these categories were only a small minority of the total population.

Within public administration in 1998, there were only 6,803 senior professionals (*técnicos superiores*), 664 professionals (*técnicos*), and 45,070 mid-level professionals (*técnicos médios*) representing respectively 3.5%, .3% and 23% of the total public sector workforce.¹²⁹² In 1991, a Mid-level worker with a technical college degree (*técnico médio*) made on average US\$170 per month, descending to only US\$13 in 1993 and US\$5 in 1994, increasing again to US\$93 in 1996 before falling back down to US\$43 in 1998.¹²⁹³ The statistics do not extend post-1998, but that same year a census of public employees found that only 3% had a university education, 16% had upper secondary or technical education, and “almost 17% had less than four years of primary education”.¹²⁹⁴ The extremely low salaries cited would not require NGOs to spend significantly to attract these few educated public servants into the sectors of development, humanitarian assistance, and basic service delivery. Otherwise, many of these workers were forced to engage in double employment.

In order for the government to retain these qualified workers from moving into the private sector or joining international organizations or NGOs, the government began slowly raising salaries beginning in 1999, as well as offering the small cadre of highly qualified workers temporary incentives “including official cars and residences, Christmas bonuses, special shopping entitlements, per diems for official travel, medical evaluation and

¹²⁸⁹ Pain, *Desafios da Participação*, 198-199.

¹²⁹⁰ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 8.

¹²⁹¹ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 67-71, 175-177.

¹²⁹² *Ibid.*, 175.

¹²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹²⁹⁴ UNDP, *Angola: The Post-War*, 75.

scholarships”.¹²⁹⁵ Furthermore, their actions extended beyond the direct control of authorities and created disturbances within the national financial system as resources, financial and otherwise, flowed in through a third sector not directly linked to the traditional commercial or government exchanges.¹²⁹⁶ This dynamic represents another logical incentive for the government to undercut the power and dynamism of the NGO sector, as doing so weakens the job market and raises the probability that skilled workers will enter the public workforce for lack of better options.

5.3.4 RURAL DEPENDENCY ON URBAN INTERLOCUTERS

While the public participation was mostly confined to the realm of academics and technocrats, thereby including a minimal involvement of Angolan civil society as a whole, the reverberating effects of these discussions in the society are still an important point to consider in the medium to long term. However, based upon the documentation reviewed and the interviews conducted, it becomes clear that while *Rede Terra* became in part an advocacy vehicle for communal land rights among rural populations, it is only if you take into account the work of its predecessor, the Huíla Land Network, that it could even minimally be considered a ‘rural’ network or a rural ‘social movement’. While the protection of rural populations’ traditional customs against encroaching neoliberal economic projects was a central project of its work throughout the periphery, notions of bottom-up ‘peasant mobilization’ within *Rede Terra* appear wholly unfounded.

Following the history and different activities leading to the creation of the Huíla Land Forum and the Huíla Land Network, growing from a loose provincial patchwork of organizations into a national network known as *Rede Terra* presents a valuable snapshot in experimental social organizing methods begun during the war and how they were able to be strengthened into leveraging their agency at the seat of the legislative negotiating table vis-à-vis the government. In a political system where civil society has little representation, elections appear pre-determined, and little to no channels of political engagement exist (depending on

¹²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹²⁹⁶ Pacheco, *et al.*, “The Role of External”, 8.

geography and urbanization), *Rede Terra*'s members were able to access the political arena through a third, 'apolitical' channel. Ironically, by staying 'out of politics' they were hesitantly welcomed to participate in the political process.

The inclusion of the FAO as an apolitical balancing force gave the network institutional legitimacy due to its previous work in collaboration with the government, as well as providing *Rede Terra* with cover from the more activist wing of its members. Likewise, the involvement of a limited but significant amount of public officials and politicians demonstrates the extent to which the MPLA-dominated government should not be considered as a monolithic party following strict marching orders from above. While party discipline and rallying around the leader is the ultimate outcome, there are sections of the body politic that are ready and willing to engage with certain civil society actors, including João Lourenço as was discussed earlier. Developing these relationships and expanding upon the partnerships to include a wider range of issues represents a clear strategy for wider inclusion of civil society actors into the political agenda.

After it was made official in Luanda, the *Rede Terra* campaign was inevitably drawn to the country's capital where it would establish its headquarters for its mostly urban-based advocates. *Rede Terra* initially worked out of ADRA's Luanda office, which could provoke obvious concerns of equal treatment among members, but was later moved to an office in the Alvalade neighborhood in the zone of Maianga in March 2004 with support from the European Union.¹²⁹⁷ The important work done by many members of the network on the part of urban and peri-urban issues made Luanda a natural environment to work within. Furthermore, the location of the organization's activities is heavily Luanda-centric, especially when compared to those of the Huila Land Network.

Moving outside of the urban and peri-urban areas, the different member organizations had established strong connections to the rural populations through their work in socio-economic development programs, mostly linked to the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, in the various documents produced, the active inclusion and involvement of the rural populations appear to have been concentrated almost exclusively in the nation-wide informational campaign collecting the voices and concerns of the rural residents. Their involvement and inclusion in actions afterwards appears to be minimal as they go

¹²⁹⁷ Rede Terra, *Relatório Anual 2003*, 2.

unmentioned in the documents revised and collected during the fieldwork, except in a passive role during the various educational campaigns and as receivers of aid and assistance. The fact that the government abruptly ended the consultation period accelerated this reality. Furthermore, despite the fact that the *Rede Terra* land campaign was able to connect with over 2,000 citizens in these ten provinces, even this statistic does not differentiate from rural, peri-urban or urban residents. It is therefore unknown to what extent its geographical reach extended and which populations were specifically reached, as information identifying the village, *comuna*, or *município* levels was absent in the documents reviewed.

Oxfam/Novib notes that the NGOs created to work alongside the traditional structures and community-based organizations “are not representative nor should it be assumed that they represent the populations and communities”, going on to mention that “such an error would be fatal for the quality and the social legitimacy of the process, which should do everything to create its bases and autonomy in the self-organization of the interested populations/communities themselves”.¹²⁹⁸ This critique is well-founded, but also deserves further inspection as each NGO involved in the *Rede Terra* network or the Huíla Land Network has its own unique relationship to the local populations. This analysis therefore does not pertain to each organization active in the overall network. In fact, the local legitimacy brought through the fusion of the Huíla-based Land Network and the populations it represents has created perhaps one of the best examples of rural agency that has come out of Angola’s peripheries. The comparison between the national NGOs ADRA and ALSSA is revealing in establishing the fusion leading to authentic rural political agency emerging from the Gambos in Huíla province.

5.3.5 SOLIDIFYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF RURAL AGENCY

In the late 1990s, ADRA first came to Huíla province as a Luanda-based organization working alongside ACORD. Despite ADRA’s central mission of rural development and the legitimacy and capacity building it has built up since its establishment, during its initial contact

¹²⁹⁸ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 111.

with the local population of the Gambos for example it was still at the time an outside organization providing services for pre-established programs. ADRA was more representative than a foreign NGO such as ACORD, but initially an outsider nonetheless. On the contrary, ALSSA was an NGO led by Padre Jacinto Pio Wacussanga, a local Catholic priest based in the Mission of Santo António in the Gambos.¹²⁹⁹ His rural placement coming from and living among the local populations provides his organization's activities of advocacy with a true representativeness of the local communities, setting it apart from the abovementioned Oxfam critique. The Gambos region where these two NGOs accrued experience also endured serious multi-faceted land conflicts during their intervention period in which the NGOs provided support, leading to a strengthening of ties with these local populations.

The research stemming from the Support Program for the Agro-Pastoral Communities of the Gambos executed by ADRA and ACORD in 1993 led to a further study in 1997 focusing on the hydrological cycle of the area given its importance to the pastoral communities. Overall, the land mass of the Gambos is divided into three parts:

The first consists of rugged topography, predominantly rocky with patches of black and red soil in the west of highway EN-105. The second is a sandy topography locally known as Tunda dos Gambos which consists of slopes of grasslands and forests where the pastoralists graze their animals. The third is a valley known locally as Vale de Chimbolela (or mulola), located farther east with abundant grass and water.¹³⁰⁰

Water is therefore as important an asset as the land itself. Despite the dry conditions, the vegetation is categorized as savannah with certain areas having significant amounts of low-lying bushes and grasses ideal for cattle grazing. However, the balance between water availability and grasslands requires a delicate balance.

The entrance of colonial commercial farmers and ranchers to the area in the 1950s led to the slow destabilization of the intricate web of resource consumption. As the process of economic transition began in the 1990s, land conflicts began to affect greater areas of Huíla province, occurring with a constant frequency in the Gambos region in particular. The

¹²⁹⁹ To review the geographical situation of the Gambos, the Mission of Santo António of Father Jacinto Pio Wacussanga and the area occupied by ranchers, see Map 2 in the section "Engaging the Gambos" in the introduction.

¹³⁰⁰ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 30.

increasing prevalence of these commercial entities around the end of the civil war has accelerated the destabilization of the region. Below follows a short historical timeline of these conflicts affecting the area throughout the 1990s and through the transition to peacetime. Notably, these conflicts occurred alongside the arrival of ACORD and ADRA to the region, and continued through the *Rede Terra* campaign, thereby highlighting the importance of their work in resolving land conflicts:

– Between 1996-1998, large-scale land conflicts occurring in the Gambos were simmering between local herding communities and newly installed ranchers. This situation led to the “first titles being granted in March 2001 to communities [in Tchicala] that recognized land defined in social terms, not narrowly in topographical terms” through a partnership between the FAO and MINADER.¹³⁰¹

– In 2003 in northern Huíla, the local population supported by the FAO and members of the Huíla Land Network was able to block a land grab by a military elite who was hoping to sweep up a large portion of land previously known to have potential gold reserves.¹³⁰²

– In 2003, a complex land grab occurred in the locality of Ombala-Yo-Mpata, Humpata *município*. A conflict erupted between army generals and peasants belonging to a peasant association registered with UNACA. Generals hailing from Luanda were awarded 331,283 hectares of land under the project “Caixa Central das Forças Armadas”. In reality, the project was given 309,500 hectares according to the land concession process, but 21,783 hectares were later found to have been taken from a local community. Rather than supporting the peasants, UNACA ended up dividing them. The 309,500 hectare land transfer dispossessed 3,000 families. The other 21,783 hectares was traditional land of the Mbala-Ya-Mpata community, which affected 800 families registered in the area, making up between 12 and 15 thousand inhabitants.¹³⁰³

– Between 2002-2003, in the Kamphanda region of the Gambos near the Bicular National Park, key grazing land located in the Tunda dos Gambos and Vale de Chimbolele was cordoned off. The lands were “coveted by politically connected private individuals who targeted the areas for ranching”.¹³⁰⁴ The concerned areas are key pastoral lands for

¹³⁰¹ Clover, “Land reform”, 359.

¹³⁰² *Ibid.*, 364.

¹³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 365; Pedro Kalweyo, “Camponeses e generais desentendem-se por terras,” *Agora*, Luanda, 2003.

¹³⁰⁴ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 37.

transhumance cattle herding, comprising a total grazing area of 3,928km². However, the ranchers had enclosed 2,629 km² of the most fertile land, leaving herders with only 1,299 km² to support their cattle. In the ensuing land conflicts, the ranchers were found to be threatening dozens of local herders and their families, allegedly destroying crops and goods, illegally imprisoning them, including claims of torture. ALSSA was called in to mediate the conflict and took the case to legal authorities.¹³⁰⁵ Aided by the legal advisors of the NGO *Mãos Livres* and the *Sindicato Nacional de Professores* (SINPROF, National Teachers Union), the case was brought to the attention of the local and provincial authorities, culminating with the imprisonment of the Portuguese rancher José Marques Pinto to 28 years in prison by the Huíla Provincial Tribunal in what became known as the “*cárcere privado*” (private prison) case.¹³⁰⁶ This again represents a major victory for the traditional Ovangambwe communities within the villages of Kamphanda, though the communities themselves saw little improvement. Their transhumance corridors remained closed by the ranches Kamphanda and Achor they only apparently received “a few liters of water” in return from the ranchers, though the installed hand pumps for community water access were fenced in by the ranchers and replaced with motorized pumps with exclusive access to the ranch.¹³⁰⁷ The continuation of this episode of pastoralists versus commercial ranchers will be expanded in §6.3.6.

– In September 2004, an inter-ethnic conflict erupted in the Gambos between the Mukuahona people, from Huíla province, and the Mukubal, from Namibe province. The clash was provoked by recurring drought conditions and the limited availability of watering holes for the grazing cattle, leading to six deaths, 50 displaced families & over 1,000 cattle stolen. The problem was resolved through traditional channels between the two peoples.

– In early 2006, the conflicting economic practices of sedentary agriculture and cattle raising led to “dozens of deaths” due to violent clashes, leading to the intervention of the provincial government demanding a local development program to ease the growing social pressures between the toxic mixture of land conflicts and the stealing of cattle.¹³⁰⁸

¹³⁰⁵ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 191.

¹³⁰⁶ [n.a.], “Caso Kamphanda: 28 anos de prisão para José Marques Pinto”, *Angonotícias*, Luanda, 16 Nov. 2005. <http://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/7120/caso-kamphanda-28-anos-de-prisao-para-jose-marques-pinto>.

¹³⁰⁷ ACC, *Situação Sócio-Económica da Quibita (Chibia) e dos Gambos – Relatório do Estudo*, Lubango, Dec. 2008, 28.

¹³⁰⁸ [n.a.], “Conflitos dos Gambos com os dias contados”, *O Independente*, Luanda, 2 Jan. 2006. <https://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/7663/conflitos-dos-gambos-com-os-dias-contados>.

Tableau 27 - Huíla: A succession of land conflicts

Time	Place	Event
Late 1990s	Gambos	Outsiders encroaching on communal land
2001	Tchicala	First ever legal recognition of community land tenure, assisted by the FAO
2002-2003	Kamphanda (Gambos)	Conflict between ranchers and local herders, intervention by ALSSA.
2003	Northern Huíla	General's failed land grab of 5,000 hec. on land known for colonial gold mining. Aided by FAO
2003	Humpata <i>município</i> , Ombala-Yo-Mpata locality	General's land grab of 21 hec. of communal land, dispossessing 3,000 families
2003	Gambos	New fences erected on traditional lands
Sept. 2004	Gambos	Inter-ethnic conflict involving Mukuahona & Mukubal, led to six deaths, 50 displaced families & over 1,000 cattle stolen
2006	Gambos	Conflict between farmers and cattle herders, leading to dozens of deaths

Source: Author's compilation.

Overall, the local and provincial government was found to have failed to uphold any laws designed to protect against land dispossession. Firstly, the Land Law “designates rural communal lands as non-grantable lands” and therefore the land cannot be expropriated “for the benefit of third parties without due diligence”, prior consent and just compensation.¹³⁰⁹ Environmental laws further require an “environmental and social impact assessment” for projects that could negatively impact livelihoods.¹³¹⁰ None of these procedures were implemented by authorities in these cases, providing more evidence to the dual-track legal system within Angola where impunity is a common denominator.

The timing and location of the Gambos conflict is notable for various reasons. Firstly, the situation had been increasing tension for some time, beginning in the 1996 until an outbreak of violence in 1999, later returning to the national scene in 2003-2004. This period corresponds to the formation of the Huíla Land Forum and leads up to the height of the *Rede Terra* negotiation process. Importantly, these conflicts occurred precisely in the *comuna* where the Huíla Land Network had invested itself. The Gambos populations had therefore already begun receiving training on building social development initiatives, making them one of the most highly educated rural communities on the importance of speaking out

¹³⁰⁹ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 11.

¹³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

and connecting with officials when in time of need. They also had direct contacts with local organizations committed to supporting them and were more knowledgeable about their rights compared to the average rural *município* due to these formative years of NGO engagement. Furthermore, Huíla had built up one of the strongest civil society infrastructure networks for mobilizing resources, connections, and media sources to inform the appropriate outside actors to the local issues at hand. Finally, the Gambos clash combined determined populations with equally engaged civil society leaders, notably the team of ALSSA headed by Padre Pio and Cecilia Cassapi, who refused to back down to political pressures and threats of violence because of their advocacy.

The Gambos land conflicts have been widely cited and researched as a case study in the different typologies of conflict and the different drivers motivating them.¹³¹¹ This study considers the interventions of ALSSA, ACORD and ADRA as pivotal to laying the foundations with the local populations leading to the mediatization, rural social organizing and ultimately the conflict resolutions in this specific geographical area and hopes to emphasize the vital importance of these early interventions when discussing the Gambos case studies. This type of civil society mobilization has been extremely rare in post-independence Angola and the implementation of the MPLA's authoritarian impulses, but this province has proven to be able to organize local opposition to infringements on their land rights.¹³¹² These events show the importance of land tenure for these rural communities and the willingness to act in their interests to preserve or strengthen their positions in society. This agency has been built through an intricate combination of links and connections, but importantly spearheaded by local activists engaged with the issues through their 'grassroots elite' NGO status.

¹³¹¹ See for example: Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 2019; Clover, "Land reform", 2005; Pacheco, *A questão da terra*, 20; Pacheco *et al.* "The Role of External", 46; Pain, *Desafios da Participação*, 2007; Serrano, *Strengthening institutions*, 2012. The Chatham House study by Vines, Shaxson & Rimli of Chatham House (2005b) is particularly insightful, already connecting the various pieces to the puzzle leading to the Gambos conflict with their study published in 2005.

¹³¹² Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 28.

Box 8 - Amassing rural agency in the Gambos

Outside Links

Local: The Mission of Santo António in the Gambos provides the clearest symbol of the local link to the community, as well as the local legitimacy of the Mission's Catholic priest Padre Jacinto Pio Wakussanga. Furthermore, provincial authorities in Huíla have more experience (relative to elsewhere) in their approach to land issues given the repeated clashes of land conflicts in the area and maintain dialogue with the local *sobas* and NGOs. CACS also provide a channel of institutional dialogue.

National: ADRA's headquarters in Luanda allow it to easily mobilize its resources and connections in the capital; its historical links to the MPLA and previous work alongside the government provide a channel of communication to officials and institutions. It practices a non-confrontational approach to the government, transforming it into a more easily-approachable partner.

International: Being a member of extremely active and influential Congregation of the Holy Spirit (*Espiritanos* in Portuguese) of the Catholic Church brings Padre Pio and his NGO the legitimacy of a worldwide network to its work on the ground. Likewise, media coverage of the conflict was amplified to international audiences relayed through the NGO networks, including important religious channels such as Christian Aid and *Rádio Eclésia*. Furthermore, in 2018 Padre Pio won the "Human Rights Defender Award" presented by the Southern Africa Human Rights Defenders Network; Padre Pio's new NGO ACC has observer status before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

Internal Connections

Religious: The religious connection to the Catholic Church is primordial. Not only does it provide the NGO's representatives with an opportunity for regular contact with the local populations, it also brings the different actors of the community around a central space for open dialogue: the preferred approach to conflict resolution for religious officials.

Cultural: The complex social structure of the Gambos area maintains a local Monarchic structure headed by the King of the Gambos (*obamba*), Katyito Kondjamba, from the pre-colonial Kingdom, giving the population a stronger central voice compared to traditional *sobas* and a stronger communal cohesion among the main ethnic group, the Gambwe (Morais & Correia, *Estudo das Comunidades*, 27).

Historical: The territory is known as the 'cradle of cattle' and the 'land of milk' for its historical importance of the herding of cattle and subsistence living off the derivatives of this practice.

Ecological: The livelihoods of the local populations are summed up by the Ngambwe term *Chimbolela*, referring to "the life-sustaining ecological services that accrue to the pastoralists as they interact with their cattle and the local ecosystem" (Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 9).

5.3.6 FRAGILE IMPROVEMENTS

The accumulation of these experiences mobilizing rural populations in defense of their communal rights has led to changes in the provincial government's response: "[P]rovincial authorities in Huíla are now extremely cautious (relative to elsewhere) in their approach to land issues, and citizens in the province are said to be far more aware and defensive of their rights".¹³¹³ Given the provincial government's experience in handling land conflicts between commercial and traditional interests, it is unsurprising that it would be more experienced on the topic, though whether it is "extremely cautious" in its approach is debatable given the repeated conflicts that have repeatedly arisen in the province, even after the 1990s.

This chapter has attempted to provide a broad brush of the colliding interests between different economic models and the role of the different actors involved in these land conflicts. As the war was coming to an end and the government prepared to project its selective modernization model into the countryside, groups of engaged civil society actors brought their energy and experience to the conversation. The first sanctioned dialogue between the civil society and the government revolved around the amorphous debate on land issues, directly affecting every Angolan. Although the civil society's concrete contributions to the ultimate legislation of the new Land Law were undercut and watered down, we argue that the overall experience was extremely formative for the NGO sector as it represented their first show of collective force in direct engagement with the government. This has led to further activity and aspirations within the engaged civil society, though the situation has not necessarily been reciprocal.

As we will see in the next chapter, this cautiousness is relative and the perceived gains of the rural populations are fragile. The economic perspectives provided by the natural resources of the area inevitably attract influential people and investment capital with enough political capital to bend local administration to their will as "the weight of individuals with such considerable economic and political power is also weakening the power of the

¹³¹³ Vines, Shaxson, & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 30.

Municipal Administration”.¹³¹⁴ This formula -- the higher concentration of economic and political actors, the weaker the local governance structure -- is key to understanding the lack of respect of the law and regulations in rural areas, also revealing the limitations of accrued agency when confronting elite interests.

¹³¹⁴ [n.a], “Fazendeiros ocupam os Gambos sem conhecimento da administração”, *Apostulado*, Luanda, 17 Nov. 2006: 31, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Nov. 2006.

Part III – Controlling the countryside: Dominance through strategic abandon

In the previous chapter, we have seen the importance that both foreign and national NGOs and CSOs have played in stimulating efforts at rural social organizing to bring development to local areas where their programs are present, especially given the generalized dispossession of resources wrought by the war on the rural populations. Outside of the particular spaces of local NGO and CSO engagement, the populations are left dependent on governmental assistance that has been shown to be generally inadequate or simply absent. What are the concrete actions and strategies that the government, led by José Eduardo dos Santos, had employed in order to maintain its position of domination of the peripheries through resource scarcity? What are the effects of this approach to the agricultural sector and, more importantly, the approximately ten million Angolans living in these peripheral lands where a dependence on agricultural practices is a question of life and livelihood itself?

The regimes of both Agostinho Neto and José Eduardo dos Santos possessed neither the resources nor the logistical capacity to rebuild a centralized rural economy.¹³¹⁵ Forty-five years after independence, the question still remains. In order to overcome the government's weak presence in the country's periphery, and in its quest for dominance over these spaces, the administration of José Eduardo dos Santos crafted a predatory political strategy focused on imposing resource scarcity on the actors and organizations attempting to assist the development of rural economic agents outside of the government's sphere of direct influence, as well as upon the rural economic agents (the peasantry) itself. The question of redistribution of resources remains central to the politically engineered structural scarcity hypothesis this study puts forward. This strategy employs a two-fold geographical approach: one nationally affecting the entire population, and one geared specifically towards the peripheral populations.

On a national scale, Christine Messiant described the strategy the MPLA conceived at the turn of the century to impose its domination on the economy and the society as a whole. This strategy went far beyond the traditional authoritarian toolset of social control consisting of the deployment of an oppressive security apparatus and the general climate of

¹³¹⁵ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 10; Bhagavan, *Angola's Political Economy*, 19-20.

fear instilled in the society due to the civil war and its aftereffects. The state's domination also came via the foundation of a new form of redistribution of resources, solidified in the post-war context including

the 'legal' misery as a consequence of the absolute insignificance of salaries, of an even further disinvestment from public social services, of the populations generalized dependence on a brutal formal and informal 'market', wherein the development led to generalized corruption and economic insecurity, as well as a considerable increase in social, police, and criminal violence.¹³¹⁶

If it is Adam Smith's infamous 'invisible hand' that guides markets globally, in Angola the 'market' forces are guided by and for the MPLA. The effects of this strategy are magnified in the periphery as they combine a near total control of the circulation of resources in the domestic market, the allocation of these rarified economic resources to privileged sectors of the economy, opacity between the public/private and legal/illegal spheres, all amid a context of generalized violence and socio-economic insecurity. The resource-poor peripheries facilitate the implementation of such a strategy as the lower population density, vast spaces and structural limitations characteristic of the peripheries have allowed the government to focus its efforts on a limited set of social actors in order to impose its political dominance throughout.

¹³¹⁶ Messiant, "La Fondation Eduardo", 88.

Chapter 6 Rural domination through structural resource scarcity

The MPLA under Dos Santos has transformed into a rent-seeking state, guided first and foremost by the economic exploitation offered by oil and diamonds and later concocting a similar rent-seeking strategy in its campaign to diversifying the national economy by integrating the agricultural sector.¹³¹⁷ However, much different from the streamlined sectors of oil and diamonds where a few chosen companies filter both resources and revenues, the agricultural sector is characterized by a complex labyrinth of economic and social actors each playing a pivotal role in the sector's overall development. In an attempt to capture the rents of the agricultural sector, the government enacted a state-centric policy funneling financial resources to public companies and farms while undermining the institutions and organizations set up to provide assistance to the production of the peasantry. The adoption of "liberalized authoritarianism" within the political sphere, allowing some democratic practices and procedures while manifesting authoritarian tendencies of social control, allowed limited spaces of criticism as a strategy to identify perceived threats to their hegemony and should be therefore targeted with persecutions or restricted access to public resources.¹³¹⁸ The NGO and CSO sectors were both targeted as such.

This chapter is designed to draw together the central threads throughout this study destined to further expose how the government has intentionally used its public presence in the rural economy to both stunt private economic initiatives, all the while depriving its peripheral populations from public resources and broad-based opportunities for socio-economic development, with the overarching goal of maintaining political dominance in areas where its physical presence is minimal. This strategy is furthered by systematically undermining attempts of non-state actors to provide resources and development assistance, thereby discouraging them from filling the absence left by a government organized around a

¹³¹⁷ Lesleigh Cameron, *Reversing the Resource Curse in Angola*, UWILL Discover Undergraduate Conference, UWill Discover 2017, University of Windsor, 2017, 1. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/uwilldiscover/2017/posters2017/5/>.

¹³¹⁸ Zefanias Matsimbe & Nelson Domingos, "Angola's 2017 Elections and the Start of a Post-Dos Santos Era", *Journal of African Elections*, 17, no. 1, (2018), 5. DOI: 10.20940/JAE/2018/v17i1a1.

strategy of political dominance through an intentional strategy of structural resource deprivation.

The rural actors that do benefit from the rural economy are designed to be dependent on the MPLA's approval. In this chapter, we will see concrete examples of how the political domination through resource scarcity thesis plays out between different socio-economic actors on different geographic scales. First, we will see how the government's hostility to the NGO sector has contributed to its overall fragility. Secondly, we will further investigate the role of UNACA as the principal social organizer of the peasantry. Third, we will see three different case studies laying out how political ecology and the manipulation of resources strengthens the grip of the MPLA throughout the peripheries, both nationally and locally.

6.1 NGOs get squeezed

To begin, we will focus on the NGO sector and see how the government has mobilized its administrative apparatus in an attempt to coerce these actors into taking more politically favorable positions, while exerting persistent pressure on their financial lifelines. As mentioned in §4.3.4, the regulation of the NGO sector was a constant concern of the Angolan government. Legislation affecting these organizations, directly and indirectly, was submitted consistently throughout the end of the war and into the period of peacetime (2000, 2002, 2007, 2011, 2015).¹³¹⁹ Given the central role that NGOs have played in mobilizing rural resources, controlling and coopting them would be a natural response for a regime structured on the exploitation and redistribution of resources as a means of state patronage. The changing regulatory structure is itself a central strategy of the government to keep its perceived adversaries off kilter and on the defensive. These constant shifts have left NGOs exposed to potential sanctions from the government, leading many of them to tread lightly for fear of reprisals and avoiding potentially controversial positions, while authorities took advantage of these regulatory ambiguities to impose government control over the limited space afforded to the independent civil society¹³²⁰ that is not already occupied by government-backed groups created as models for the other organizations to follow.¹³²¹

¹³¹⁹ Dates refer to when laws or decrees were declared, not when they were actually implemented, which could take years. Refer to the table "Laws governing NGOs" below in the following section.

¹³²⁰ Schubert, "Democratização", 87.

¹³²¹ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

Even without a burdensome regulatory apparatus, the conditions of working in Angola are already made difficult due to a hostile administrative atmosphere, elevated prices and costs within the country due to an overvalued currency, and logistical difficulties of bringing in people and the resources necessary to carry out their programs. A report by the INGO World Learning found that nearly 50% of NGOs active in Angola in 2010 were dependent on international donors, while 40% of these organizations received less than \$50,000 for the implementation of their programs.¹³²² As time went by and donors moved on from emergency relief, many NGOs eventually turned into metaphorical ghosts, their traces left in homes and communities, existing in all but name or ceasing their activities entirely. Targeting NGO access to foreign donor financing could directly weaken over half of the entire sector. Confronted with these sobering statistics that put into further question the relatively significant numbers of NGOs active in the country as detailed in §4.3.6, the government decided to double down on squeezing the sector's waning resources.

6.1.1 WEAPONIZING LEGAL-RATIONAL AUTHORITY

In its attempts to regain its control over the countryside, the administration of José Eduardo dos Santos enacted various decrees beginning in 2000 to set regulations for the CSO and NGO sectors destined to burden them through a sclerotic bureaucracy aimed at reining in national, foreign and international financial support. A concerted attempt to control the resources mobilizing the NGO sector focused intently on financial resources. In 2001, the government created the Law on the Status of Public Utility. This law was ostensibly made to provide public funding to help promote the NGO sector. In reality, it attempted to divide the NGO community by creating a privileged section that would be officially recognized as serving the 'public good', thereby leaving other NGOs open to questioning.

Given that it was the government defining the "public utility" and choosing which organizations fit the criteria, it was clearly a biased exercise designed to lift up its allies by bestowing upon them a fabricated sheen of prestige, trying to insert its influence into the

¹³²² USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability*, 22.

designated organizations, and attracting other NGOs in need of funding further into the government's sphere of influence, while attempting to ostracize those not compliant to government's demands. The aforementioned study found in 2010 that only 13.2% had officially secured the status, due to a combination of unclear regulations, general uncertainty on how to apply, and the government slow-walking applications that should otherwise meet the criteria.¹³²³ The meager 2010 data on the 2001 law shows the government was not particularly interested in providing public resources to the NGO sector, but rather picking favorites and imposing its influence. Finding out where and how other organizations were spending their money was however a pressing concern for the regime.

¹³²³ USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability*, 20.

Tableau 28 - Laws governing NGOs

Decree/Date of implementation	Description	Controlling Body
Decree n° 14 of 1991 Law on Associations	Allow legal establishment of CSOs & NGOs to participate in a broad range of activities	<i>Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias</i> (UTCAH, Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance) Established by decree n° 30 of 11 Sept. 1998, organ of the <i>Ministério de Assistência e Reinserção Social</i> MINARS (Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration)
Approved 22 Nov. 2000, published 5 of 23 February 2001 Regulation of associations of public interest Decree n° 5 of 2001 Law on the Status of Public Utility	Set of regulations that provide eligibility for regular public funding, according to specific criteria	UTCAH
Decree n° 84 of December 2002, implemented in 2004 Regulation of NGOs	Strengthen oversight on NGOs through UTCAH, designed to discipline their activities	UTCAH
Decree n° 2 of 31 August 2007	Establish laws on foreign workers, immigration	UTCAH
Decree n° 2 of 2011	Allows CSOs to provide products & services as private entities, operating as non-profits	UTCAH
Decree n° 34 of 12 December 2011	Establish laws to combat money laundering & financing terrorism	UTCAH
Decree n° 74 of 23 March 2015, revokes decree n° 84 of 2002	Establish new regulations on NGOs	UTCAH
Decree n° 80 of 13 April 2015	UTCAH closed down (article 3). Replaced by the <i>Instituto de Promoção e Coordenação da Ajuda às Comunidades</i> (IPROCAC, Institute for Community Aid Promotion and Coordination) by same decree, (article 2), remains part of MINARS	UTCAH closed down Replaced by IPROCAC, part of MINARS
Decree n° 74 of 23 March 2015 – Invalidated by court in 2017, reinstates decree n° 84 of 2002	Increases control of NGOs through new operating mechanisms, burdens foreign financing of activities.	IPROCAC (moved to the <i>Ministério de Ação Social, Família, e Promoção da Mulher</i> (MASFAMU, Ministry of Social Action, Family, and Women Promotion))

Source: Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 2006; CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 38; Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change*, Position Paper 3, 2005; Francisco Flávio Germano Jorge, *Abordagem dos Sectores que Integram o Sistema de Prevenção e Combate ao BC-FT*, Conferência sobre a Preparação da Avaliação Mútua do Sistema de Prevenção Combate ao BC/FT/P de Angola, Luanda, Sept. 2019. <https://www.bna.ao/uploads/%7B16086fa9-186a-4c94-814a-c44af6eee46d%7D.pdf>; Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 2001; *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 51, Luanda, 13 April 2015: 1585; *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 39, Luanda, 23 March 2015: 1101-1108; USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade da Organização da Sociedade Civil para Angola em 2017*, Washington D.C., 2017, 3. <https://adpp-angola.org/images/Civil-Society-Organization-Sustainability-Index-CSOSI-report.pdf>.

With the end of war, the government changed its approach to the way NGOs were administered through decree n° 84 of 2002 (implemented in 2004) strengthening the oversight role of the *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, Technical Unit on Coordinating Humanitarian Aid), its coordinating body. The decree sought to regulate the NGO sector by centralizing policy by bringing them all under the responsibility of UTCAH, which itself brought together representatives from all the other ministries. The 2002 law was “explicitly designed to ‘discipline’ NGOs” and was commonly seen as a “repressive instrument of control”.¹³²⁴ One of the central targets of the legislation was monetary supervision. The decree demanded that NGOs, foreign and national, had to open up their bank accounts and provide their previous year’s spending as well as their assumed spending for the year to come, handing their financials over to the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Social Assistance and Reinsertion. NGOs working in the sector of micro-credit were not specified.¹³²⁵ The burdensome regulations also had the direct impact of redirecting NGO resources away from program implementation towards dealing with the accumulating bureaucratic tasks, burdening not only finances, but also the precious time and effort of their administrations and personnel on the ground. These burdens went well beyond finances.

6.1.2 LIMITING THE SCOPE OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION

The new regulation also specified that NGOs were “to abstain from ‘political and partisan actions’ and it conditions the employment of expatriates and demands detailed reporting to the governmental coordinating body UTCAH”.¹³²⁶ At the time, UTCAH considered that it was “not taken sufficiently seriously as a national authority, particularly by the international NGOs”.¹³²⁷ Its influence would be significantly strengthened by this law and its role in enforcing the others to come. This enforcement body would attempt to bring

¹³²⁴ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 2005, 23.

¹³²⁵ UNDP & Angola, *ANG/03/011 – Programa de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento do Sector Micro e Pequeno Empresarial Angolano*, Documento do Projecto, Luanda, 2011, 26.
https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/AGO/00037249_Prodoc-AEP.pdf.

¹³²⁶ Vines, Shaxson & Rimli, *Angola: Drivers of change, Position Paper 3*, 2005, 23; Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society”, 7.

¹³²⁷ Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001*, 33.

the NGO sector to heel, as the distrust toward these organizations was shared throughout government agencies,¹³²⁸ despite their vital role in service provision and assistance.

As an indicator of their important role to play in alleviating poverty and misery, a study conducted in twelve provinces with the support of the FAO between November 2002 and April 2003 found that “2 657 000 Angolans were vulnerable and required food or other types of assistance or may require assistance in the short term”.¹³²⁹ As a means to limit the public space to maneuver, NGOs were to keep their missions limited to the very real need for humanitarian and emergency responses only, abstaining in particular from engaging in campaigns infused with human rights work or democracy building.¹³³⁰ Humanitarian and emergency assistance was obviously a pressing need at this moment, but the UTCAN regulations also came just at the moment when the integration of human rights work and democracy building were gaining ground among the donor community. Working on the promotion and defense of human rights in the country was generally viewed by officials as hostile and an intrusion into the public domain reserved for the government.¹³³¹ This hostility lasted throughout the presidency of José Eduardo dos Santos, consistently targeting freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and weaponizing the security and judiciary systems to impose these authoritarian tendencies.¹³³² Furthermore, partnering with foreign entities even brought up paranoid questions of patriotism and loyalty to the Republic.¹³³³

In October 2006, for example, the Minister of Territorial Administration Virgílio Fontes Pereira denounced national NGOs for being beholden to foreign interests.¹³³⁴ Virgílio Pereira was clearly expressing one of the more extreme views of the MPLA nomenclatura. At the exact same time he was decrying ‘foreign interests’ in Angola, other international programs were underway in the country and even in direct collaboration with the government. The Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA) is a prime example. CLUSA is a major American NGO principally financed through USAID, but with

¹³²⁸ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society”, 4.

¹³²⁹ Groppo, *et al.*, *Land tenure support*, 2004.

¹³³⁰ Amundsen & Abreu, “Civil Society in Angola”, 7.

¹³³¹ USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability*, 2010.

¹³³² The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, *Angola: “They want to keep us vulnerable” – Human Rights Defenders Under Pressure*, World Organization Against Torture, Geneva, March 2015. https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/angola_obs_eng_19_mars_2015_ok.pdf.

¹³³³ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

¹³³⁴ [n.a.], “Governo cerca ONGs” *Folha* 8, Luanda, 7 Oct. 2006: 18, in *Extractos da imprensa Angolana sobre questões sociais e de desenvolvimento*, Centro de Documentação (CEDOC), Development Workshop, Luanda, Oct. 2006.

a diverse financial stream. At times CLUSA partnered with the American gas company Chevron¹³³⁵ while it was also financed through the Angolan government's *Banco de Fomento Angola* and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

CLUSA was such a major player that it was put in charge of implementing the *Programa de Desenvolvimento Agrícola e Financeiro* (ProAgro Angola, Agricultural Development and Finance Program) over a five-year period.¹³³⁶ Working alongside the Ministry of Agriculture, the program ran from 1 October 2006 until 30 September 2012, focusing on four components of: cooperative development, agricultural production and technical assistance, facilitating access to financing, and the promotion of rural market connections.¹³³⁷ The direct collaboration of CLUSA with the Ministry of Agriculture shows the government was clearly willing to work with Western actors when they are acting under clear supervision. A clash between the government and NGOs appeared inevitable.

While Angolan authorities have played lip service to the important role NGOs play in socio-economic development, due to their reliance on their services and resources to deliver it, in reality these same authorities have still not fully accepted the multiple roles assumed by the NGO sector. According to Nuno Vidal, CSOs and NGOs are being increasingly pressured to tailor their action to technical issues of social assistance to communities in an isolated, micro and fragmented perspective.¹³³⁸ This process of isolation, reduction and fragmentation has been crafted through a conscientious political strategy of threats, cooptation, and administrative restrictions. This has pushed NGOs into three different positions vis-à-vis the government: acquiescence to its political position, attempting to maintain a constructive yet somewhat independent relationship, or confrontation against the restrictive, authoritarian framework.

¹³³⁵ [n.a.], "Chevron signs farming assistance MOU with USAID, CLUSA in Angola", *Oil and Gas Journal*, Tulsa, 10 Aug 2009. <https://www.ogj.com/general-interest/companies/article/17275903/chevron-signs-farming-assistance-mou-with-usaid-clusa-in-angola>.

¹³³⁶ Angop, "Projectos agrícolas começam a ser financiados pelo Banco de Fomento Angola", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 24 July 2007. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2007/6/30/Projectos-agricolas-comecam-ser-financiados-pelo-Banco-Fomento-Angola,fb4b937b-ff9c-49eb-a82f-69df65c71d15.html.

¹³³⁷ Angop, "ProAgro termina actividades de apoio agrícola em Angola", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 9 Oct. 2012. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/mobile/noticias/economia/2012/9/41/ProAgro-termina-actividades-apoio-agricola-Angola,4dfdd3e2-3c84-4460-a889-6590ccbecfb4.html?version=mobile.

¹³³⁸ Nuno Vidal &, Justino Pinto de Andrade, (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral*, 2º Quinquénio 2009/2010 – 2014, Relatório de Progresso, Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Editora Firmamento/Lisbon, Media XXI, Jan. 2015, 18.

Through legal procedures and extra-legal threats, the government has attempted to marginalize groups that take on issues and advocacy that go beyond basic development. Activities such as advocating for good governance practices, promoting human rights, monitoring corruption or assuming the function of a watchdog by demanding accountability still remain taboo subjects. Given their restrictive spaces for development, NGOs active in these areas are often pushed to take ‘extraordinary’ actions in order to bring public attention to the issue.¹³³⁹ The notion of ‘extraordinary’ is highly relative to the authoritarian context in which it takes place, as many of these actions would be considered normal in a Western democracy.

For example, in the province of Bengo in July 2015, five political activists were detained in prison as they were visiting it to shed light on another group of fifteen people imprisoned for allegedly planning a *comp d'état*. The five activists were Nelson Sul D'Angola, a journalist for DW Africa, Rafael Marques de Morais and Pedro Narciso of the NGO SOS Habitat, and João Malivendele and Jesse Lufendo of the NGO OMUNGA. These five were “retained” by the police themselves, accused of “taking photos of the façade of the prison”, “conducting interviews”, and “playing politics (*fazer política*) in a penitentiary”.¹³⁴⁰ In this case, their actions themselves were not ‘extraordinary’ *per se*, but the fact that they would travel to a penitentiary to document the situation of fellow activists is itself ‘extraordinary’ according to the logic of the MPLA.¹³⁴¹ The example of Padre Pio’s *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Building Communities) will be described below in §6.3.6 as the ‘extreme’ measures took the form of the local communities of the Gambos physically blocking road

¹³³⁹ Personal interview with Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

¹³⁴⁰ Glória Sousa & Cristiane Vieira Teixeira, “Jornalista Nelson Sul D'Angola e quatro ativistas angolanos libertados”, Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 23 July 2015. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/jornalista-nelson-sul-dangola-e-quatro-ativistas-angolanos-libertados/a-18603286>.

¹³⁴¹ A personal anecdote of the sensitivity of the simple act of taking pictures in Angola reveals the dominating and paranoid mindset of the security forces in Angola. In August 2017, right around the parliamentary elections granted, I was visiting the governmental compound in downtown Luanda with an Angolan friend, Father Manuel “Bumba” Gaiola, when we found ourselves in front of the imposing Parliament building. The dominating size, harmonious colonial architecture and exquisite paint job makes the building truly unique in the landscape of the capital. We enquired with the security guard how to organize a visit to the ‘people’s house’ and then asked if it would be possible to take a photo of the building right in front of us from outside the closed gates. The simple act of asking if taking a picture is permitted is itself an indicator of the mindset of the country and the blurred lines between ‘normal’ and ‘extraordinary’ actions. Clearly suspicious of our presence, the reflex of the security guard was to immediately ask: “To take it [the picture] where?” (*Para levar onde?*). We were both baffled by the question and replied that it was for personal memories. The security guard told us it was forbidden to take a picture of the building. In all seriousness, he proposed a second option. On the other side of the four-lane street behind us was a giant billboard covering up a construction site behind it. On the billboard were pictures of the most famous landmarks in Luanda, the Parliament building included. The security guard thus pointed us across the street and told us we could walk over to the billboard to take a picture of the picture of the Parliamentary building that was, again, sitting right in front of us.

access with rocks and branches to a vital local water source in protest of the government's plan to build a major water pump system.

Those determined to push ahead with their activities are hounded by a constant surveillance state of local MPLA collaborators or secret police. Placing such restrictions on the NGO sector is not unique to Angola, however. In fact, this has been a strategy that has emerged across the African continent in the 21st century.

Box 9 - African countries enacting anti-NGO policies or legislation (2004-May 2019)

Enacted measures restricting activities (12)	Have pending or impending measures (6)	Measures abandoned, rejected by legislature or invalidated by courts (6)
Algeria Burundi Egypt Ethiopia Rwanda Sierra Leone South Sudan Sudan Tanzania Tunisia Uganda Zambia	Egypt Malawi Mozambique Rwanda Sudan Zambia	Angola Congo-Brazzaville Kenya Malawi Nigeria Zimbabwe

Source: Godfrey Musila, *Freedoms Under Threat: The Spread of Anti-NGO Measures in Africa*, Special Report 2019, Washington D.C., Freedom House, 2019, 3. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2019/spread-anti-ngo-measures-africa-freedoms-under-threat>.

The inclusion of Angola in this chart is misleading, however. While it is true that the decree n° 74 of 23 March 2015 setting extraordinary burdens on foreign donors financing NGO activities in Angola was invalidated by the courts in 2017, and therefore justifying its inclusion, the vast timeline of 2004-2019 should also include the restrictive regulations introduced in 2004, 2007 and 2012. The government's focus on the NGO sector would merit its proper place in both the first and third column of the chart above.

On 23 March 2015, the executive passed decree n° 74, which would lead to a significant overhaul of the NGO sector through its oversight of foreign financing, burdensome regulatory framework, and strict controls over the organizations' programs. The decree declared that authorities could determine where NGOs operate and what programs they should enact, as well as declaring them liable for severe infractions in cases of "harmful acts to the sovereignty and integrity of the Republic of Angola" and could even be shut down if an NGO went over two years without performing "activities beneficial to the

community”.¹³⁴² By giving authorities direct decision-making powers over the programs and activities implemented, the decree effectively tied the NGO sector’s work directly to the government by ultimately breaking down any wall of independence from the government.¹³⁴³ In a bid to control the flow of financial resources, the decree also required NGOs accepting foreign financing to ensure that their financiers were not under investigation for criminal activity and that the financial agreement between the donor and the NGO had been approved by authorities.¹³⁴⁴ These extraordinary demands to essentially investigate their donors came after the government had already passed legislation crafted for this same issue.

Decree n° 34 of 12 December 2011 was nominally passed for national security purposes in a bid to crack down on money laundering and the threats of financing terrorism within Angola and abroad. Through this 2011 decree, financial exchanges in and out of the country were put under greater scrutiny, making the 2015 financial regulations on NGOs even more burdensome and allowing authorities to follow all financial transactions between donor bodies and their workers on the ground. This financial regulation gave the government the ultimate oversight of the activities being undertaken on the ground, giving the government a much more detailed picture of the sector than that provided by the UTCAH and IPROCAC directories.¹³⁴⁵

Again working along the lines of manipulating resource flows, one of the key strategies employed by the government to reduce NGO activities is the burdensome bureaucratic and administrative system imposed on the organizations trying to conform to the Kafkaesque regulatory framework. Notably, the regulatory state demands that each NGO must receive an official registration certificate through the Ministry of Justice, have their name published in the *Diário da República* (Government Gazette), as well as obtain a notary certificate to officialize the organization, a process that generally takes “at least five years” to finalize.¹³⁴⁶ For donors or interested organizations, that requires a minimum of medium-term planning as five years in the world of international development programs is a significant investment given their notoriously short-sighted and results-driven agendas. Furthermore, the NGOs must first register locally where they plan on implementing their programs,

¹³⁴² ICNL, *Comments on Angola’s Presidential Decree No. 74/15 on the Regulation of Non-Governmental Organizations*, Washington D.C., 4 Sept. 2015, 1.

¹³⁴³ CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, 38.

¹³⁴⁴ ICNL, *Comments on Angola’s*, 1.

¹³⁴⁵ Refer to §4.3.6 for the summary of the data collected by these two governmental bodies.

¹³⁴⁶ USAID, *The 2010 NGO Sustainability*, 20.

creating a regulatory system that ultimately promotes an urban bias and even Luanda-centric agenda. For the organizations setting up outside of Luanda, the process therefore requires multiple travels in between the local area of operations and the provincial capital, which drains significant resources itself.

6.1.3 STUNTING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIMITING SPACES

The government's zeal to impose constraints and arbitrary limits on activities and issues that are declared too 'political' not only suppresses those topics into an underdeveloped social discourse, but it simultaneously limits the capacity of the population to appropriate the discursive spaces emerging in established peacetime. The weak engagement of these areas, such as human rights, democratization, transparency and corruption creates a lopsided civil society where a few NGOs take on the full burden with limited resources and little to no institutional support. According to professor Fernando Macedo, who also founded the NGO *Associação Justiça, Paz e Democracia* (AJPD, Association for Justice, Peace and Democracy), one of the NGOs identified as being 'elite' in §4.4.4, one of the biggest potential consequences of the government's cooptation and pressure campaigns on CSOs and NGOs is the reduction of the diversity of these organizations themselves.

By 'making an example' of certain NGOs, this strategy dissuades others from nearing the unwritten red lines imposed. In doing so, these NGOs knowingly or not acquiesce to the government's restricted vision of what the civil society can and should do, and which areas they should renounce from engaging in for threat of reprisal. This runs the peril of making them less representative overall of the natural diversity of Angolan society and instead reducing them to a specific structure that risks conforming to a "homogenization" of organizations by avoiding confrontation with the government and conforming to specific models.¹³⁴⁷ This is a valid point to make, and the position surely comes from personal

¹³⁴⁷ Nuno Vidal & Justino Pinto de Andrade (coord), *Projecto de Pesquisa-Ação Processos de Democratização e Desenvolvimento em Angola e na África Austral*, 2º Quinquénio 2009/2010 – 2014, Relatório de Progresso, Luanda, Chá de Caxinde-Editora Firmamento/Lisbon, Média XXI, Jan. 2015, 10.

experience as it was reported that the government had threatened to ban AJPD in 2008 for its work on human rights, coming only three months after the Angolan authorities closed the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Angola.¹³⁴⁸ Furthermore, the general pressure felt by the NGOs to conform to the regime disallowed effective formal organizing of horizontal partnerships, thereby weakening the overall local associative networks in Angola and undercutting the ability of engaged civil society actors to present an organized, united front against the government.¹³⁴⁹ Dismantling and undoing the creation and strengthening of horizontal relationships created by NGOs and CSOs is a not so subtle strategy of the government to maintain its power over the most active segments of the civil society and redirect public discourse away from issues it could be rightly criticized for.

Here we argue that the government's pressure on the NGO and CSO sectors are doubly nefarious. Beyond reducing the natural diversity of civil society engagement and overall discourse, by squeezing the sector through burdensome regulations the government is sharpening already existing pressures, which in turn leads these organizations to a diminished or even distorted work product. In their never-ending quest to finance the next project, NGOs can be pressured to adopt exaggerated or manipulated rhetoric or work product in order to justify not only their current activities but also their future projects. This phenomenon is common throughout the NGO sector and is certainly not unique to Angola. Yet, the government's constant pressure heightens this tendency, thereby further potentially manipulating and degrading the quality of the studies produced by these organizations. As funding sources dry up due to burdensome regulations as mentioned above, NGOs either have to choose a more conciliatory position privileging government access by massaging their studies to better conform to the official discourse, or the NGOs are pushed to exaggerate their findings to distort reality into a discourse more favorable to pique donor interest by sounding the alarm about impending conflicts or imminent necessities.¹³⁵⁰

In all honesty, the exaggerations found within the 2010 study written by Guilherme Santos and Inácio Zacarias *Pesquisa sobre Diferendos e Conflitos de Terras e as Formas da sua*

¹³⁴⁸ International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). Attempt to ban the AJPD – AGO 001 / 0908 / OBS 149, Paris, 8 Sept. 2008.

¹³⁴⁹ Juliana Lima, “Des « printemps arabes » à la « nouvelle révolution » en Angola » Mobilisation et contestation politique dans l'après-guerre”, *Afrique contemporaine*, 245, no. 1, (2013): 30.

¹³⁵⁰ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

Resolução (Research on land disputes and conflicts and the forms of their resolution), led by ADRA and financed by *Ajuda Popular da Noruega* (APN, Norwegian People's Aid), were one of the main motivators of this research project itself. The report claims that land conflicts in Angola were so serious and occurring so often that "the possibility that organized revolts occurring are very visible" and that this issue of land conflicts should be treated "as an emergency" given how serious the situation was becoming.¹³⁵¹ An otherwise extremely well-researched and important study on land conflict resolution in Angola, this exaggerated, alarmist rhetoric of impending rural social mobilizations due to systematic land conflicts was destined for the Norwegian donors and not based in reality on the ground.

My fieldwork was in part organized around probing this idea of rural social organizing around land conflicts, but there was almost literally none to be found, in Huíla province at least. If the government did not put so much pressure on the financial resources of the NGO sector, these unfortunate exaggerations would be less necessary, though still present given the nature of the 'development industry' as it has evolved. NGOs could focus their precious resources on producing work products more in line with the complex dynamics affecting the everyday lives of Angolans, and the work produced would be more in line in solving everyday problems rather than the creative license of workers seeking out donors' interests.

The direct effect of these laws was to generally weaken NGOs working in Angola, reducing their resources and scope of intervention. They have aimed at controlling not just financial resources but, just as importantly, the influx of ideas. By squeezing the NGO sector out of the countryside, their propagation of 'Western' ideals of human rights, democracy, accountability, and empowerment all followed them out, leaving only the seeds already sown. Their risk of propagation would be handicapped by the structural difficulties inherent to rural human geography. Likewise, by cutting out the participation of these organizations, they left the peasantry to the mercy of the government officials, further solidifying the relationship of dependency. This has effectively left traditional and smallholder farmers in a weakened space of institutional support. Ultimately, the accumulation of these regulations inevitably hindered the agricultural sector's ability to rebuild, handicapping the most promising means of socio-economic development in these areas.

¹³⁵¹ Santos & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 13.

6.2 Cutting off pathways to independent rural resource accumulation

In the previous section, we saw how the government has promoted its legal-rational authority through a neo-patrimonial, authoritarian strategy to weaponize, coopt, control, and in some cases diminish the NGO sector. Alongside this approach, the government has employed clear methods of resource control and rent capture to strengthen its grip on the levers of power across the rural economy. At the local level for the average farmer, the strategy centers around the economic and social centripetal forces produced by the *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, The Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola). Accompanying the associations, cooperatives, and commercial enterprises in the agricultural sector is a variety of state-owned enterprises providing services to these rural economic agents. As we will see, the legacy of the ‘socialist’ state still commands a dominating presence across the rural economy, though we will demonstrate that its neglect has created serious systemic problems across the agricultural sector.

The rebuilding of the rural economy is in fact a highly selective program based on three objectives: First, the major public investments have been funneled into attempts to modernize agricultural production, notably the state-owned enterprises and a series of state-run farms backed by Chinese loans. Broad-based ‘modernization’ initiatives aimed at the small scale and communal farming sector have not featured prominently in this strategy. This development strategy has left little room or interest in traditional smallholder agriculture, while also discouraging private entrepreneurship finding itself in disloyal competition against State-Owned Enterprises (SOE). The desire to modernize also requires the adoption of a second objective: the professionalization of the rural workforce. Paradoxically, in a replica of the Portuguese colonial era, many of the aforementioned medium and large size farms rely on a foreign workforce,¹³⁵² often Portuguese or Brazilian, called onto the job.

However, adopting modern techniques and methods of production is a costly endeavor and requires a significant capacity of investment, either through savings or the use

¹³⁵² IFC, *Creating Markets*, 47.

of loans. This calls for the promotion of foreign investment into the rural economy, embodying the third objective. Despite the declared economic ‘liberalization’ launched in the mid-1980s, by the turn of the 21st century President José Eduardo dos Santos was still warning that developing the private sector posed an “imminent danger” to the socialist revolution.¹³⁵³ Rather than safeguarding the socialist revolution, the real “imminent danger” the private sector posed was potentially loosening the authoritarian grip the government had on the nation’s economic production.

Materializing this fear of the private sector developing in the peripheries, the Angolan financial system has in reality been structured to undermine private investment initiatives in the rural economy.¹³⁵⁴ Despite having the third largest banking sector in Sub-Saharan Africa with a seemingly endless number of banks in Luanda, one on every street corner it seemed, hardly any of them choose to lend for agricultural purposes, amounting to only 5% of total loans.¹³⁵⁵ This reluctance stems from a past of systematic non-payment. Between 2011-2013, the rate of repayment was a dismal 2.2 percent.¹³⁵⁶ The other option available to average farmers to access the tools of modernization is through the formation of a cooperative or association and adhering to UNACA, a ‘mass organization’ designed to represent the interest of the peasantry.¹³⁵⁷

6.2.1 COOPERATIVE CAPTURE AND UNDERMINING UNACA

As described in §3.1.5, modern-day UNACA has evolved to become the preeminent institution for organizing the main rural economic actors through associations and cooperatives. Furthermore, alongside the *Estações de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (EDAs, Agricultural Development Stations), it is one of the principal links in the government’s response to rural socio-economic development, tasked with providing much-needed resources to increase agricultural production. It has a national presence in the form of a “confederation”, present in all eighteen provinces as “federations”, and in 157 out of 164

¹³⁵³ Ferreira, “Nacionalização”, 4.

¹³⁵⁴ See also §3.3.2 for an overview of the different streams of financing that support the agricultural sector as a whole.

¹³⁵⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 47.

¹³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹³⁵⁷ Angola, *Programa de Extensão*, 8.

municípios in the form of local “unions”.¹³⁵⁸ This gives the organization, at least on paper, a truly national presence at the local level. Seeing as the rural populations were arguably left the most destitute from the effects of war and the post-war political agenda that marginalized them even further, public assistance in providing tools, seeds, fertilizers, logistics, market access and technical support would be essential in both recovering losses and reestablishing a sustainable livelihood. More than a time-limited, specific program targeting particular areas, UNACA has been charged with providing a permanent, nation-wide economic support role. However, multiple reports¹³⁵⁹ contest the capacity, engagement and effectiveness of UNACA in bringing public support to the associative and cooperative sectors.

The organization’s mismanagement and its role in undercutting the development of the overall rural economy is evidenced by UNACA’s systematic underresourcing of the organization’s workers themselves, producing in turn dire effects for its purported beneficiaries. This was due in part to the legal framework of cooperatives and associations that had constrained these organizations until an attempt at modernization of the sector finally occurred in 2015. Prior to this time “cooperatives were regulated as associations with production, consumption, and common services objectives, not business activity”.¹³⁶⁰ This left peasant cooperatives and associations vulnerable to volatile market prices for key in-puts and fertilizers, in a weak position to negotiate prices for selling their commercial production, and their decapitalization has left them dependent on state-owned companies to provide key services such as mechanized field preparations, irrigation systems, and general infrastructural projects.

These largely political decisions are coupled with the serious competition of globalization alongside the harsh climatic realities of the sector, where “90 percent of production losses in sub-Saharan Africa were linked to droughts between 2003 and 2013”.¹³⁶¹ In order to improve their economic model, a new cooperative law n° 23 of 31 August 2015 was officially unveiled in an April 2016 conference intitled “*Cooperativismo como modelo*

¹³⁵⁸ According to the *Organização Cooperativista dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (The Cooperativist Organization of Portuguese-Speaking Countries) website. See: <https://www.portolocplp.org/organizacoes/unaca> (accessed 14 June 2020).

¹³⁵⁹ See: ACORD, *Development in Conflict*, 50; Morais & Pacheco, *Diagnóstico*, 2-3; Clover, *Framing issues*, 2007; Kalweyo, “Camponeses”, 2003.

¹³⁶⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 105.

¹³⁶¹ World Bank, *Options for Increased Private Sector Participation in Resilience Investment: Focus on Agriculture*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2017, 14. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/969921521805628254/pdf/Options-for-increased-private-sector-participation-in-resilience-investment-focus-on-agriculture.pdf>.

empresarial sustentável e rentável e o seu impacto no fortalecimento da economia nacional” (Cooperativism as a sustainable and profitable business model and its impact in strengthening the national economy) aimed at changing the legal status of cooperatives in Angola from ‘non-profit organizations’ to business-oriented organizations that are exempt from paying taxes, have negotiation power with buyers and suppliers, and can more easily access bank loans.¹³⁶²

Until 2015, the peasant cooperative and association sector was therefore constrained by an antiquated framework built on a ‘non-profit’ system that undermined the foundations for the development of the sector, but these constraints are in line with the structural scarcity ideology motivating the government’s policies. In January 2012, a report coming out of Cuanza Norte province found 34 workers had not received a salary for ten months, with the hardest hit being those working at the *município* level not being paid since February 2011, while their provincial counterparts had not received a salary since July of the same year.¹³⁶³ The report specifies that the disruption at the *município* level is the gravest threat to the assistance of the peasants as those workers represent the relay between UNACA and the distribution of the resources to the farmers themselves.

A similar report in January 2018 found that nine UNACA workers posted in Soyo *município* in Zaire province had not been paid for eight years, noting that some of the workers were reduced to “begging” to feed their families. According to UNACA’s statistics, Soyo has 3,750 peasant members distributed between 85 associations and 25 cooperatives.¹³⁶⁴ A similar experience played out in Bengo province where UNACA went from thirty-five workers to twelve because of a lack of payment: six of the provincial workers went unpaid for two years, while another six workers at the *município* level, whose salaries depend on the members of the cooperatives themselves each paying in a monthly contribution of 100 kwanzas,¹³⁶⁵ went eight years without receiving a salary.

¹³⁶² Cristóvão Neto, “Lei das Cooperativas é apresentada”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 1 April 2016. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/investimentos/lei_das_cooperativas_e_apresentada.

¹³⁶³ ANGOP, “Funcionários da Unaca sem salários há 10 meses”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 20 Jan. 2012. http://angop-as31.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2012/0/3/Funcionarios-Unaca-sem-salarios-meses,530c7783-8b2f-4f70-9f33-5a6da2e92745.html.

¹³⁶⁴ Angop, “Funcionários da UNACA no Soyo sem salários há oito anos”, *Sapo*, Lisbon, 10 Jan. 2018. <http://tpa.sapo.ao/noticias/sociedade/funcionarios-da-unaca-no-soyo-sem-salarios-ha-oito-anos>.

¹³⁶⁵ Angop, “UNACA quer ter cooperativas modelo no país”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 30 Sept. 2019. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/8/40/UNACA-quer-ter-cooperativas-modelo-pais,3273a788-26a1-4205-953c-fe96a0f63672.html.

This financial mismanagement nearly cut the workforce by two-thirds, thereby drastically reducing its capacity to respond to the needs of the province's 16,334 members distributed between 123 associations and 105 cooperatives.¹³⁶⁶ Another report from 2017 out of Malanje found six UNACA workers had not received a salary for seventeen months, while fourteen others categorized as “*presidentes municipais (colaboradores)*” (*município* presidents (collaborators)) had not received a salary since 2011 (approximately seven years). According to Malanje's provincial president of UNACA, António Inácio Manuel, the budgetary problems stem from a ‘decentralization’ policy¹³⁶⁷ enacted in 2011 wherein UNACA's budgetary control moved from its previously autonomous status managed through the *Delegação Provincial das Finanças* (Provincial Delegation of Finances) to being dependent on the Ministry of Agriculture.¹³⁶⁸ In other words, the ‘decentralization’ of UNACA led to the centralization of its financial capacity and, ultimately, blocked its ability to function properly as the lack of payments that accrued thereafter attest to.

This significant shift in financial resource control occurred shortly before the August 2012 elections, suggesting a political motive for tightening control over the sector. Similarly, given the huge time lapse in the back payment of salaries, it is significant to note that most of these reports came out after the election of João Lourenço (2017) and had been kept out of the media until then. This attests to both the fear and loathing of the workers unable to navigate an unresponsive and sclerotic bureaucracy, as well as the authoritarian nature of the regime of José Eduardo dos Santos who preferred maintaining a superficial image of competency rather than a properly functioning government serving the needs of his people.

The general lack of resources across the peasantry incentivizes small-scale farmers to adhere to opportunities for assistance or find other means to make a living. Receiving

¹³⁶⁶ Angop, “Funcionários da UNACA no Bengo sem salários há oito anos”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 7 Feb. 2019. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/1/6/Funcionarios-UNACA-Bengo-sem-salarios-oito-anos,02e28592-9aa0-4245-b175-bddfedac12d6.html.

¹³⁶⁷ Though little decentralization has actually taken place since it was officially launched in 2001 and strengthened in the 2010 Constitution, *municípios* are in charge of “municipal and urban planning, agriculture and rural development, primary health care, education, municipal police, water and sanitation[.]” (World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 45). However, actual resource allocation to fund programs remains in the hands of the central government and provincial authorities, leaving *municípios* unable to “perform any functions with respect to the development and implementation of economic and social plans for their constituencies” (*Ibidem*).

¹³⁶⁸ Club-K, “Trabalhadores da UNACA há 17 meses sem salário”, Luanda, 21 Dec. 2017. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30592:trabalhadores-da-unaca-ha-17-meses-sem-salario&catid=41026&Itemid=1083&lang=pt; Ana Gomes, “Trabalhadores da UNACA contam 17 meses sem salários”, *O País*, Talatona, 2018. <https://opais.co.ao/index.php/2017/12/22/trabalhadores-da-unaca-contam-17-meses-sem-salarios/>.

UNACA assistance is only available to those who adhere. While the government promotes participation and enrollment in the organization, ensuring the proper functioning of the associative and cooperative structures does not appear to be a priority. In fact, shortly after taking over the administration, the Ministry of Agriculture under João Lourenço produced a scathing document claiming that “the inexistence of agricultural cooperatives” makes it “impossible for producers to benefit” from the various programs designed to support them, including the incapacity to share costs, debts, and collectively negotiate.¹³⁶⁹ Its analysis of the peasant associative sector was equally as damning.

It found that an associative sector capable of managing risks for future development plans, able to combine tools and services in collective solidarity, capable of managing and upkeeping the infrastructure necessary to their production, and able to depend on a system of mutual insurance in function with the risks faced by the sector was likewise inexistent.¹³⁷⁰ Cooperatives and associations as understood in their original definition, characterized by ideals of mutual solidarity, independence, democratic and collective management, and collective bargaining power are inexistent in Angola. In their place remains a sort of hybrid sector lacking the notions of spontaneous and independent organizing, democratic governance, and instead dependent on the government to validate their existence in order to access services provided by these structures. UNACA’s evolution under the leadership of President João Lourenço will be briefly addressed in §7.3.2.

6.2.2 LAND CONFLICTS DESTABILIZE THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

While the mismanagement of the organization’s finances constitutes a potentially fatal structural weakness to the associative and cooperative movement, these same organizations are facing further difficulties due to the complexities and ambiguities written into both the laws governing their own organizations as well as their relation to the current Land Law. As mentioned in §4.4.2, in 2013 the government worked with a number of civil society organizations on reforming the laws governing the associative and cooperative sector,

¹³⁶⁹ MINAGRI, Government of Angola, *Plano de Desenvolvimento de Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário: 2018-2022*, Luanda, April 2017, 60-61.

¹³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

as they were seen as lacking a viable structural foundation.¹³⁷¹ While the structural framework of the organizations was addressed by the law, another foundational principle remains a similar threat: the access to land titles.

In order to officially register with UNACA and take advantage of its potential services, the land the cooperative works needs to be under official title.¹³⁷² By working the land together within a recognized cooperative structure, the members then have improved access to training, tools, inputs such as fertilizers and seeds, and services (machinery, veterinary, irrigation) offered by UNACA and partner companies. However, as these farmers were legally structured as “non-profit organizations” until April 2016, their actual structure sharing resources and profits have remained in administrative limbo.

While the issuance of land titles is technically free, it is a bureaucratically complicated process that requires a strong knowledge of the administrative state, the cooperation of multiple government agents and agencies, and considerable personal resources allowing the petitioner to amass the documents needed for the overall process, the travel costs to the different competent institutions as well as the likely necessary payment of “*gazozas*”, or bribes, in order to acquire the documentation and get it through the bureaucratic hurdles.¹³⁷³ The extensive documentation is difficult for rural communities to procure or provide, leaving many peasant cooperatives to persist in informality and thus unable to transform into beneficiaries. For example, between 2015 and 2018, UNACA recorded 1,983 new cooperatives, though only 1,388 of these were legally established.¹³⁷⁴ According to these statistics, the lack of land title therefore undermines nearly 30% of the cooperative sector. At a more local level, in the *município* of Cacuso in Malanje province, a World Bank study of *município* data found that of the 979 peasant associations and 98 cooperatives, only one was

¹³⁷¹ Angop, “Lei das Cooperativas vai preencher lacuna no ordenamento jurídico”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 11 Dec. 2013. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2013/11/50/Angola-Lei-das-Cooperativas-vai-preencher-lacuna-ordenamento-juridico,583e04ab-aaa2-4997-8f7e-be420aa9a13a.html.

¹³⁷² Ana Paulo, “Angola – Desapropriação de terras inviabiliza cooperativas”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 22 Jan. 2019. <https://landportal.org/pt/news/2019/02/angola-desapropriação-de-terras-inviabiliza-cooperativas>.

¹³⁷³ For a guide on how the process is organized, see: USAID, *Direito a Terra*, 2008.

¹³⁷⁴ Paulo, “Angola – Desapropriação”, 2019.

legally registered.¹³⁷⁵ This reveals a local reality to a larger problem. At the national level, of the 2,900 cooperatives claimed as members by UNACA, only 1,380 of these are legalized.¹³⁷⁶

This situation has created a serious problem not only for the productivity of the cooperatives, but also for the integrity of the organizations themselves as they become easy targets for land invasions by outsiders usurping portions of land. As the government has made recent attempts to further reform the cooperative sector, one of UNACA's major demands is putting more resources into fighting illegal land occupations that have become more and more commonplace.¹³⁷⁷ This represents an interesting new dynamic in the post-José Eduardo dos Santos era of UNACA. The land occupations that the organization is denouncing have been historically linked to figures linked to the MPLA party. Coming out against these land occupations after the arrival of João Lourenço demonstrates the increased freedom to criticize the government in this new era, as well as a means for UNACA to create an image of greater independence from the government.¹³⁷⁸

6.2.3 DISINCENTIVIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL MARKETS

The incentive to register with UNACA does however provide the government with the vital resource of identification of the economic agents as well as creating a symbolic connection between the farmers and the government in areas where its presence is notoriously sparse. If UNACA cannot pay its own workers, a logical causation would be its diminished capacity to provide assistance to the peasantry. This centralization of resource allocation of UNACA is but another example of the government's will to dominate and dictate the actions of rural economic actors (the peasantry) through the strategic withholding of vital resources. However, this centralization of resources leaves certain sectors of the rural

¹³⁷⁵ World Bank, *International Bank for Reconstruction Development Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Loan in the Amount of EUR 105.5 Million to the Republic of Angola for the Commercial Agriculture Development Project*, Report. No: PAD20297, Washington D.C., May 2018a, 112 p. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/863641527823851667/pdf/ANGOLA-PAD-05092018.pdf>.

¹³⁷⁶ Angop, "UNACA quer ter cooperativas modelo no país", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 30 Sept. 2019. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/8/40/UNACA-quer-ter-cooperativas-modelo-pais,3273a788-26a1-4205-953c-fe96a0f63672.html.

¹³⁷⁷ Angop, "Responsável sugere cooperativas numa única entidade", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 8 Nov. 2018. https://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2018/10/45/Responsavel-sugere-cooperativas-numa-unica-entidade,35c0cf26-19c5-4851-9202-ea72b2e769fd.html; Angop, "UNACA quer ter", 2019.

¹³⁷⁸ I thank my director for expanding on this insight.

economy dependent on state-owned enterprises (SOE), exposed and vulnerable to the volatility of the international oil market. Likewise, the heavy presence of public companies occupying key areas of the agricultural sector disincentivizes the development of private entrepreneurship due to the unfair competition and distorted market effects afforded by the full governmental support of these companies.

As the government's ability to finance its general budget is strictly related to the price of oil, unforeseen drops in value mean certain programs and institutions get defunded based on political priorities (or lack thereof). The global financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent crash of oil prices hit Angola's economy hard. While prices slowly recovered years after, the calamitous event was a foreshadowing of what was to come. The precipitous and sustained drop in oil prices between mid-2014 and early 2016 produced "one of the largest oil-price shocks in modern history" falling 70%¹³⁷⁹ and further shrank the budget of the Angolan government. The state-owned enterprises dominating economic spaces in the rural economy (Gesterra, SOPIR, Mekanagro) would all see their budgets take a hit as a squeeze on public finances led to further funding prioritization and deprioritization. The public investments in the rural economy took a hit across the board. Between mismanagement, deprioritization, and purposeful divergence of resources, the concrete effects of this latest oil volatility have had dilapidating effects on the agricultural sector, as can be seen in the following examples.

6.2.4 DEFERRED PRIORITIES

The mismanagement of programs destined for the development of peasant agriculture went beyond UNACA. One major example is the *Programa de Aquisição de Produtos Agropecuários* (PAPAGRO, Agricultural and Livestock Products Purchasing Program).¹³⁸⁰ The program was created in 2013, on the idea of creating a production and distribution network for smallholder farmers organized in cooperatives. Inconveniently, it was launched right before a major drop in oil prices. The program was designed to offer the means and logistics for the transportation of the agricultural production from participating cooperatives to processing centers distributed throughout the country, then enter into the national distribution network with the produce eventually ending in urban markets and even

¹³⁷⁹ World Bank, *With the Benefit*, 51.

¹³⁸⁰ For the origins of PAPAGRO, see §3.3.2.

supermarket chains.¹³⁸¹ While a positive influence on paper, the program was shut down by 2017.

By 2015, the program had already consumed US\$500 million and it was taking on criticism by peasants for its slowness in paying for goods and services rendered.¹³⁸² It was found in 2018 to owe millions of kwanzas in back payments to peasants having sold their goods to the program without receiving compensation in return. The amount of debt owed to the peasants was reported to range between 142 million¹³⁸³ and 300 million kwanzas¹³⁸⁴ with many farmers claiming to border on bankruptcy due to the lack of payment. Beyond not paying the farmers for their goods and services (such as transporting their own goods to warehouses and distribution centers), it is estimated that approximately 40% of the produce bought up by the Papagro program was wasted.¹³⁸⁵ This is unsurprising and it extends beyond wasted foodstuffs. The country lacks a national coordinating system that connects producers, retailers and wholesalers for the distribution of goods in the agricultural, livestock, and timber sectors, becoming particularly acute in the coordination between the agricultural, commerce and transportation sectors.¹³⁸⁶ Not only were the smallholder farmers indebting themselves by selling their produce to the government, the huge level of perished goods was a serious detriment to promoting national food security, which was itself purportedly one of the main goals of the program's creation.

The *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento dos Perímetros Irrigados* (SOPIR, Development of Irrigated Perimeters in Angola), a state-run company created in 2005 to manage irrigation projects in the push for modernizing the agricultural sector also experienced grave financial difficulties. After the arrival of João Lourenço to the presidency, SOPIR was found to owe over 2.5 billion kwanzas in back pay dating back to 2015 to its workers in Moxico, Luanda and Huíla provinces, which led to a secondary problem of sabotage and vandalism of farming

¹³⁸¹ Angonotícias, “Ministério do Comércio lança microcrédito para dinamizar PAPAGRO”, *Agora*, Luanda, 27 Aug. 2015. <http://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/48123/ministerio-do-comercio-lanca-microcredito-para-dinamizar-papagro>.

¹³⁸² José Zangui, “Papagro consumiu 515 milhões de dólares em três anos”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 8 June 2016. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/papagro-consumiu-515-milhoes-de-dolares-em-tres-anos>.

¹³⁸³ Mirene de Cruz, “Agricultores arriscam falência por atrasos nos pagamentos do PAPAGRO”, *Expansão*, Luanda, 12 Dec. 2018. <http://www.expansao.co.ao/artigo/106328/agricultores-arriscam-fal-ncia-por-atrasos-nos-pagamentos-do-papagro?seccao=5>.

¹³⁸⁴ Armando Chicoca, “Unita pede que Governo pague as dívidas para com os camponeses”, *Voice of America*, Luanda, 28 May 2015. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/namibe-unita-divida-contraida-camponeses/2793882.html>.

¹³⁸⁵ José Zangui, “Papagro consumiu”, 2016.

¹³⁸⁶ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 52.

equipment attributed to dissatisfied workers.¹³⁸⁷ 300 workers went unpaid and those working in the provinces had been forced to abandon their posts to find other ways to earn a living.¹³⁸⁸ This explains the generalized poor state of SOPIR's projects as identified by one of the latest World Bank reports.¹³⁸⁹

As of 2019, seven of the irrigation projects were still owned by the state, the rest being abandoned or privatized, though nearly all of them are listed as “partially in production” except for that of Caxito in Bengo province (“in production”) and Missombo in Cuando Cubango province (“abandoned”).¹³⁹⁰ The lack of complementary infrastructure, especially electricity, has contributed significantly to the poor state of the irrigation infrastructure, as well as the poor planning of its construction and implementation in areas where such agricultural production is not predominant (Cuando Cubango and Moxico) and the locals benefitting from the service lack the technical training to use and maintain such systems.¹³⁹¹

Another example of a lack of complementary infrastructure undermining the push for industrialization is that of the public company SODEPAC managing the Agro-Industrial Pole of Capanda (Malanje province). Begun in 2009, the government has invested over US\$1.2 billion in the development pole, the largest of its kind of Angola involved in the production of maize, soybean, sugar cane, cassava, beans, rice, horticulture, fruits, oils, and livestock.¹³⁹² It comprises over 411,000 hectares of farmland worked by over 28,000 families. It was reported to have requested a US\$200 million investment by the government in infrastructure, particularly irrigation, in order to properly maintain the development project.¹³⁹³ The SODEPAC development pole has “not operated at full capacity due to poor management and the credit and capacity constraints of small and medium players”.¹³⁹⁴ The

¹³⁸⁷ Angop, “Sopir deve mais de dois biliões de kwanzas a trabalhadores”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 23 April 2018. http://cdn1.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2018/3/17/Sopir-deve-mais-dois-bilhoes-kwanzas-trabalhadores,1e70e36d-ed93-445d-a5d3-3251ea872bf4.html.

¹³⁸⁸ Osvaldo Nascimento, “Mais de 300 Trabalhadores Da SOPIR Sem Salários Há 33 Meses”, *Portal de Angola*, Luanda, 25 Jan. 2018. <https://www.portaldeangola.com/2018/01/25/mais-de-300-trabalhadores-da-sopir-sem-salarios-ha-33-meses/>.

¹³⁸⁹ See §3.3.2 for information on the establishment of SOPIR.

¹³⁹⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 76.

¹³⁹¹ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 62.

¹³⁹² IFC, *Creating Markets*, 11, 74.

¹³⁹³ Valdimiro Dias, “Falta de investimentos trava pólo agro-industrial de Capanda”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 9 Oct. 2017, 12. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/uploads/files/2019/10/angola-sob-ameaca-do-xisto-americano-edicao-80.pdf>.

¹³⁹⁴ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 11.

news of the privatization caught the Chairman of the Board of Directors Carlos Fernandes off guard, claiming the company was in “good financial health and technically operational”.¹³⁹⁵ Despite having the greatest irrigation potential of the various publicly-owned agricultural projects, the request for further public investment was denied and is among the areas the government is now looking to divest from.¹³⁹⁶ The situation of the company remains in flux.

Tableau 29 - Agricultural irrigation projects led by SOPIR

Project name and location	Size & activity	Responsible entity	Financing source	Status
Matala (Huila)	11,000 ha Storage/infrastructure support Tomato processing	Sodmat (public enterprise for local development)	N/A ^a	Partially in production, canal needs rehabilitation
Humpata (Huila)	1,300 ha	N/A	China Development Bank	N/A
Ganjelas (Huila)	6,220 ha Citrus production	Soganjelas (to be privatized)	China Development Bank	Partially in production
Missombo (Cuando Cubango)	1,040 ha Variety of crops	SOPIR; to be privatized	N/A	Abandoned in May 2016 for lack of funds
Caxito (Bengo)	3,600 ha Fruits (banana production)	Caxito Rega	China Development Bank	In production
Luena (Moxico)	1,000 ha	Cachito Rega	China Development Bank	Partially in production

^a While the original source is unknown, the project was reportedly in need of US\$45 million to rehabilitate the site (Angop, “Matala’s irrigated perimeter needs USD 45 million”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 22 March 2018. https://www.angop.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/economia/2018/2/12/Matala-irrigated-perimeter-needs-USD-million,80e0eaf1-2b99-4a31-b664-614de63d3146.html).

Source: André Samuel, “Caxito Rega aumenta produção em 21% em 2019”, *Mercado*, Luanda, 21 May 2019. <https://mercado.co.ao/negocios/caxito-rega-aumenta-producao-em-21-em-2019-AC545075>; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 75; Lourenço Bule, “Perímetro irrigado do Missombo abandonado por falta de dinheiro”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 17 May 2018. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/provincias/perimetro_irrigado_do_missombo_abandonado_por_falta_de_dinheiro_1; Angop, “Huambo: Projecto Bom Jesus/Calenga implanta 29 sistemas de irrigação”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 18 Feb. 2015. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2015/1/8/Huambo-Projecto-Bom-Jesus-Calenga-implanta-sistemas-irrigacao,7b07f80f-8f1b-48e9-a621-5a700e03b9c7.html; Angop, “Sopir deve mais de dois biliões de kwanzas a trabalhadores”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 23 April 2018. http://cdn1.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2018/3/17/Sopir-deve-mais-dois-biloes-kwanzas-trabalhadores,1e70e36d-ed93-445d-a5d3-3251ea872bf4.html.

¹³⁹⁵ Valor Económico, “Sodepac apanhada de surpresa”, *Angonotícias*, Luanda, 23 July 2018. Retrieved from: <http://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/58502/sodepac-apanhada-de-surpresa> (accessed 14 Sept. 2020).

¹³⁹⁶ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 64, 72.

In the *comuna* of Caemplongo, Matala *município* in Huíla province, SOPIR's financial troubles directly contributed to the dysfunction of the *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento da Matala* (SODEMAT, Matala Development Enterprise), which manages the largest irrigation perimeter in the country with its canal measuring 43 kilometers irrigating up to 11,000 hectares. The farm is a recuperation project from colonial times originally built in the 1960s and refurbished beginning in 2008. The company manages the country's only tomato processing plant in the country. SODEMAT was dependent on SOPIR to pay its 95 workers at the time (down from 136 after dozens quit), who had similarly gone over five years without a paycheck, affecting an estimated 470 families and provoking hunger, illness, missed educational opportunities and the general breakdown of the family structure.¹³⁹⁷ In the four years of missed payments, the company has accrued a debt of 90 million kwanzas of missed salary payments for its workers, equivalent to approximately US\$157,000.¹³⁹⁸ Without paid workers, the farmers themselves are tasked with maintaining the irrigation services, including six different cooperatives working in the area totaling over 600 farmers.¹³⁹⁹ These financial woes are not the first time SODEMAT has faced difficulties, however.

When the area was chosen for rehabilitation beginning in 2008, the Spanish/Portuguese national chosen to manage its reconstruction, left unnamed by authorities, fled Angola in 2012 after receiving a US\$10,280,000 payment for the project from the *Banco de Desenvolvimento de Angola* (BDA, Development Bank of Angola).¹⁴⁰⁰ After unsuccessful attempts to recover the money and finish the development project, SOPIR's investigation later found that the contractor's supposed company was not even legally registered in Spain or Portugal.¹⁴⁰¹ While the businessman who fled to Europe has not been charged, the former president of the board of directors of SODMAT, Luís Arsénio Salvaterra

¹³⁹⁷ Jesus Domingos, "Falta de Salário Provoca Fome e Morte de Familiares dos Trabalhadores da SODMAT", *Rádio Angola*, Luanda, 8 April 2019. <https://www.radioangola.org/falta-de-salario-provoca-fome-e-morte-de-familiares-dos-trabalhadores-da-sodmat/>.

¹³⁹⁸ Angop, "Infra-estruturas abandonadas no perímetro irrigado da Matala", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 1 April 2019. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/3/14/Infra-estruturas-abandonadas-perimetro-irrigado-Matala,e4e3f67d-a590-438d-b13a-ac7e8574b7b8.html.

¹³⁹⁹ Angop, "Cooperativas agastadas com gestão do Perímetro Irrigado da Matala", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 19 June 2018. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2018/5/25/Cooperativas-agastadas-com-gestao-Perimetro-Irrigado-Matala,5d03d5df-2c5c-4704-bb76-2b5d6290f998.html.

¹⁴⁰⁰ NJOnline, "Empreiteiro luso-espanhol desapareceu com mais de 10 milhões USD que deveriam reabilitar fábrica de tomate da Huíla", *O Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 19 March 2018. <http://www.novojornal.co.ao/economia/interior/empreiteiro-luso-espanhol-desapareceu-com-mais-de-10-milhoes-usd-que-deveriam-reabilitar-fabrica-de-tomate-da-huila-50340.html>.

¹⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

dos Santos, along with three administrators, were all imprisoned in March 2018 on charges of embezzling around €3.2 million (approximately US\$4 million).¹⁴⁰² Four silos, six irrigation pivots, as well as the tomato processing plant have all been inoperative since 2012 when the money to finance the project was allegedly stolen.¹⁴⁰³ The following president of the board of directors, Cirpriano Ndulumba, asked the government for US\$1.5 million more in financing in order to get the company operational, as it was only 75% completed in November 2017.

Furthermore, a survey of the site found that some of the equipment already installed was not industrial grade and was therefore already outdated before it had even been used at anywhere near its full production levels, capable of processing 12,500 tons of tomatoes per year.¹⁴⁰⁴ The corruption and financial mismanagement of SODEMAT and SOPIR have had serious consequences. The workers in charge of the country's irrigation projects were forced to abandon their posts, imposing additional burdens on both the peasant cooperatives and the budding commercial sector dependent on these irrigation services. All in all, SOPIR's legacy of irrigation amounts to 105,000 hectares of the estimated 5,744,815 land under production, totaling approximately .2% of the land, while the rest of the land depends on natural climatic conditions.¹⁴⁰⁵ The solution for this poor performance offered by the government has been to begin a search for reliable private investors to take over the public investments. SOPIR is currently in the process of privatization.

Furthermore, the *Empresa Nacional de Mecanização Agrícola* (Mecanagro, National Agricultural Machinery Company), which was the key state companies tasked with integrating the use of mechanization into the agricultural sector, was similarly shut down by João Lourenço whose administration subsequently earmarked the equivalent of €8.4 million to fill the backpay of its employees.¹⁴⁰⁶ In Malanje, around one thousand workers went over a year

¹⁴⁰² Lusa, "Administradores de sociedade estatal agrícola angolana detidos por desvio de dinheiro", *Observador*, Lisbon, 7 March 2018. <https://observador.pt/2018/03/07/administradores-de-sociedade-estatal-agricola-angolana-detidos-por-desvio-de-dinheiro/>; João Katombela, "Desvio de 4 milhões de dólares leva Ex-PCA da SOD MAT à cadeia", *O País*, Talatona, 2018.

¹⁴⁰³ Angop, "Infra-estruturas abandonadas no perímetro irrigado da Matala", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 1 April 2019. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/3/14/Infra-estruturas-abandonadas-perimetro-irrigado-Matala,e4e3f67d-a590-438d-b13a-ac7e8574b7b8.html.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Isabel Dinis, "Fábrica da Matala precisa de mais 1,5 milhões USD", *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 6 Nov. 2017. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/fabrica-da-matala-precisa-de-mais-1-5-milhoes-usd>.

¹⁴⁰⁵ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 32.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Lusa, "PR de Angola extingue empresa estatal de Mecanização Agrícola e privatiza CAFANGOL", *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 7 Nov. 2018. <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/pr-de-angola-extingue-empresa-estatal-de-mecanizacao-agricola-e-privatiza-cafangol-10142666.html>.

without receiving a salary, while 49 workers were reported to be at risk of starvation due to their lack of resources.¹⁴⁰⁷ In declaring its closure, the administration of Lourenço pointed out that Mekanagro as a company had fallen into such a state of disrepair that it had ceased being a productive asset to the economy *a decade ago*.¹⁴⁰⁸ In Huíla province, the closing down of Mekanagro by João Lourenço led certain *municípios* to create ‘mechanization brigades’ that integrate the trained Mekanagro workers and the company’s used tractors.

The areas having formed a ‘brigade’ in Huíla are Jamba, Caconda, Chicomba, Quipungo, Caluquembe, Cuvango and Matala.¹⁴⁰⁹ This idea of “brigades” had been floated since 2012 by the then-head of *Gestão de Terras Aráveis* (Gesterra, Management of Arable Lands)¹⁴¹⁰ Carlos ‘Calabeto’ Alberto Jaime¹⁴¹¹, who was also the head of Mekanagro since its founding in 2001¹⁴¹², ultimately responsible for the company’s performance. While a substitution for Mekanagro needs to be found at the national level, it remains to be seen how the *municípios* will be able to manage the modified structure of ‘mechanization brigades’ at the local level, though the maintenance of such expensive machinery will be a burden on already limited local budgets.

The *Empresa Distribuidora de Produtos Perecíveis de Angola*, (FRESCANGOL, Firm for the Conservation and Trading of Perishable Products), a public company in operation since 1984 responsible for maintaining the country’s cold storage infrastructure of meat, eggs, fruit and vegetables through a string of supermarkets was also found in 2016 to have not paid its more than 200 workers for over a year.¹⁴¹³ The workers finally went on strike after attempts to negotiate with the company’s leadership and appeals to the Ministry of Agriculture failed.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Isaías Soares, “Funcionários da Mekanagro dizem passar fome em Malanje”, *Voice of America*, Luanda, 25 July 2018. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/funcionários-da-mekanagro-dizem-passar-fome-em-malanje/4499590.html>.

¹⁴⁰⁸ Emphasis my own. Vanda de Carvalho, “Extinção da Mekanagro Anuncia Ministro Nhugnga”, *Rádio Ecclesia*, Luanda, 17 May 2018. <https://www.radioecclesia.org/angola/economia/21789-extincao-da-mekanagro-anuncia-ministro-nhunga>.

¹⁴⁰⁹ [n.a.], “Brigadas de mecanização substituem a Mekanagro”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 15 Aug. 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/brigadas-de-mecanizacao-substituem-a-mekanagro>.

¹⁴¹⁰ A public company created in 2004 to prepare, administer, and accompany land transfers, as well as managing State industrial farm assets. See §3.3.3 and §6.3.2.

¹⁴¹¹ [n.a.], “Taxa de mecanização ainda é muito baixa em Angola”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 23 Jan. 2012. <http://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/32903/taxa-de-mecanizacao-ainda-e-muito-baixa-em-angola>.

¹⁴¹² Economia & Finanças, “Perfil”, *Jornal de Economia & Finanças*, Luanda, 12 Sept. 2014. <https://www.pressreader.com/angola/jornal-de-economia-financas/20140912/281633893437321>.

¹⁴¹³ Pedro Borralho Ndomba, “Angola: trabalhadores da FRESCANGOL continuam em greve”, *Deutsche Welle*, Luanda, 25 May 2016. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/angola-trabalhadores-da-frescangol-continuum-em-greve/a-19282866>.

While the workers had gone on strike during the regime of Dos Santos, the company was eventually sold off to private investors in 2018 under Lourenço's administration. The workers' pay remained in limbo despite assurances that the privatization process to the private companies Inalca (51%) and Pecuang (49%) would resolve the issue of unpaid salaries.¹⁴¹⁴ While the company was closed in 2016, the privatization process was only getting finalized in July 2019. The workers' claimed they were only informed about the company's closure via the media. Therefore, the strikes that began before the company's closure continued afterwards, which reportedly lasted until 2018¹⁴¹⁵ when the workers' backpay was finally reportedly resolved.

The transition to peacetime and the euphoria of abundant financial capacity to rebuild the rural economy during the 2000s saw the government make huge bets on major agro-industrial programs and companies, without having a track record of being able to manage large scale, complex investments. Instead of a 'bottom-up' approach aimed at scaling up investments towards an industrialized model, Angolan authorities attempted to follow a hugely consequential faith in the axiom 'build it and they will come', with the operative 'they' being production and profit. This blind faith has had dire consequences, such as the failure of restarting cotton production in Cuanza Sul in 2006 where a more than US\$66 million investment in the sector's infrastructure was unable to produce even a kilo of cotton.¹⁴¹⁶ Cronyism, mismanagement, and poorly planned investments all share the common thread of the government's priorities of maintaining control and domination over the production and distribution of resources flowing throughout the peripheral spaces, rather than the larger goal of rural economic development itself.

The three examples given above cover the sectors of irrigation, mechanized land preparation, and distribution of peasant agricultural production. The prolonged existence of these state-owned enterprises has disincentivized the creation of private companies to develop these sectors, as they would face unfair competition against an authoritarian government keen on establishing its control across the economy. If the public companies

¹⁴¹⁴ Vivo/Lusa, "Extinção da Frescangol deixa supermercados a privados", *Dinheiro Vivo*. Lisbon, 11 July 2016. <https://www.dinheirovivo.pt/angola/governo-angolano-extingue-estatal-frescangol-e-deixa-supermercados-para-privados/>.

¹⁴¹⁵ Isabel Dinis, "Liquidação da Frescangol na fase final", *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 11 June 2019. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/liquidacao-da-frescangol-na-fase-final>.

¹⁴¹⁶ Fernando Pacheco, "Problemas Políticos e da Política Agrícola", *Conversa na Mulemba*, 132, 17 March 2019, 1.

were successful in their various missions, the lack of alternatives would not pose such a conundrum for the development of the agricultural sector. In reality, the weak existence of private alternatives to a system characterized by corruption, inefficiencies, and incompetence has left the government as the ultimate arbitrator and referee of state patronage.

From this position, these state companies all ultimately disrupted the development of Angola's rural economy through gross negligence and the mal-distribution of vital resources. Through these multiple cases of systematic mismanagement across the rural economy, not only are these programs not benefitting the farmers involved, but they are in fact contributing to the sector's further degradation. The issue of asset degradation is severe in Angola as "authorities have paid limited attention to the monitoring of public assets" and "insufficient attention is given to maintenance".¹⁴¹⁷ As we will now see, the documented degraded state of the Chinese-built agro-industrial farms fits clearly into this analysis.

6.3 Rent controls & centralized development

The difficulties engendered through the mismanagement of these programs and organizations destined for the development of the peasantry stem specifically through the deprioritization of these programs coupled with the incompetence to achieve their objectives. The lack of financial resources was claimed to be the main culprit, yet the government was able to inject hundreds of millions of dollars (reportedly up US\$2 billion) in these state-owned enterprises and a string of agro-industrial farms that the government invested in to revamp the sector and position the state to capture the rents of the agricultural sector as the preeminent actor managing them. After describing how the government literally 'bet the farm' on a nationwide agro-industrial model, we will then see examples of resource allocation through elite medium- and large-scale modernized commercial projects (example of Biocom), and manufactured resource scarcity through the politically undermined independent local socio-economic community development project of the Catholic Priest Padre Jacinto Pio Wakassunga's Santo António dos Gambos Catholic Mission.

¹⁴¹⁷ Søren Kirk Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure Ambitions Through Booms and Busts*, Africa Programme, London, Chatham House, Sept. 2018, 26. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-09-14-angola-infrastructure-ambitions-kirk-jensen.pdf>.

6.3.1 BETTING BIG ON STATE FARMS: CHINESE ASSISTANCE

One of the most exemplary and illustrative examples of the state-centric structural resource scarcity argument put forth in this paper is the government's decision to bet the future of the rural economy on a series of massive agro-industrial farms, financed and constructed through Chinese cooperation, though mostly bypassing the country's farmers. Taken alone, this decision could be a viable means to improve food security for the population. Taking into consideration the utter lack of investment and assistance to the rural peasant farmers, however, this massive modernization scheme appears to be producing a "rural countryside without farmers".¹⁴¹⁸ Furthermore, the question of achieving food security is likewise negligible as production is mainly aimed at urban markets, thereby undermining food availability in the peripheries, while gross mismanagement of the farms' production itself further undercuts their efficacy.

China made its entrance into Angola in March 2004 just as the country was emerging from its civil war.¹⁴¹⁹ The budding relationship with China demonstrated the *realpolitik* needs at the time, as the MPLA once held China as enemy number one (on par with the United States) for many years because of its former support of the hostile regime of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire and UNITA under Jonas Savimbi.¹⁴²⁰ Putting their differences aside, Angola found itself awash in oil production and in need of loans for reconstruction. The grinding war had been a significant drain on the national coffers¹⁴²¹ and any significant rebuilding effort would have to be complemented by foreign financial assistance.

For its part, China was looking to consolidate its access to the vital natural resources necessary to continue its growing economic clout, while simultaneously positioning itself on the international stage as a reliable negotiating partner for developing countries.¹⁴²² The flexibility in size and scope of the Chinese loans on offer made them very tempting for the Angolan government looking to invest in massive infrastructure projects. With these new

¹⁴¹⁸ CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 30.

¹⁴¹⁹ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 55.

¹⁴²⁰ Ferreira, "Realeconomie e realpolitik", 82.

¹⁴²¹ As quoted by Ricardo Soares de Oliveira. Then Vice-Prime Minister Jaime Aguilando in 2003 declared the country to be facing a "severe financial crisis" (Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 54).

¹⁴²² Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The real story of China in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 152-153.

options on the table, modernizing agricultural production began attracting more attention among the Angolan elite, while financing of such endeavors slowly rose to become a policy priority. It is within this contemporary historical conjecture that China found its foothold as a key actor in Africa coming first to the aid of Angola before reaching out to other African countries. China's financial resources and economic influence as a major trading partner opened up a key opportunity for Angola's elites to revive their plans to reengage with the rural economy through the creation of so-called socio-economic development plans based on the policies of the 'socialist' past by reinserting the state at the heart of the agricultural sector: rebuilding a rural economic network through the stimulation of large-scale agro-industrial state farms. Importantly, this reinsertion assumed that the government had learned from its past 'socialist' failures, documented in §1.2.4 and §3.1.5.

China has positioned itself for a long-term presence in Angola by building political capital with the government through its use of favorable loan terms, oftentimes backed with oil guarantees.¹⁴²³ In 2004 China stepped in with its most ambitious oil-backed loan to any country at the time: a \$2 billion line of credit with an interest rate one LIBOR percentage point lower than that offered by Western financial institutions, with a built-in grace period included.¹⁴²⁴ This loan marked a major turning point in Sino-Angolan relations for its sheer scale and crucial timing in the reconstruction efforts of the country. The sudden infusion of money, however, sparked a "struggle within the Angolan leadership for access and coordination of disbursement of these funds".¹⁴²⁵ More oil-backed loans followed, reaching US\$4.5 billion worth of credit extended by China's Eximbank.¹⁴²⁶ The loans provided would be destined for key major development projects focused on "infrastructure, telecommunications, and agro-businesses under the Angolan government's National Reconstruction Program".¹⁴²⁷ This Reconstruction Program is managed through the *Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional* (GRN, Angola's Reconstruction Office), "which is exclusively accountable to the Angolan presidency".¹⁴²⁸ This institutional set-up placed the

¹⁴²³ Oliveira & Taponier, "O governo está aqui", 55.

¹⁴²⁴ Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift*, 275.

¹⁴²⁵ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 100.

¹⁴²⁶ Jinyan Zhou, "Neither 'Friendship Farm' Nor 'Land Grab': Chinese Agricultural Engagement in Angola", China-Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., CAIS-CARI, no. 7, 2015, 2. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5652847de4b033f56d2bdc29/t/568c478fa2bab8d5752045b1/1452033935723/CARI_PolicyBrief_7_Mar2015.pdf.

¹⁴²⁷ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 97.

¹⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, 100.

president at the heart of the country's reconstruction and the policies pursued via these loans would reveal the priorities of the Angolan elite as they sought to solidify their positions of dominance while setting the path for the country's emergence into peacetime.

Some critics of China's loan policy in Africa point to the inability of some countries to repay such massive amounts of debt and the possibility that China could take advantage of the indebted countries to take direct control over certain natural resources.¹⁴²⁹ The European Commission noted that in a span of five years (2004-2009), Angola quickly became "China's most important partner on the African continent" showing "the greatest interest in Angola's extractive industries".¹⁴³⁰ In the case of oil-rich Angola, China's principal motivation in this bilateral relationship is the continuation of exploiting Angola's oil resources at favorable prices, while continuing to procure and secure major construction and project management contracts.¹⁴³¹ The relationship nevertheless remains reciprocal, as Angola is able to secure major capital to finance its perpetual reconstruction efforts, though its ability to pay off the loans remains a pivotal leveraging point for China's continued engagement with Angola.

For the Angolans, these major loans marked the beginning of what researchers refer to as the "Angolan mode" of cooperation, allowing the Angolan leaders a level of financial freedom that was rare for a developing country in desperate need of foreign financing.¹⁴³² The budding relationship was firmly rooted in China's quest to ensure market access to natural resources and bilateral trade, conveniently excluding questions on "socio-political reforms or good governance".¹⁴³³ This "financial freedom" was relative, however, as it remained constrained by the power imbalance with the financiers. In the terms of distribution of China's loans, Angola "had little input in these arrangements" given that the financing through the state-run Eximbank "was provided directly to Chinese firms".¹⁴³⁴

¹⁴²⁹ Lusa, "Acordo monetário com a China torna Angola uma 'colónia económica'", *Economia ao Minuto*, Lisbon, 12 Aug. 2015. <https://www.noticiasao minuto.com/economia/435162/acordo-monetario-com-a-china-torna-angola-uma-colonia-economica>.

¹⁴³⁰ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 97.

¹⁴³¹ Zhou, "Neither 'Friendship Farm'", 4.

¹⁴³² Oliveira & Taponier, "'O governo está aqui'", 56.

¹⁴³³ Paulo Conceição João Faria, "The Dawning of Angola's Citizenship Revolution: A Quest for Inclusionary Politics", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, no. 2, (2013): 309.

¹⁴³⁴ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 97.

Nevertheless, the Dos Santos regime took full advantage of the opportunity presented to restructure the country's infrastructure.

Concerning the rural economy, the partnership transformed into the construction of seven agro-industrial state farms, constituting a massive investment by the government into a rural economy that had been largely neglected until the establishment of this new policy.¹⁴³⁵ In phase one of the disbursement of the funds destined for the agricultural sector, out of a global estimated value of US\$216,658,414, US\$194,992,572.60 was financed and US\$185,145,713.44 was disbursed, representing 94.95% of the funds absorbed.¹⁴³⁶ The further phases and loans destined for agriculture appear to have been absorbed into the infrastructure and construction sectors, making it difficult to define how much money was precisely invested into the state farms. Furthermore, according to Elias Isaac, the country director for the Open Society Initiative for South Africa (OSISA), in his activism on transparency and anti-corruption in Angola found that “the Chinese loans into Angola are not accounted for in the national budget so [...] nobody can track Chinese investment in Angola.”¹⁴³⁷ These hundreds of millions of dollars destined for rebuilding the agricultural sector follow the opaque nature of Angolan finances, with José Eduardo dos Santos' Reconstruction Office the sole arbitrator.

6.3.2 INSTITUTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

After decades of government authorities neglecting investment, these seven agro-industrial farms have the potential to become a central driver for the direction of the rural political economy in the country. This policy is putting to the test the MPLA's capacity to truly bring socio-economic development to its rural regions thus far neglected by the

¹⁴³⁵ Manuel Ferreira, “Angola: conflict and development, 1961-2002”, *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 1, no. 1, (2006): 28.

¹⁴³⁶ European Commission, *Country Level Evaluation*, 99.

¹⁴³⁷ Sourced from a roundtable discussion organized by Corruption Watch, a London-based NGO, held in Washington DC intitled “Deception in High Places: The Corrupt Angola-Russia Debt Deal”. The discussion was held by Ken Hurwitz, senior legal officer with the Open Society Justice Initiative, Andrew Feinstein, the South African author of the report exposing corruption in Angola (see: Andrew Feinstein, *Deception in High Places: The Corrupt Angola-Russia Debt Deal*, London, Corruption Watch, 2013) Elias Issac, South African country director for Open Society Initiative for South Africa (OSISA), and Adriano Parreira, the former permanent representative of Angola to the UN in Geneva. While most of the discussion is based on offshore money laundering between Angola and Russia, a short discussion on Chinese loans begins around 49 minutes in. See: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/a-discussion-of-the-corrupt-angolarussia-debt-deal>.

country's economic policies. The seven farms were approved through the Angolan Ministry of Agriculture and the Chinese Department of Foreign Aid within the Ministry of Commerce. Three Chinese companies were awarded the contracts, all financed by the China Development Bank except for one, financed by the Exim Bank: the CITIC Group, China CAMC Engineering, Ltd. (CAMCE) and the China National Electronics Import & Export Corporation (CEIEC).¹⁴³⁸ The loans therefore went from the Chinese banks straight to the Chinese companies, hired to complete the projects in Angola through their subsidiaries.

As the construction progressed, these three companies worked alongside their Angolan counterpart Gesterra, a public company created on 4 March 2004 to accompany the evolution and eventual takeover of these state farms. Gesterra, under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture, is in charge of preparing the groundwork, both literally and figuratively, for the installation of the construction projects.¹⁴³⁹ The contracts were designed to have the Chinese firms hand over full control after five years, with the first two years dedicated to the construction and initial preparation of the farm and the last three focused on training the Angolan counterparts for the full handover of managerial duties, at which time the Chinese companies would be dismissed.¹⁴⁴⁰ The farms are located throughout the country and each one specializes in specific products.

¹⁴³⁸ Zhou, "Neither 'Friendship Farm'", 2015.

¹⁴³⁹ Estefanía Jover, Anthony Lopes Pinto & Alexandra Marchand, *Angola Private Sector: Country Profile*, African Development Bank, September 2012, 62. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Evaluation-Reports-_Shared-With-OPEV_/Angola%20-%20Private%20Sector%20Country%20Profile.pdf.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Zhou, "Neither 'Friendship Farm'", 3.

Tableau 30 - Chinese built agro-industrial state farms

Farm	Location	Chinese contractor	Year project began	Current status	Loan amount in (US\$ millions)	Dimension (ha)	Main products produced
Pedras Negras	Malange	CITIC	2011	Partial production	160/117	10,000	maize, soy, beans, animal feed production
Sanza Pombo	Uíge	CITIC	2012	Partial production of rice and cattle	87.5/129	9,000	rice, cattle, maize, coffee
Longa	Cuando Cubango	CAMCE	May 2012	Partial production	76.6	1,500	rice
Camacupa	Bié	CAMCE	2012	Partial production (community land conflicts)	88.6	3,000	maize, soy, aquaculture
Cuimba	Zaire	CEIEC	Jan. 2014 ^a	Partially in production (170 jobs)	68	3,000	corn, soy, eggs, poultry
Camaiangala	Moxico	CEIEC	2013	Partially in production (50 jobs)	79	5,000	maize, soy, pork
Manquete	Cunene	CEIEC	2014	Paralyzed in 2017, partially in production	85.5	2,000	Rice, maize

a This date corresponds to information provided by Joaquim Duarte, Director of the Cabinet for Studies, Planning and Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture, as reported in Angop, “Zaire: Projecto Agro-indústria no Kuimba arranca em Janeiro próximo”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 23 Nov. 2013.
Source: Zhou, “Neither ‘Friendship Farm’”, 3; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 74-75.

Each farm represents a major economic investment for Angola, especially compared with the meager budget the government traditionally allocates to the agricultural and forestry sector.¹⁴⁴¹ In total, the farms initially cost the Angolan government approximately US\$677 million, wholly financed through Chinese loans. To put that into perspective, in 2014 the entire amount of money dedicated to the official budget for agriculture and forestry was US\$387 million. In the following years, the agricultural budget was slashed even further as the economy weakened, registering a total of US\$205 million in 2015, US\$159 million in 2016, and US\$118 million in 2017. Further investment through loans and the FSDEA would be injected as needs arose.

While the official budget for the agricultural sector continues a downward trend, this does not mean that the government has not invested in its rural economy. Given that the

¹⁴⁴¹ See §3.3.2 for the statistics on the agricultural budget (2000-2018).

hundreds of millions of dollars in loans are not integrated into the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture, these meager budgets do not represent the full amount of investments into the rural economy. In fact, “it is estimated that between \$1.5 and \$2 billion were invested in large-scale agro-industrial projects up to 2016. However, few operate at capacity due to management challenges and insufficient commercial focus”.¹⁴⁴² The strategy of attempting to modernize the sector on an industrial scale carries with it political risks, whether by provoking local land conflicts¹⁴⁴³ or through continued mismanagement of the rural economy. These major industrial investments are not designed for significant impact on rural farmers apart from promoting food security, though this is debatable as will be seen with the Manquete farm in Cunene province, and the limited employment opportunities dependent on the farms’ competent management. Given the industrial size of each farm, the dispossession of land is nearly inevitable in productive areas of the country, though information concerning these land conflicts is currently sparse and deserves further inspection for each of the state farms recently constructed.

6.3.3 SYSTEMIC FRAGMENTATION

Beyond the social dimension of attempting to integrate the farms into their respective local economies as development poles,¹⁴⁴⁴ the other major impediments to the farms’ success arise from the atypical institutional setup the projects were built upon. Any complex unit such as an industrial-sized farm would confront potentially serious difficulties when its ownership changes hands multiple times in the span of only a few years, especially the crucial formative years. Due to the managerial and financial instability explained below, the biggest threat to their success comes from the transfer of the farms’ management as they passed through different institutional hands. The managerial complications first arose through the presidential decree n° 91 of May 2016 declaring the transfer of the management of the farms from Gesterra, the public company initially charged with accompanying the projects to

¹⁴⁴² IFC, *Creating Markets*, 10.

¹⁴⁴³ For the Sanza Pombo farm, see: David Filipe, “Na província do Uíge – Governo contra conflitos de terra”, *Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 28 Dec. 2010. <https://quitexe-historia.blogs.sapo.pt/85277.html>; For the Manquete farm, see: VivaPortal, “Culpa da perda do arroz no Cunene é do Fundo Soberano”, Luanda, 3 July 2018. <https://vivaportal.co.ao/2018/07/03/culpa-da-perda-do-arroz-no-cunene-e-do-fundo-soberano/>.

¹⁴⁴⁴ The influential Development Pole Theory emerged in the 1960s by the French economist François Perroux.

fruition, to the Sovereign Wealth Fund of Angola (FSDEA), then headed by the son of the President, José Filomeno dos Santos.

The decree n° 91 also called for the dissolution of the Board of Directors of Gesterra, headed by three people: Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto, the Chairman of the Board of Directors; Aia-Eza Nacilia Gomes da Silva, administrator; and Eduardo Barros, also an administrator.¹⁴⁴⁵ This had the effect of insulating “Calabeto” and the others from criticism. Stepping down from their positions, two of them moved on to further governmental positions. Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto moved to the position of Secretary of State for the Business Sector of Agriculture. The decree additionally ordered the FSDEA to take over the totality of the social capital of any future concessionary companies in order to keep the farms under state control.¹⁴⁴⁶ However, the president later permitted the concessionary companies to possess up to 49% of the capital if validated by the president himself.¹⁴⁴⁷ This significant change opened up the door to the partial privatization of the profits gained through public investments, but would technically keep the projects under majority control of the state. This strategy of maintaining majority control is a policy of the MPLA party-state, and not necessarily the president, as it will be replicated under the administration of João Lourenço as detailed in §7.3.3.

The seven industrial farms were therefore put under the nominal control of Swiss-based Quantum Global, a private investment firm hired in 2013 to manage the funds of the FSDEA. The CEO of this company, Jean-Claude Bastos de Morais, is a close friend and business partner of the President’s son, José Filomeno de Santos. As soon as the new President João Lourenço was nominated to lead the MPLA’s politburo in April 2018, cementing the exit of José Eduardo dos Santos’ active influence over the party, the newly elected president announced that it would be severing ties with Quantum Global as the asset manager of the FSDEA due to questionable practices managing the country’s US\$5 billion wealth fund.¹⁴⁴⁸ The name and company of Jean-Claude Bastos de Morais had been revealed

¹⁴⁴⁵ [n.a.], “Decreto Presidencial anula funções do Conselho de Administração da Gesterra”, *Correio de Kianda*, 26 April 2017. <https://correikianda.info/decreto-presidencial-anula-funcoes-do-conselho-administracao-da-gesterra/>.

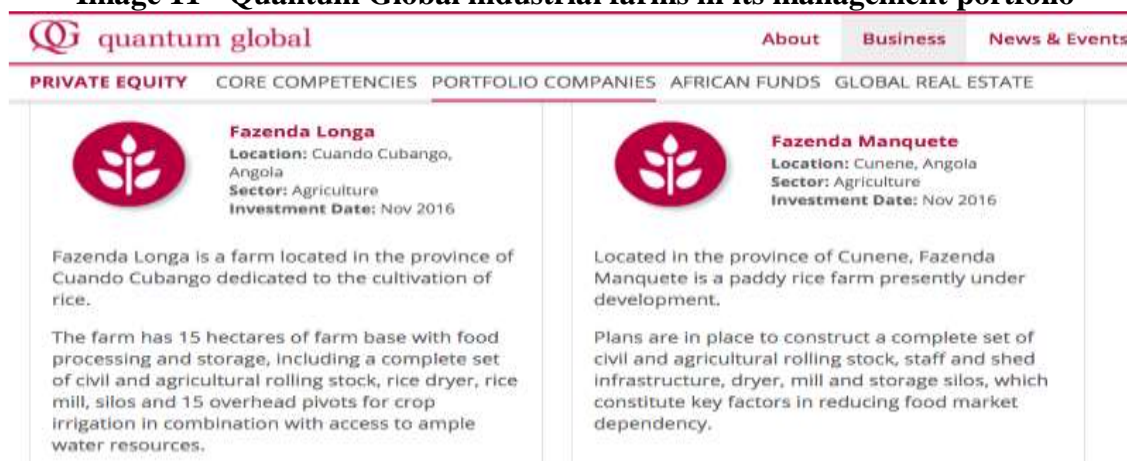
¹⁴⁴⁶ Isabel Dinis, “Governo privatize sete projectos agrícolas”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 16 May 2016. <http://www.valoreconomico.co.ao/economia-politica/item/703-governo-privatiza-sete-projectos-agricolas>.

¹⁴⁴⁷ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2016*, 91.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Herculano Coroado, “Angola’s wealth fund to sack asset manager, president consolidates power”, Reuters, 27 April 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-angola-politics/angolas-wealth-fund-to-sack-asset-manager-president-consolidates-power-idUSKBN1HY2Q3>.

by the Panama Papers investigation implicating the consulting firm KPMG in facilitating the transfer of money into offshore entities and tax havens, involved in moving US\$3 billion in funds to several separate entities in Mauritius.¹⁴⁴⁹ By March the Angolan government declared that it had recovered US\$3.35 billion in financial and non-financial assets.¹⁴⁵⁰ Despite the date of the aforementioned presidential decree being May 2016, the website of Quantum Global¹⁴⁵¹ declares that the farms were officially taken over six months later in November 2016. The information on the management of these farms has since been taken down as of writing on 14 June 2020, but a screen grab of the information confirms this data and describes some of the farms in its portfolio. This six-month gap would prove to be highly controversial.

Image 11 - Quantum Global industrial farms in its management portfolio



Source: Screenshot of official website of Quantum Global (accessed 2 Feb. 2020).

According to the current Chairman of Gesterra Carlos Paím, the decree 91 of May 2016 meant that the FSDEA would immediately take over the seven farms and would be responsible for their management from that moment on.¹⁴⁵² That leaves a six-month gap of managerial opacity during a pivotal moment of institutional vulnerability when the farms

¹⁴⁴⁹ Will Fitzgibbon, *Angolan tycoon's frozen funds highlight KPMG's role in offshore secrecy*, Washington D.C., International Consortium of Investigate Journalists, 23 April 2018. <https://www.icij.org/investigations/paradise-papers/angolan-tycoons-frozen-funds-highlight-kpmgs-role-in-offshore-secrecy/>.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Candido Mendes, "Angola Says It Recovers \$3.35 Billion of Assets From Quantum", *Bloomberg*, New York, 23 March 2019. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-23/angola-says-it-recovers-3-35-billion-of-assets-from-quantum>.

¹⁴⁵¹ Retrieved from the company's official website: <http://quantumglobalgroup.com/businesses/private-equity/portfolio-companies/> (accessed 29 Jan. 2019).

¹⁴⁵² NJOnline, "No Cunene há toneladas de arroz a degradar-se, culpa é do FSDEA, diz Gesterra", *O Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 3 July 2018. <http://novojornal.co.ao/economia/interior/no-cunene-ha-toneladas-de-arroz-a-degradar-se-culpa-e-do-fsdea-diz-gesterra-55812.html>.

should have been ramping up to full operational capacity. Further complicating the timeline, the official dispatch n° 426 of 5 September 2016 of the Ministry of Agriculture officialized the signing of the concessional contracts of five anonymous companies (S.A.) set up by Quantum Global to manage six of the seven farms (Pedras Negras in Malange being the exception).¹⁴⁵³ The companies, all filed as “Sociedade anónima” were listed as Sociedade Cakanduiwa, owner of the farm of Longa (Cuando Cubango); Sociedade de Exploração Agrícola da Kadianga, owner of the farm of Camaiangala (Moxico); Sociedade da Cakanyama, owner of the farms of Cuimba (Zaire) and Sanza Pombo (Uíge); Sociedade Makunde, owner of the farm of Manquete (Cunene); and Sociedade Agrícola-Cakanguka, owner of the farm Camacupa (Bié).

Tableau 31 - Companies taking over Gesterra’s ownership, managed by Quantum Global

Farm	Location	Company
Pedras Negras	Malange	N/I
Sanza Pombo	Uíge	Sociedade Cakanyama, SA
Longa	Quando Cubango	Sociedade Cakanduiwa, SA
Camacupa	Bié	Sociedade Agrícola-Cakanguka, SA
Guimba/Kuimba	Zaire	Sociedade Cakanyama, SA
Camaiangala	Moxico	Sociedade Exploração Agrícola da Kadianga, SA
Manquete	Cunene	Sociedade Makunde, SA

Source: *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 150, Luanda, 5 Sept. 2016: 3666-3672.

The lapse between the decree n° 91 of 2016 and the dispatch n° 426 of 2016 was six months if we consider Gesterra’s claim that the FSDEA had been running the farms since May 2016, but a two month gap also exists between Quantum Global’s declared ownership of the state investment and the official concession of the contracts to the five anonymous companies in September 2016.

Once Quantum Global finally assumed official management over the farms, a new anonymous company was created, Cofergepo, and ultimately put in charge of the daily operation of six of the seven farms (Pedras Negras in Malanje again being the exception). In

¹⁴⁵³ According to a report prepared by the Dutch Embassy in Luanda, the Pedras Negras farm has a direct connection to the Vice President Manuel Vicente. See: Agrix, *Dutch Agrifood*, 2015. Manuel Vicente is also connected to the industrial sugarcane transformation project Biocom below in §6.3.5.

an article written by Jorge Malaquias, he quotes José Suspiro, agricultural engineer and managing director of Cofergepo, claiming that the transfer of the different farms was handled in multiple phases between “June and July of 2016 and September 2017, and the transfer is still incomplete, observing many hindrances resulting from the various interests overlapping with the state”.¹⁴⁵⁴ Overall, there are multiple conflicting reports¹⁴⁵⁵ in the press of when these state farms were transferred from Gesterra to Cofergepo, through the FSDEA managed by Quantum Global. The transfer dates emanating from the reports do not correspond to the official timelines. That said, the reports all purportedly quote from those responsible on the ground and directly involved in the process.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Jorge Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais armazenados e podem ser salvos se a Gesterra quiser”, May 18 2018, Luanda, Club-K.net. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32066:ainda-ha-cereais-armazenados-e-podem-ser-salvos-se-a-gesterra-quiser&catid=9&Itemid=1078&lang=pt.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Taking the Camacupa farm for example, per Quantum Global’s website, the FSDEA claims to have taken over the farm in November 2016, but a news report ([n.a.], “Decreto Presidencial anula funções do Conselho de Administração da Gesterra”, *Correio de Kianda*, 26 April 2017. <https://correiokianda.info/decreto-presidencial-anula-funcoes-do-conselho-administracao-da-gesterra/>) claims Cofergepo took over in mid-December 2016, while another claims November 2017 (Angop, “Fundo soberano investe USD 4 milhões na produção de milho e soja”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 19 March 2018. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2018/2/11/Fundo-soberano-investe-USD-milhoes-producao-milho-soja,f6fc3245-7a4d-4f42-8944-d8ad8057cf00.html). Interestingly, both articles cite the same José Suspiro, agronomist, consultant for Quantum Global and head manager of Sanza Pombo farm.

Tableau 32 - Timeline of different entities managing Chinese-built state farms

Farm	Location	Project Partner of Gesterra	Project start date ^a	Transfer date Gesterra → Quantum Global (according to source)			Transfer date ^d Quantum Global → GoA
				GoA ^b	Quantum Global ^c	News Reports	
Pedras Negras	Malange	CITIC	2011	May 2016	Nov. 2016	2016 ^e	25 Sept. 2018 ^f
Sanza Pombo	Uíge	CITIC	2011 ^g / 2012	May 2016	Nov. 2016	June 2017 ^h / Sept. 2017 ⁱ	Oct. 2018
Longa	Cuando Cubango	CAMC	May 2012	May 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016 ^j / Sept. 2017 ^k	Oct. 2018
Camacupa	Bié	CAMC	2012	May 2016	Nov. 2016	Dec. 2016 ^l / Nov. 2017 ^m / Sept. 2017 ⁿ	Oct. 2018
Guimba/Kuimba	Zaire	CEIEC	Jan. 2014 ^o	May 2016	Nov. 2016	Sept. 2017 ^p	Oct. 2018
Camaiangala	Moxico	CEIEC	2013	May 2016	Nov. 2016	Sept. 2017 ^q	Oct. 2018
Manquete	Cunene	CEIEC	2014 ^r	May 2016	Nov. 2016	Aug. 2016/Nov. 2017 ^s	Oct. 2018

^a All dates sourced by Zhou, “Neither ‘Friendship Farm’”, 2015, unless otherwise identified.

^b GoA = Government of Angola. Transfer ordered by presidential decree n° 91 of 2016. May 2016 date is echoed in the report by Dinis, “Governo privatize”, 2016.

^c According to Quantum Global’s investment portfolio. See: <http://quantumglobalgroup.com/businesses/private-equity/portfolio-companies/> (accessed 11 Jan. 2019).

^d Presidential Decree n°132 of 1 Oct. 2018, specified the privatization of the six Chinese-built projects. A second decree of 3 October declared the privatization of 18 other agro-industrial projects (Lusa, “Angola vai privatizar 24 empreendimentos agroindustriais”, *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 16 Oct. 2018. <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/angola-vai-privatizar-24-empreendimentos-agroindustriais-10008016.html>).

^e See for example: *Angop*, “Malanje: Fundo Soberano investe USD 20 milhões na fazenda Pedras Negras”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 13 Sept. 2017, http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2017/8/37/Malanje-Fundo-Soberano-investe-USD-milhoes-fazenda-Pedras-Negras,548f34c7-9837-4b83-84f9-2633d2544b17.html.

^f Dispatch n°221 of 2018 approves total privatization of farm to Sociedade Agro-Kapanda, S.A.

^g CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, 94.

^h According to António Sousa Dias, manager of Sanza Pombo beginning in the end of March 2018. See Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

ⁱ *Ibid.* Same date confirmed by Club-K, “Futuro das fazendas agroindústrias está ameaçado por indisponibilidade de recursos financeiros”, Luanda, 20 June 2018, https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32376:futuro-das-fazendas-agroindustrias-esta-ameacado-por-indisponibilidade-de-recursos-financeiros&catid=9&Itemid=1078&lang=pt. Club-K is one of the most consistent Angolan sources following the evolution of the Chinese-backed agro-industrial investments.

^j *Ibid.* According to José Suspiro, director of Cofergepo, interviewed in the article. Date confirmed by Carlos Paulino, “Longa volta a produzir arroz em grande escala”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 3 April 2018. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/reportagem/longa_volta_a_produzir_arroz_em_grande_escala.

^k See: Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

^l *Ibid.*

^m *Angop*, “Fundo soberano investe”, 2018.

^u See: Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

^o Date according to information provided by Joaquim Duarte, Director of the Cabinet for Studies, Planning and Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture, as reported in Angop, “Zaire: Projecto Agro-indústria no Kuimba arranca em Janeiro próximo”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 23 Nov. 2013.

^p See: Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

^q *Ibid.*

^r Same date reported in Lusa, “Em Angola, descaso faz apodrecer 250 toneladas de arroz”, *V Digital*, Lisbon-Porto, 3 July 2018. <https://www.vdigital.pt/noticias/mundo/em-angola-descaso-faz-apodrecer-250-toneladas-de-arroz-9543075.html>.

^s Aug. 2016 date is given by Carlos Paim, head of Gesterra. In the same report, the director of the Manquete farm, Paulino César, affirms that the farm has been administered by Cofergepo, contracted by FSDEA, since Nov. 2017. The same Paulino César also mentions that Cofergepo took over in 2016 and sent the Chinese away immediately, before the end of the initial contract. See: Madalena & Mualimusi, “Até seis mil toneladas foram abandonadas pelo FSDEA”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 4 July 2018. <https://vivaportal.co.ao/2018/07/03/culpa-da-perda-do-arroz-no-cunene-e-do-fundo-soberano/>.

Source: Author’s compilation.

Various reports¹⁴⁵⁶ paint a devastating picture of the dysfunction of the farms after they were handed over to the responsibility of Cofergepo, contracted by Quantum Global in the name of the FSDEA. The sources attesting to the degraded state of the various farms nearly all come from people working on subcontract with the FSDEA. In the aforementioned interview of José Suspiro he declared that all of the farms are oversized beyond the capacity of local production potential, presenting high levels of degradation due to their inability to turn a profit, and run the risk of becoming “white elephants” due to their myriad problems.¹⁴⁵⁷

According to the director of the Sanza Pombo farm António Sousa Dias, much of the machinery from the farms of Sanza Pombo, Longa and Camacupa had been severely degraded in only five years, which should normally have lasted twenty years, claiming that only three of the thirty-five tractors worked and other working equipment had been taken out by the Chinese with the approval of Gesterra.¹⁴⁵⁸ When confronted with the litany of criticisms, Gesterra’s new Chairman of the Board of Directors, Carlos Paím denied the reports of mismanagement and pointed the blame at José Eduardo dos Santos’ decree,

¹⁴⁵⁶ See for example Club-K, “Futuro das fazendas”, 2018; Ramiro Aleixo, “Começou o saque do milho e de meios nas fazendas resgatadas pelo Estado”, Club-K.net, Luanda, 30 Dec. 2018. https://www.clubk.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=34498:comecou-o-saque-do-milho-e-de-meios-nas-fazendas-resgatadas-pelo-estado&catid=9&Itemid=1078&lang=pt; NJOnline, “No Cunene há toneladas”, 2018; ANJOS, André dos, “Grandes projectos agrícolas têm graves falhas de gestão”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 17 May 2018. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/grandes_projectos_agricolas_tem_graves_falhas_de_gesta.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

¹⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

reiterating that any responsibility for the farms should have been assumed by the FSDEA after the date of the announcement of the decree in May 2016.¹⁴⁵⁹

A final institutional transfer occurred with the arrival of the new President of the Republic João Lourenço. Shortly after the elections in August 2017, the publication of the Panama Papers by the International Consortium of Independent Journalists (ICIJ) revealed that public funds from Angola's sovereign wealth fund were being used in the personal investment projects of the CEO of Quantum Global, Jean-Claude Bastos de Moraes.¹⁴⁶⁰ The President João Lourenço later fired the director of the sovereign wealth fund, José Filomeno dos Santos in January 2018¹⁴⁶¹ and terminated the contract with Quantum Global in April 2018.¹⁴⁶² Both of the previously mentioned people were sent to jail in an investigation of corruption and later freed, with Jean-Claude Bastos de Moraes returning \$3.35 billion in assets back to the government.¹⁴⁶³ The President's son José "Zenu" Filomeno dos Santos later found himself facing prison time again, this time arrested on charges of illegally transferring US\$500 million to a bank account in London.¹⁴⁶⁴ Finally, another presidential decree n°132 from 1 October 2018 declared the official transfer of six of the seven farms back under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) and the Ministry of Finance, managed once again by Gesterra. This extreme managerial volatility for such complex agricultural

¹⁴⁵⁹ José Madalena & Adelaide Mualimusi, "Até seis mil toneladas foram abandonadas pelo FSDEA", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 4 July 2018. <https://vivaportal.co.ao/2018/07/03/culpa-da-perda-do-arroz-no-cunene-e-do-fundo-soberano/>. Interestingly, none of the press reports interviewed then-Chairman Carlos Alberto Jaime Pinto on the record, thereby disconnecting him from this apparent crisis of mismanagement of national proportions.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Will Fitzgibbon, *Angolan tycoon's frozen funds highlight KPMG's role in offshore secrecy*, Washington D.C., International Consortium of Investigate Journalists, 23 April 2018.

¹⁴⁶¹ NJOnline, "José Filomeno dos Santos libertado por excesso de prisão preventiva – PGR", *Angonotícias*, Luanda, 25 March 2019. <https://www.angonoticias.com/Artigos/item/60699/jose-filomeno-dos-santos-libertado-por-excesso-de-prisao-preventiva-pgr>.

¹⁴⁶² Quantum Global, *Press Release – Quantum Global Seeks a Negotiated Settlement in Contract Dispute*, 17 May 2018. <http://quantumglobalgroup.com/article/fsdea-legal-proceedings-accelerating-value-destruction-of-the-angolan-peoples-investment-portfolio/>.

¹⁴⁶³ Adrian Jimenea, "Angola's sovereign wealth fund recovers \$3.35B from Quantum Global Investment", S&P Market Intelligence, New York, 23 March 2019. https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/trending/GCME9rgYaUW_ExChmieXTw2.

¹⁴⁶⁴ The President's son José Filomeno dos Santos 'Zenu' later found himself facing prison time again, this time arrested on charges of illegally transferring US\$500 million to a bank account in London. He was ultimately found guilty and sentenced to five years in prison (Estelle Maussion, "Angola: Dos Santos family woes continue after Zenu sentenced to 5 years", *The Africa Report*, 19 Aug. 2020. <https://www.theafricareport.com/38020/angola-dos-santos-family-woes-continue-after-zenu-sentenced-to-5-years/>).

investments, notably in the constant change of financial sources, is inevitably detrimental to the farms' development.

After years of unstable management, the state farms returned under full government control. As part of the strategy for the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-22, the Ministry of State for Economic and Social Development was put in charge of preparing the farms for a final handover to private interests organized through an international bidding process.¹⁴⁶⁵ Finally back under state management, the major risk now lies in the government's ability to find a willing private company that is competent, experienced, and ready to take on a large-scale investment risk that has so far yet to become profitable or demonstrate a capacity for financial sustainability. Further complicating the search for private investors is the complete lack of transparency as the "government still does not publish information about completed infrastructure projects, their final costs, or the extent to which they deliver the benefits expected of them".¹⁴⁶⁶ Major rural economic investment represents an important step for the development of the rural economy, improving national food production. But at what price for the rural peasant communities?

6.3.4 MISMANAGEMENT LAID BARE IN CUNENE

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, rice is the fourth most consumed crop in the country, after corn, manioc and beans. Regarding the national consumption of rice, "it is estimated that the production in 2015 was 45.2 million tons, whereas the annual needs were close to 390 million".¹⁴⁶⁷ These statistics demonstrate the stark underproduction of Angola's current agricultural capacity and the serious needs to increase production in the pursuit of food security, especially in the more arid regions of the South where droughts have become more frequent.

¹⁴⁶⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 24. In total, President Lourenço took over 24 agro-industrial structures, preparing them for private sector takeovers (Lusa, "Angola vai privatizar", 2019). João Lourenço's administration will be developed in chapter seven of this study.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure*, 9.

¹⁴⁶⁷ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 94.

Between 2011 and 2013, harvests were severely impacted across central and southern Angola, affecting over 1.8 million people.¹⁴⁶⁸ According to the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) in 2013, 20% of the population in the provinces of Cunene and neighboring Namibe “came under a situation of precarious food security in which they were able to satisfy only a minimum of their basic alimentary needs”.¹⁴⁶⁹ While the situation was the worst in Cunene and Namibe, the drought had a far reaching impact: “In 2012 and 2013, lost cereal and legume production reached nearly 100 per cent in some areas of Cunene, Namibe, Benguela, Kwanza Sul and southern Huíla, and 40 per cent in northern Huíla. The crisis led to a surge of acute under-nutrition in young children, requiring a rapid emergency response”.¹⁴⁷⁰ Aimed at alleviating this regional risk, in December 2013 the Manquete agro-industrial complex was approved by the Cabinet of Planning and Studies within the Ministry of Agriculture, alongside the Ministry of Finance. The farm was initially valued at \$85.5 million. Located in the *comuna* of Manquete, Ombadja *município*, in the semiarid province of Cunene containing nearly one million inhabitants “of which 79.1% live in the countryside”,¹⁴⁷¹ the main economic activities for the local populations are deeply linked to the land through pastoralism and agriculture.

The zoning of the project was to be located on the right bank of the Cunene River, 100 kilometers from Xangongo, the main city of the *município*. The historic, nearly 1,000 kilometers long river, is one of only a few perennial rivers in the arid region, thus its importance to the local populations dependent on the water source for their livelihoods. The zone in question holds an estimated 60,000 inhabitants.¹⁴⁷² When Gesterra marked off the official irrigated perimeter of the farm “more than 100 families were incited to abandon the lands they possessed within the perimeter, in exchange for hopes of reciprocal altruist benefits, according to the great soba of the region, Otchikuso Kondo”.¹⁴⁷³ The project was planned as a regional development hub through the establishment of the farms as a development pole, which would later integrate the production of the local peasants that had

¹⁴⁶⁸ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 40.

¹⁴⁶⁹ CEIC, *Relatório social de Angola 2015*, 177.

¹⁴⁷⁰ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis*, 40.

¹⁴⁷¹ CEIC 2015b: 180

¹⁴⁷² Domingos Calucipa, Agro-Industria na Província do Cunene, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 8 May 2011. <http://www.angolabelazebelo.com/2011/05/agro-industria-na-provincia-do-cunene/>.

¹⁴⁷³ VivaPortal, “Culpa da perda”, 2018.

been forced from their lands. As is the running theme of this chapter, the project did not go as planned.

In the Manquete farm on 3 July 2018, the managing company Cofergepo, hired by Quantum Global, discovered 250 tons of rice sitting in the farm's silos.¹⁴⁷⁴ The rice dated back to the first harvests of the farm in 2015, when it was under the control of Gesterra and its Chinese counterpart CEIEC. There are conflicting reports on the quality of the rice, some saying that it was rotting in the silos,¹⁴⁷⁵ others claiming it had been properly treated and only needed to be dehusked for consumption.¹⁴⁷⁶ Because the tons of rice were harvested previously by Gesterra and CEIEC, Cofergepo claimed they were not responsible for processing the rice and could not take any actions without the authorization of Gesterra.¹⁴⁷⁷ However, the Chairman of Gesterra's Board of Directors, Carlos Paim, categorically denies any responsibility for not having processed and commercialized the rice, instead sticking to his claim that all control of the farm was transferred to the FSDEA upon the presidential decree of May 2016.¹⁴⁷⁸ Officials found similar issues of abandoned grains on the farms of Bié (Camacupa), Moxico (Camaiangala), Sanza Pombo (Uíge) and Longa (Cuando Cubango).¹⁴⁷⁹

In a country where hunger and malnutrition are omnipresent, the local populations became justifiably frustrated upon hearing the news. In Cunene, they called for the rice to be made available to the local communities in order to “*matar a fome*” or appease (literally ‘to kill’) their hunger.¹⁴⁸⁰ Not only were hundreds of families forced to abandon their traditional lands to allow for the farm's construction, but bureaucratic mismanagement has both blocked the farms from commercializing its harvests and kept the locals from being able to access the harvested grains. President João Lourenço intervened to declare the rice would

¹⁴⁷⁴ NJOnline, “No Cunene há toneladas de arroz a degrade-se, culpa é do FSDEA, diz Gesterra”, O *Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 3 July 2018. <http://novojournal.co.ao/economia/interior/no-cunene-ha-toneladas-de-arroz-a-degradar-se-culpa-e-do-fsdea-diz-gesterra-55812.html>.

¹⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*; Lusa, “Em Angola, descaso”, 2018.

¹⁴⁷⁶ Malaquias, “Ainda há cereais”, 2018.

¹⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷⁸ VivaPortal, “Culpa da perda”, 2018; Lusa, “Em Angola, descaso”, 2018; Madalena & Mualimusi, “Até seis mil”, 2018. The FSDEA remains invested in the agricultural sector, claiming to have disbursed US\$250 million in the sector. See its official website at: <https://fundosoberano.ao/investimentos>. The link to a document detailing its investments is inoperative at the moment (accessed 14 June 2020).

¹⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

not go to waste. As of writing, a clear resolution of the abandoned grains in Manquete and the other state farms has still yet to be reported.

In June 2019, the government officially launched the public tender for the farms of Longa, Camaiangala, Cuimba and Sanza Pombo through Resolution n° 5 of 2019.¹⁴⁸¹ The other two farms, Manquete and Camacupa, have been handed over to the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA).¹⁴⁸² Ultimately, these projects have essentially transformed themselves into extremely complex land grabs, passing from the traditional endogenous populations to state property under the guise of national interest, created through public financing, and eventually ending up in a privatization scheme with little to no agency available to the local populations.

Unless Chinese firms end up purchasing one of these farms, which is a real possibility, then the land grab referenced here is not directly due to China *per se*. Instead, China has played a key role as facilitator to permit other actors to achieve the “land grab”. That said, China’s close relationship with Angolan authorities and its presence on the ground has facilitated other land grabs combining an estimated 83,630 hectares for Chinese commercial livestock farmers whose goods are destined for export across the provinces of Uíge, Cuando Cubango, Cunene, Bié, Malanje, Zaire and Moxico.¹⁴⁸³ All of these provinces correspond to the placement of the state farms. However, given their shadowy nature, it is difficult to confirm how this Chinese exportation scheme operates and what the status is of these ventures.

Given the colossal price tags they absorbed as the purported vehicles to widespread rural socio-economic development and national food security, their failure would represent a continued stagnation of the rural economy under the MPLA’s leadership. This puts into question the government’s economic policies and its (in)ability to improve the livelihoods of the populations living in the countryside, many of which have harbored distrust of a government they see as absent and dismissive of their needs. It would also represent a massive setback for peasant communities as the country has taken on significant debt for

¹⁴⁸¹ Angola, Ministério de Finanças, *Caderno de Encargos, Concurso Público N° 05/2019: Privatização de Empreendimentos Agro-Pecuários, Instituto de Gestão de Activos e Participações do Estado*, 2019a, 4-5. <http://www.ucm.minfin.gov.ao/cs/groups/public/documents/document/zmlu/mjy/~edisp/minfin222736.pdf>.

¹⁴⁸² Lusa, “Angola vai privatizar”, 2019.

¹⁴⁸³ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle’s Paradise*, 27.

these investments and further financing on such a scale to promote the peasantry is unlikely for the foreseeable future.

If this state-led model could accomplish its goals of establishing rural development poles that could integrate local and regional farmers, even through clientelistic practices, the land grab could perhaps find justification for its public interest.¹⁴⁸⁴ But the Manquete rice debacle, alongside the other farms' mismanagement, casts heavy skepticism on such claims. In fact, the government itself has admitted that it has not set up any sort of National Commission to direct policies responding to achieving food security by coordinating actions across programs and across sector.¹⁴⁸⁵ The inexistence of a steering committee horizontally integrating the government's actions has instead left a series of institutions staffed with various officials across government to act unilaterally without a broader vision of how to achieve one of the nation's top policy goals.

6.3.5 ELITE ACCESS AND PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

In 1998 Catherine Boone noted that in Africa “no significant stratum or fraction of the wealth-accumulating political class invest in productive activities... in these situations, political classes are predominantly ‘rentier’ in nature”.¹⁴⁸⁶ By the mid-1990s the Angolan elite had not only deeply enmeshed personal interests into the public sphere through systemic siphoning off of state-owned companies and public contracts, but they had also begun moving these activities into the private sphere. In the two decades since this analysis, the principal exception to this rule in Angola comes in the form of Public Private Partnerships wherein the private investments come backed up with the public financial support of the state. While this represents direct investment of the elite, the end goal remains “rentier in nature”.

Moving to the private commercial sector, for having such an outsized role in provoking land conflicts in Angola, the lack of detailed information on private commercial

¹⁴⁸⁴ Joseph Patrick Ganahl, *Corruption, Good Governance, and the African State: A Critical Analysis of the Political-Economic Foundation of Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Potsdam: Potsdam University Press), 2013, 58.

¹⁴⁸⁵ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 50.

¹⁴⁸⁶ As cited in Ovadia, “The Reinvention”, 40.

farms and ranchers is an important piece of the rural puzzle that needs further examination. Such research initiative should be coupled alongside the (re)investment of the state in agro-industrial farms. A thorough examination of the creation and implementation of these farms and ranches could explore the state of the land in question before its modern development and would shed light on the process of displacement and reintegration of the rural communities previously inhabiting the area. In this perspective, a systematic study could shed light on the dynamics of compensation for asset loss and damages, rural flight, resource marginalization, and the breakdown of traditional societies. If possible, and pending the ongoing privatization process, the possibility of dividing up the farms among cooperatives or partnerships between smaller companies could also be a way to both keep the farms producing, but also bring the local farming community further into the process, thereby expanding the reach of the ‘development pole’. This would obviously be contingent on the new owners and/or operators having sufficient financing and technical know-how to manage such massive assets.

The main vehicle influencing the normalization of these PPP partnerships was the President himself, José Eduardo dos Santos, through his *Fundação Eduardo dos Santos* (FESA, Eduardo dos Santos Foundation) set up in March 1996. Modelled on the philanthropic foundations of developed countries, Tony Hodges points out this institution’s goal “to complement the actions of the government by promoting ‘the citizens’ social welfare and economic development”” comes in the form of a “particularly poignant manifestation of [...] personalized power and state patronage” which diversifies the reach of presidential patronage deep into the sectors outside of the oil and diamond sector.¹⁴⁸⁷ The source of the Foundation’s funds are vague however with most of its coming from private national and international companies operating in Angola that have felt compelled to contribute to the foundation to keep in the administration’s good graces¹⁴⁸⁸ while some of the funds come from the state itself.¹⁴⁸⁹ As Christine Messiant adeptly puts it, the FESA became the crown of the generalized system of clientelistic domination, reinforcing the powers of the president.¹⁴⁹⁰

¹⁴⁸⁷ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 56-57.

¹⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 57; Messiant, Christine, “La Fondation”, 83

¹⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 82, 92.

¹⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 90.

As her article was written before the end of the war, it makes no mention to how the FESA would later spread its influence into the agricultural sector, but that is precisely what happened when it began partnering with the FAO in 2013 as an intermediary to begin bringing in Brazilian expertise.¹⁴⁹¹ This public/private funded FESA model would later be expanded upon with the creation of the Sovereign Wealth Fund of Angola (FSDEA) injecting public funds into the economy, inevitably feeding into the private interests of Angola's elites as their investments sprawled across the major sectors of the economy.¹⁴⁹²

As we saw with the creation of the Chinese built agro-industrial farms, the FSDEA's influence was also designed to reach far into the rural economy, becoming the vehicle for massive investment and state control. Notably, the country's peasantry did not factor into these attempted modernization plans, though the farms do employ Angolans, thereby creating a very modest amount of commercial employment across the peripheries. The FSDEA's nebulous role in managing, investing, and partly privatizing the aforementioned Chinese-built agro-industrial state farms is the biggest case study (by amount of public money invested) of the potential role of PPP partnerships in the agricultural sector, once the farms actually become privatized. As the World Bank notes in its 2019 study focusing on promoting private markets, half of the FSDEA's US\$5 billion initial endowment "was invested in venture capital in agriculture, mining, infrastructure, and real estate in Angola and other African markets".¹⁴⁹³ The FSDEA positioned itself as the preeminent financial vehicle to dominate the push to modernize the countryside, though promoted through such complex institutional setups without the technical expertise to develop the projects properly that they would ultimately undermine the projects themselves.

As transparency in business transactions is notoriously opaque, identifying specific examples of Angolan elites exploiting these PPPs follows the same opacity.¹⁴⁹⁴ More traditional examples of PPP have already been mentioned in §3.2.3 in the role of various state companies (SOPIR) and programs (PRESILD) providing services to private companies and commercial farms, as well as private interests taking over state companies in §3.3.2.

¹⁴⁹¹ Angop, "FESA e FAO firmam seguimento de cooperação imediato", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 31 Jan. 2013. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2013/0/5/FESA-FAO-firmam-seguimento-cooperacao-imediato,ec9f5cdd-e786-4d0a-9ee6-5d077622332e.html.

¹⁴⁹² Schubert, "Les 'glorieuses familles'", 2019.

¹⁴⁹³ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 9-10.

¹⁴⁹⁴ For a clear example in the food sector, recall the corruption scandal regarding the *Programa de Reestruturação do Sistema de Logística e de Distribuição de Produtos Essenciais à População* (PRESILD, Program of Restructuring of the System of Logistics and Distribution of Essential Products to the Population) described in §3.3.2.

However, the political transition from José Eduardo dos Santos to João Lourenço and the latter's campaign of anti-corruption and economic restructuring has had the effect of bringing light into some of this opacity. As both presidents come from the same party, this transition has been revelatory of the internal dynamics of the MPLA and its cohesion and fractures as a political entity. As the transition to peacetime solidifies and the civil society strengthens, the notions of good governance practices, accountability, and acceptable political behavior is in full transformation.

The case of the massive sugarcane plantation known as Biocom, located in Malanje province, is a prime example of this political shift regarding the rural economy and the normalized practices of clientelism and state patronage towards MPLA-connected elites. Biocom “is a self-described public-private investment to diversify the economy, create jobs and economic growth in times of low oil prices, substitute for imports, and lessen the needs for foreign exchange”.¹⁴⁹⁵ In January 2020, the Provincial Tribunal of Luanda announced the confiscation of investments linked to the business dealings of General Leopoldino “Dino” do Nascimento, a longtime ally of former President José Eduardo dos Santos. The case claimed that General “Dino”, imprisoned in 2019, illegally took advantage of a public sovereign loan of \$210 million via the anonymous company Cochán he founded and chaired, owned jointly by then-Vice President Manuel Vicente, General Manuel Helder Veiria Dias Junior, aka “Kopelipa”, and General “Dino”. His various business assets included investments in UNITEL in the telecommunications sector, Grupo Kero in the supermarket sector, Puma Energy in oil services, TV Zimbo and *O País* in the media sector, and *Companhia de Bioenergia de Angola Lda* (Biocom) in the agricultural and energy sector.¹⁴⁹⁶ The loan was directly linked to Biocom, an agricultural and bio-energy venture created through a partnership with Sonangol (20% ownership), the Brazilian multinational Odebrecht (40%), and the Angolan Cochán company (40% ownership). Construction began in 2011 on the 42,000 hectare farm, one of the country's largest, destined for sugar and ethanol production.¹⁴⁹⁷ The farm ultimately cost \$750 million to establish, reportedly “after a year of

¹⁴⁹⁵ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories”, 122.

¹⁴⁹⁶ Club-K, “Tribunal arresta bens de General ‘Dino’”, 30 Jan. 2020, Luanda, Club-K.net. https://club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=39158:tribunal-arresta-bens-de-dino&catid=8:bastidores&lang=pt&Itemid=1071.

¹⁴⁹⁷ Colin McClelland & Manuel Soque, “Odebrecht-Run Biocom Seeks Angola Sugar Self-Sufficiency”, *Bloomberg*, New York, 25 July 2013. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-07-24/odebrecht-run-biocom-seeks-angola-sugar-self-sufficiency>.

delays as costs rose 50 percent”.¹⁴⁹⁸ The farm remains in operation today and has not been taken over by the state, though threats were made.

The conflicts of interest of General “Dino” between his private business interests with public companies alongside his status as a public official as the “chief adviser to the Ministry of State and the head of the Intelligence Bureau at the Presidency” had already been revealed and reported on by the investigative journalist and activist Rafael Marques de Morais in 2010 wherein he identified the “flagrant violation of the Law on Probity”, in force since July 2010 designed to root out private citizens profiting off of their positions as public servants.¹⁴⁹⁹ In other words, the knowledge of these conflicts of interest is not revelatory in itself, but rather the position of the government in its willingness to condemn such practices is potentially a fundamental shift in the internal workings of the country’s elite after the end of the reign of José Eduardo dos Santos.

Nevertheless, this anti-corruption campaign could turn out to be simply a changing of the guard, uprooting the allies of the previous president and installing the new guard loyal to João Lourenço. As the exercise of state patronage and cronyism was central to the previous president’s long hold on power, and as the MPLA has remained the dominant party, perhaps the political system still requires it to some extent. Regardless of the destiny of General “Dino”, the intricate set-up of the Biocom company exposes how these complex PPP partnerships enrich well-connected private national investors, often facilitated through foreign actors through a network of companies supported through public funds inaccessible to the average citizen.

Aharon de Grassi & Jesse Ovadia (2017) note that these potential conflicts of interest and elite accumulation should also take into account the transformative potential of the Biocom farm in broader infrastructural investment, employment and energy production. This favorable position adopts the idea that state patronage and elite accumulation can be a net positive when the technical capacity to enact such projects are otherwise unavailable,

¹⁴⁹⁸ Manuel Soque & Colin McClelland, “\$750m Angolan ethanol, sugar project still on track”, *Bloomberg*, New York, 27 May 2015. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-26/angola-sugar-to-fuel-farm-delayed-for-tests-as-costs-rise-50->.

¹⁴⁹⁹ Rafael Marques de Morais, “Trio Presidencial Lidera o Saque aos Bens do Estado Angolano”, *MakaAngola*, 30 July 2010. <https://www.makaangola.org/2010/07/trio-presidencial-lidera-o-saque-aos-bens-do-estado-angolano/>.

while the services rendered also benefit those outside of the privileged elite circle receiving extraordinary access and, in this case, potentially illegally procured public resources. Ovadia and de Grassi propose changing the analytical perspective from the dominating, nefarious nature of “elite accumulation” toward how major elite land acquisitions also have important secondary effects influencing broader types of investments, land claims, mobility and market access for the broader communities.¹⁵⁰⁰

That such major investments have reverberating effects is inevitable, especially given the size of these industrial-sized development projects. Measuring the net positive and negative of such overbearing “elite accumulation” practices is however much more difficult to measure, but will become clearer over time. The situation of Biocom with General “Dino” is particularly illuminating within the inner political dynamics of the MPLA in its transition from José Eduardo dos Santos to João Lourenço. This transition will be expanded upon in chapter seven of this study. The fact that what was once deemed acceptable practice within the Angolan government (the tradeoff of potentially illegal, privileged elite accumulation for some public good as described by de Grassi) is now being fervently pursued in some cases by the judicial system led by the same political party provokes significant questions. Was the once considered ‘acceptable’ deviance within the party simply a sort of standard operating procedure or was it always considered a nefarious gaming of the system of the elites, yet allowed to proceed because it was enabled and sanctioned by the President himself and his inner circle of advisors who were leading the way?

6.3.6 DIVERTING ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT: PADRE PIO IN TCHIYEPEPE

The previous two examples of resource distribution focused on a national rural development policy led by state-owned enterprises, followed by a medium-scale elite PPP structure. Now we will turn our attention to the local level and the strengthening of an emerging ‘bottom-up’ ‘grassroots elite’ model. During my fieldwork in the Gambos in

¹⁵⁰⁰ De Grassi & Ovadia, “Trajectories”, 117.

August 2017, a prime example of political ecology's theory of politically engineered resource deprivation provoking social conflicts revolving around the Catholic Mission Santo António dos Gambos led by Padre Jacinto Pio Wakassunga was in full flux. This local case study brings together the clashing interests between the range of actors on the ground (local officials, religious leaders, NGOs, rural communities, local farmers, cattle herders, and ranchers) in specific areas discussed in the previous chapter (the Gambos *município* and the Tunda dos Gambos grazing area) and highlights the complex power relations between these groups. The following events should therefore not be seen through the prism of an average land conflict occurring within rural Angola as it in fact brings together both 'top down' elites, the emerging 'new rural bourgeoisie' as well as the emerging 'grassroots elites'¹⁵⁰¹. Additionally, it further highlights both the capacity and the limits of the exercise of agency among the rural populations of Angola.

The main source of this specific conflict in the Gambos revolves around water, given the area's arid climatic conditions aggravated further through climate change and the clash between two cattle raising systems: the *extensive* pastoral activities practiced by the local and regional populations, and the *intensive* system practiced by commercial ranchers expanding operations in the region since the 2000s.¹⁵⁰² Seen in context, however, the local communities still wield the largest majority of cattle. Despite the growing presence of ranchers, in 2008 it was estimated that the local populations possessed 96% of the province's cows, with only 4% managed by the commercial sector.¹⁵⁰³ These adverse systems have themselves provoked further schisms between collective or communal rights to land and individual rights, setting up conflicting interests leading to land conflicts. Even without the presence of the expanding ranches, the local populations of the Gambos experience endogenous social conflicts given the clashing traditional economic activities of sedentary agriculture practiced by some, and nomadic cattle grazing practiced by others. These local conflicts have been overshadowed however by the arrival of outside actors that have installed themselves in the region by

¹⁵⁰¹ See §4.4.4 for a reminder on the emergence of 'grassroots' elite NGOs, in this case referring to *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (ACC, Association Building Communities). See §5.1.3-5.1.4 for Padre Jacinto Pio Wakassunga's historical connection to the Gambos *município* and his long background working within NGOs (*Associação Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola* (ALSSA, Association of Leonardo Sikufinde Shalom Angola) and ACC) defending the rights of the local Gambos populations against elite interests.

¹⁵⁰² Inácio Zacarias, *Justificativa. Delimitação e Reconhecimento de Terra para Utilização Comunitária na Tunda dos Gambos – Vale do Chimbolelo* (Município dos Gambos). Associação Construindo Comunidades (ACC), Jan. 2015, 3.

¹⁵⁰³ Associação Construindo Comunidades, *Situação Sócio-Económica da Quibita (Chibia) e dos Gambos – Relatório do Estudo*, Lubango, Dec. 2008, 18.

creating large-scale ranches, putting further stress on the natural carrying capacity of the area's natural resources.

These conflicts are further aggravated through the drought-like climatic conditions affecting the wider southern region of Angola. Not only has the arrival and expansion of ranchers put pressure on the natural resource base of the Gambos region, but so has the arrival of cattle herders throughout the wider region fleeing droughts affecting the neighboring provinces of Cunene and Namibe. Ultimately, this 'milk region' has played host to pastoralists from Cunene, Namibe and Huíla provinces, all converging on this transhumance zone comprising vitally important grazing fields.¹⁵⁰⁴ These cattle herders have arrived to discover significant land for grazing their animals, but a severe lack of groundwater for the animals to drink. The droughts have therefore led to a concentration of both local and regional cattle herders competing for resources with the cattle of the ranchers installed in the area. Furthermore, not only has the arrival of the region's cattle reduced grazing land for the locals, the mixing of cattle herds from different areas has provoked outbreaks of animal diseases requiring costly veterinary services.¹⁵⁰⁵ It is in this context that the situation has been marked by a long simmering conflict based on the distribution of resources, aggravated by drought-like climatic conditions due in part to global warming, effectively producing a small-scale cold war revolving around the access and use of water.

Given the effective absence of governmental assistance to local socio-economic development programs, Padre Pio Wakassunga began conceiving a community-based solution by mobilizing the resources afforded to him through his position as the Catholic Priest of the Santo António dos Gambos Mission as well as the territory the Catholic Church has possessed in the area since 1895. The fact that the land in question has belonged to the Catholic Church since colonial times is significant, because the Church's respected reputation in the country allows it a strong negotiating position with the government.¹⁵⁰⁶ The land in question, where the Mission is built upon, also possesses an important source of water that emerges near the local church and passes through its territory, directly benefitting an

¹⁵⁰⁴ Refer to map no. 2 in the introduction for the precise location of the ranching zones occupying traditional grazing areas.

¹⁵⁰⁵ Novafrica, "Criadores vivem dias dramáticos em busca de água e pasto na Huíla", Lisbon, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 24 June 2019. <https://www.novafrica.co.ao/nacional/criadores-vivem-dias-dramaticos-em-busca-de-agua-e-pasto-na-huila/>.

¹⁵⁰⁶ Personal interview, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, Benguela, 26 Aug. 2017.

estimated 600 families with water for human and cattle consumption, as well as agricultural production.¹⁵⁰⁷ Padre Pio was therefore looking to combine the resources of the local Catholic mission and the local populations to set up a community-based agricultural project centered on the natural land and water resources managed by the Church.

The plan was designed around the model of a peasant association where the local communities could work communal plots of productive land, combining their resources and know-how in order to build a stronger food production system and forge communities that would be more resilient to the climatic shocks that have been recurring throughout the region. By combining resources, the project hoped to be able to sell excess production and invest the money into local infrastructure aimed at improving the living standards in the area. Given the scale and ambition of the project, Padre Pio Wakassunga and his NGO and religious counterparts informed local authorities about their plans to create the communal agricultural project, hoping to receive public support. Obviously, the local water source would be pivotal to the viability of this project. The government officials had other plans for the water source.

In response to the worsening water situation throughout southern Huíla, the provincial government decided to unilaterally announce a *Projecto de Transumância* (Transhumance Project) in April 2017¹⁵⁰⁸ which was designed to construct a water pump system pumping water from the water source belonging to the local community and the Santo António dos Gambos Mission to the Tunda dos Gambos area, where the cattle herders and ranchers were converging. The water was supposedly destined for both the traditional and commercial cattle herders located in and around the grazing area, but the local populations have complained that the commercial ranchers have effectively monopolized the water sources.¹⁵⁰⁹ Furthermore, it is reported that members of the provincial government, including the provincial governor João Marcelino Tchippingui, an owner of a local ranch himself, have direct financial interests in the ranches receiving the diverted water.¹⁵¹⁰ In fact,

¹⁵⁰⁷ [n.a.], “Governo da Huíla Acusado de Usurpar Fonte de Água da Missão de Santo dos Gambos”, *Folha 8*, Luanda, 14 Oct. 2017.

¹⁵⁰⁸ Christian Aid Angola, “Standing firm against water theft in Angola”, 19 March 2019. <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/standing-firm-against-water-theft-angola>.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Rádio Angola, “Huíla: Comunidade Católica Bloqueia via nos Gambos”, Rádio Nacional de Angola, Luanda, 7 Jan. 2018. <https://www.radioangola.org/huila-comunidade-catolica-bloqueia-via-nos-gambos/>

¹⁵¹⁰ VOA, “Governo da Huíla, Igreja e comunidades mantêm “braço-de-ferro” sobre fontanário de água”, Voice of America, Luanda, 31 Oct. 2017. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/governo-huila-igreja-comunidades-agua-huila/4093499.html>; Anselmo Vieira, “Angola: Populares acusam governantes de abuso de poder na Huíla”,

the majority of the ranch owners in Tunda dos Gambos are influential people with connections to the political, military, economic, or governmental centers of power.¹⁵¹¹ Importantly, the government did not include the authorities of the Santo António dos Gambos Mission, including its leader Padre Pio Wakassunga, in the decision to give the green light for the installation of the water pump project, nor the local communities. However, as a symbolic show of force and as a means to publicly display its determination, the project's commencement was commemorated with a celebratory marble plaque on 7 July 2017, without even having finished laying the pumping system.

Image 12 - Inaugural plaque for the Transhumance Project



Source: VOA, Teodoro Albano, (2017).

On the weekend of my arrival to the Gambos in August 2017, the local government of the *município* had recently begun digging the tunnel for the water pump system, with the material arriving in the cover of night. By physically occupying the ground zero zone of tension and declaring their will to impose the project on the local population through implanting the inaugural plaque on the grounds of the Catholic mission, the government made its intention clear to hold firm on their program despite the contestation of the local populations directly affected. In an attempt to revive the colonial-era tactics of divide and conquer between the local communities, the MPLA officials tasked with imposing the project recruited members of local communities outside of the Mission's territory, specifically in the area of Ngelenge, who supported the project by falsely claiming to be owners of the water

Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 14 Jan. 2018. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/angola-populares-acusam-governantes-de-abuso-de-poder-na-hu%C3%A9ADla/a-42143969>.

¹⁵¹¹ Santos, & Zacarias, *Pesquisa*, 86.

source.¹⁵¹² The conflict was set for the politically motivated structural redistribution of natural resources, though the rash planning and unviability of the government's project appeared apparent upon first inspection.

My arrival during a dry period revealed a permanent ground water source, slow-moving, and barely trickling over the small rudimentary dam that had been previously constructed. The water pump being installed was designed to carry significant amounts of water over 30 kilometers away. Technically-speaking, the pump might have been able to consistently pump water out during a significant rainy period. Otherwise, the pump would have quickly dried up the original water source and been inoperative during most of the year. The true goal of installing the pump was unclear as to whether it was truly designed to assist ranchers and cattle herders in Tunda dos Gambos, or whether it was primarily a means to undercut the local development project.

If the pump system had been installed and run at full capacity, the local water source for the Mission would have effectively run dry, risking the entire viability of the Mission's presence and therefore the projects of Padre Jacinto Pio Wakassunga.¹⁵¹³ If local officials had wanted to find a way to potentially weaken the activities of one of the country's most vocal and well-known human rights defenders, targeting his natural resource base would be a central strategy. Ironically, at the same time the water was being prepared to be diverted from the local communities dependent on the Santo António source to the Tunda dos Gambos area through its Transhumance Project, the government was also executing a separate *Água para Todos* (Water for All) infrastructure plan across the province, begun in 2014. The program arrived to the Gambos in 2017, reportedly benefitting 60,000 residents.¹⁵¹⁴ At the same time the government was diverting water from the Santo António dos Gambos Mission, it was installing it in other areas of the *município*. Their geographic isolation left the Santo Antonio community dependent on their local water source.

The situation continued to escalate within the local Santo António community. All of the community's resources were mobilized at the local, national, and international scale.

¹⁵¹² Rádio Angola, "Huila: Comunidade Católica Bloqueia via nos Gambos", Rádio Nacional de Angola, Luanda, 7 Jan. 2018. <https://www.radioangola.org/huila-comunidade-catolica-bloqueia-via-nos-gambos/>.

¹⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹⁴ Angop, "Huila: Mais de 60 mil cidadãos beneficiam de água nos Gambos", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 11 July 2017. http://angop-as31.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2017/6/28/Huila-Mais-mil-cidadaos-beneficiam-agua-nos-Gambos,421692ac-b92d-4b81-a468-b089a3b067bd.html.

Connecting these scales, Padre Pio activated another of his organizations named the Chiange Gambos Network (CGN), which is part of the Christian Aid network funded by Irish Aid. CGN is comprised of three local CSOs: the Ovatumbi Association of Pastoralists, the *Associação de Promoção de Mulher Angolana da Igreja Católica* (PROMAICA, a Catholic women's group, and the Parish Youth Group, each tasked with local coordination of the response of communal resistance while CGN “provided important legal, advocacy and visibility support”.¹⁵¹⁵ After organizing vigils and reunions, writing letters and reaching out to the media, the local population took the next step in early 2018 to physically blocking the road allowing access to the water source from the ranchers based in the Tundas das Gambos area.¹⁵¹⁶ This escalatory decision was taken after the community had run out of options after the dialogue with the local government officials had effectively broken down after calls for mediation had been systematically ignored.¹⁵¹⁷ The roadblock was accompanied by a major media push provided by CGN “seeking maximum publicity”.¹⁵¹⁸ The tensions remained high while the local populations refused to submit to the provincial government's project.

Image 13 - Rural communities blocking road access to protect its water source



Source: VOA (2019).

However, with the political transition instigated by the arrival of the new president João Lourenço, the situation changed dramatically. The new president had been informed of

¹⁵¹⁵ Christian Aid Angola, *Standing firm*, 2019.

¹⁵¹⁶ Rádio Angola, “Huila: Comunidade”, 2018.

¹⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹⁸ Christian Aid Angola, *Standing firm*, 2019.

the situation since November 2017¹⁵¹⁹, attesting to the powerful network the community had built. In February 2018 shortly after organizing the road block, the Archbishop of Lubango and the President of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar each visited the Gambos community to observe the situation first-hand, bringing major religious actors into the conversation with the Archbishop later meeting with the provincial government on the matter. Two different provincial officials later reached out to PROMAICA to discuss the matter.¹⁵²⁰ This led to a rapid de-escalation of the situation. Weeks after the roadblock the government announced that it would find another water source for its transhumance project. The conflict resolution would be temporary. In August 2019, a major drought pushed local landowners to again send in lorries to take away water from the spring.¹⁵²¹ The local communities once again mobilized their resources to resist the landowners, prioritizing roadblocks while they called for attention to their plight. Weeks afterwards, the government again announced its intention to abandon the pump project.¹⁵²² While the religious authorities were the principal peacemakers during the first round of conflicts, it appears an administrative shakeup in the governmental government provoked the second.

In September 2018, a new provincial governor, Luís Manuel da Fonseca Nunes, was nominated to replace João Marcelino Tyipinge, who had governed from 2012 until 2018.¹⁵²³ Luís Nunes is a rancher born in Caconda, Huíla province and comes from a land-owning family, but has garnered a reputation for consensus-building and problem solving.¹⁵²⁴ With the issue of the water conflict having reached the ear of the President of the Republic, it can be assumed that Luís Nunes was likewise informed. One year after he took office, the local officials of the Gambos informed the Santo António Mission community that the public

¹⁵¹⁹ Rádio Angola, “Huíla: Comunidade”, 2018.

¹⁵²⁰ Rádio Angola, “Governo da Huíla Desiste de Se ‘Apropriar’ da Água da Fonte da Missão”, *O Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 18 March 2018. <https://www.radioangola.org/governo-da-huila-desiste-de-se-apropriar-da-agua-da-fonte-da-missao/>.

¹⁵²¹ Christian Aid Angola, *Standing firm*, 2019.

¹⁵²² VOA, “Governo da Huíla anula desvio de água para fazendeiros”, Voice of America, Luanda, 10 Sept. 2019. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/governo-da-hu%C3%ADla-anula-desvio-de-água-para-fazendeiros/5077964.html>.

¹⁵²³ Angop, “Sociedade quer do novo governador mais abertura a parcerias”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 14 Sept. 2018. https://pool1.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/sociedade/2018/8/37/Sociedade-quer-novo-governador-mais-abertura-parcerias,a4a0abcc-977d-43f4-9c56-7d3669466ef1.html.

¹⁵²⁴ Club-K, “Movimentações lobista para novo governador de Benguela”, Luanda, 26 June 2019. https://club-k.net/~clubknet/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36651:movimentacoes-lobista-para-novo-governador-de-benguela&catid=8:bastidores&lang=pt&Itemid=1071.

water project had been abandoned in September 2019.¹⁵²⁵ As will be described in the following chapter, the replacement of the provincial governors had at its own source the anti-corruption campaign of João Lourenço.

The combination of defiant local communities revendicating their rights, an engaged peasantry having been involved in capacity development programs led by local and regional NGOs, and the backing of a Catholic Mission led by Padre Jacinto Pio Wakassunga and his team of vocal advocates for human rights all combined to once again allow the Gambos communities to come out victorious against political and economic elite interests in a country where the balance of power normally crushes local dissent. These qualities have been built up despite the government's lack of support to local civil society organizations through technical assistance, capacity development, and access to credit. The Gambos continues to be a model for nurturing rural agency in Angola, attesting to the necessity of local engagement, long-term investment, network building (both nationally and internationally), a strong media presence, and persistence in pushing for constructive dialogue with competent authorities.

Considering all of these unique characteristics that factored into the different Gambos clashes, it is debatable whether these local populations would have still been able to bring such national attention to their local struggles with outsiders without the previous involvement of ACORD, ADRA and ALSSA in assisting these same populations during such pivotal years. It begs the question of how many other 'Gambos' incidents have occurred throughout rural Angola, but lacked the links, connections, and organizational resources to raise their voices and get their plight onto the national agenda in a similar manner. This episode provides clear evidence of a case study where a combination of endogenous and exogenous social infrastructure allowed the local communities to overcome the embedded political asymmetries. The experience of the Gambos demonstrates that well-implemented NGO and CSO engagement can provide localized communities with considerable power and resources to defend their interests, thus transforming into avenues of agency for these otherwise marginalized peoples. This 'empowerment' of local communities goes against the interests of elites, commercial farmers and ranchers looking to expand production and land

¹⁵²⁵ VOA, "Governo da Huíla anula desvio de água para fazendeiros", Voice of America, Luanda, 10 Sept. 2019. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/governo-da-hu%C3%ADla-anula-desvio-de-água-para-fazendeiros/5077964.html>.

use, leaving such actors to seek out areas with little prior NGO engagement or regional presence in order to avoid similar pockets of accumulated agency where the likelihood of increased local resistance is a greater possibility.

The amount of mediatic attention¹⁵²⁶ brought to this local dispute is itself evidence and indicator of the accrued agency the Gambos populations are able to mobilize, as well as serving as evidence of the sustained groundwork by various actors engaged in the area. This national and international press reporting on the situation is destined to not only inform the few rural residents with the access and ability to read the stories, but just as importantly to their diffusion throughout the provincial capitals, Luanda, and with the expansion of internet access, the international community. While there is significant scholarship going to the *negative* role that media can play in social conflicts, here we analyze this relatively extensive political media coverage related to the event as playing an important role in local conflict resolution.¹⁵²⁷ This case study therefore unveils interesting perspectives for future research on the impact of political communication and rural social organizing in Angola.¹⁵²⁸

The ability to mediatize their local conflicts is in itself a transformative power of exercising agency. Getting this information out of the Gambos puts pressure on the political actors responsible for resolving the conflicts and brings the information to important elite actors and institutions that otherwise would not likely get involved. In this particular case, the mediatized heightening of tensions reportedly reached all the way to President João Lourenço, producing a cascading effect of conflict resolution once he took office, reaching

¹⁵²⁶ See in the bibliography: Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 2019; Ana Gomes, "Seca agudiza crise alimentar a três mil famílias nos Gambos", *O País*, Talatona, 2019. <https://opais.co.ao/index.php/2019/01/16/seca-agudiza-crise-alimentar-a-tres-mil-familias-nos-gambos/>; Manuel, "A água da 'Missão'", 2019; Arão Martins, "Plano estratégico ajuda a enfrentar crise de água", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 17 March 2018. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/reportagem/plano_estrategico_ajuda_a_enfrentar_crise_de_agua; Novafrica, "Criadores vivem", 2019; Rádio Angola, "Huila: Comunidade", 2019; MARTINS, Arão, "Chefe de Estado constata as riquezas dos Gambos", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 10 Jan. 2020. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/politica/chefe-de-estado-constata-as-riquezas-dos-gambos>; Anselmo Vieira, "Angola: Populares", 2018; VOA, "Famílias nos Gambos recusam projecto do Governo local", Voice of America, Luanda, 17 Oct. 2017. <https://www.voaportugues.com/a/familias-gambos-agua/4073453.html>; VOA, "Governo da Huila", 2019.

¹⁵²⁷ Michelle Betz, *The role of media in conflict prevention. Development for Peace*, World Bank blogs, 23 May 2018. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/role-media-conflict-prevention>.

¹⁵²⁸ The American historian Omar Wasow recently published a study on how black civil rights activists in the 1960s intentionally used disruptive methods to capture media attention and reframe the debate being held by the elite media. He shows how this strategy, which he calls "agenda seeding", inserts itself into the larger political process and, if used effectively, can move public opinion and redirect political outcomes. See: Omar Wasow, "Agenda Seeding: How 1960s Black Protests Moved Elites, Public Opinion and Voting", *American Political Science Review*, 114, no. 3, 2020: 638-659. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000305542000009X>.

the office of Luís Nunes and trickling all the way down into the fields of the Santo António Mission.

It is impossible to say how the situation would have ended had the problem not reached the upper echelons of government. The president's personal involvement makes the situation indeed exceptional. The intransigence of the local and provincial officials without pressure from above or from major religious figures means local government remains unable or unwilling to resolve complicated resource conflicts. This local victory of Padre Pio and the Gambos communities does not therefore signal deep structural or systemic change in relations between local government and rural populations. Rather, the situation could signal the beginning of a shift in power relations and the strengthening of pockets of rural agency, but this dynamic must be confirmed with the passage of time and the multiplication of such episodes finding resolution without the requirement of Luanda-based authorities needing to step in.

6.3.7 DOS SANTOS' LEGACY ARRIVES TO ITS TERM

In this chapter, we have seen that rather than a broad-based vision of agricultural reform to boost domestic production and improve the livelihoods of the country's peasants, the calls for economic diversification and the modernization of the agricultural sector were in reality a policy of selective patronage. This diversification concentrated limited resources in a small series of massive projects that produced few employment opportunities for the local peasantry, nor did the installations promote local production by significantly integrating it into its own logistics networks. Instead of providing a support mechanism for the local populations, the agro-industrial farms effectively compete against rural farmers in the meager budget allocations as designed by the government. Family and communal farming have been almost exclusively left out of the major modernization policies being promoted across the sector. The clearest statistics to lay out this vision is the aforementioned reality that as of May 2017, 98% of land was prepared through manual labor according to the Minister of

Agriculture Marcos Alexandre Nhunga.¹⁵²⁹ The underfunding of UNACA and the key public companies developing the agricultural sector help explain this statistic.

Christopher Cramer's analysis of the circular nature of Angola's history reinforces itself once again: from the colonial times to the 'socialist' workers' revolution to the Seeds and Tools Working Group organized by the United Nations humanitarian coordination program in 1994 until today, little has changed for the farmers among the country's agricultural sector. What has significantly changed is the increasing "massive land seizures" that are "perhaps the single most important driving force behind the profound economic, social, and cultural transformation occurring in rural Angola" since 2002.¹⁵³⁰ This dynamic is playing out among an increasing rural population working their land alongside a growing group of economic actors motivated by a mechanized agricultural model dependent on physical expansion and incentivized and self-legitimized through a purported national agenda of economic diversification. These clashing production models nearly always favor the politically-connected to the detriment of the peasantry, yet the Gambos experience shows rural populist organizing can overcome the unequal socio-economic and cultural power axes if the proper conditions are met, which require a whole other set of resources that must be conjured up to fit the moment.

On the middle level are the medium-sized commercial endeavors. These include a small, heterogenous group of the 'new bourgeoisie', often members of the elite or their beneficiaries, organized as ranchers and mid-sized commercial farms.¹⁵³¹ The establishment and functioning of these actors require not only the express support of the regime, but often direct and indirect actions to create the spaces necessary for their occupation. This 'new bourgeoisie' slowly encroaches on communal lands, which are sacrificed to the agenda of selective modernization. Finally, on the national level is the state-led investment model that engages public financing by marshalling considerable public resources aimed at a highly selective and limited modernization of the country's agricultural sector. The logic combining

¹⁵²⁹ Lusa, "Agricultura ainda é feita à mão em 98% dos terrenos de cultivo em Angola", *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 11 May 2017. <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/agricultura-ainda-e-feita-a-mao-em-98-dos-terrenos-de-cultivo-em-angola-8467768.html>.

¹⁵³⁰ Amnesty International, *The End of Cattle's Paradise*, 26.

¹⁵³¹ Recall that less than 5% of cultivated land in Angola is done commercially, according to a 2018 investment guide signed by João Lourenço himself (Angola, *Angola is Now*, 106).

all three strategies is that of rent and resource control supporting political partisans and effectively abandoning, or worse, undermining, the rest.

By neglecting previous opportunities to diversify the economy during the economic boom years backed by high oil prices, betting the house on large-scale agro-industrial projects that required a skills set, an institutional infrastructure, and a secure financial foundation that had not yet been put in place, all the while usurping the major rural public investments into shadowy joint ventures that put them on the path to privatization, the Angolan elite's mismanagement of the rural economy has left these Chinese-financed infrastructure projects in a precarious position. The present situation leaves the populations dependent on subsistence agriculture to survive and the public-private partnership (PPP) "cash cows" dependent on continuous public financing to stay viable before any private enterprise will be able and willing to turn the existing projects into sustainable profits. Furthermore, "given the current weaknesses in infrastructure governance and fiscal transparency, PPPs would carry significant risks of failure".¹⁵³² Such was the culmination of the agricultural sector when it was handed off from José Eduardo dos Santos to President João Lourenço. Changing presidents but not political parties, we will now turn our attention to the new administration and see whether Lourenço's campaign promise holds true: "*Melhorar o que está bem e corrigir o que está mal*" (Improve what's good and right the wrongs).

¹⁵³² Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure*, 21.

Chapter 7 João Lourenço: agent of change?

The former president José Eduardo dos Santos has played a central role in this study, albeit largely behind the scenes. The authoritarian system he inherited from the colonial experience passed on through the temporary stewardship of Agostinho Neto and the subsequent accumulation of power that he has centralized in his office since culminated into a system described by Paula Cristina Roque as “one of ‘hyper presidentialism’, blurring the lines of separation of powers and the necessary check to counter intrusive influence over institutions”.¹⁵³³ Working out of the presidential complex *Futungo de Belas*, public policy intertwined with the personal interests of the president and his elite presidential advisors.

The nickname of the entire complex itself, Futungo, came to be connotated with the President’s clientelist network.¹⁵³⁴ This has merged private and public interests to such an extent that the “conventional boundaries between party, state and public administration are virtually meaningless”.¹⁵³⁵ The obscure nature of the internal machinations guiding policy-making decisions within Angola’s government are a hallmark of the previous administration. Through incremental consolidation, Parliament has essentially morphed into a debating chamber rubber stamping decrees and decisions handed down by the president’s close circle of advisors.¹⁵³⁶ President João Lourenço, a longtime participant alimending this clientelist system, inherited this heavily centralized power system upon taking power in September 2017. It still remains early to analyze concrete results of the vision of João Lourenço’s administration in the arena of social and economic policy, though following the actions his administration has implemented until now provides a clear vision of the direction this new leadership hopes to take the economy and, with it, the country.

While João Lourenço was elected in August 2017, his first year was hindered by the dueling powers of the presidency and the MPLA party chairmanship which remained under

¹⁵³³ Paula Cristina Roques, *Angola’s new president. Reforming to survive*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report, no. 38, April 2020, 4. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/sar38.pdf>.

¹⁵³⁴ David Sogge, “Angola: e onde está a “boa governação” do mundo?” *Working Paper 23*, Coimbra, Núcleo de Estados para a Paz, June 2006, 9. <https://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/pdfs/DavidSogge.pdf>.

¹⁵³⁵ Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 91.

¹⁵³⁶ BTI, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Angola*, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018, 9. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1427448/488345_en.pdf.

the hold of Dos Santos until September 2018.¹⁵³⁷ The major changes that were to come with the new administration would be first marked by this dual balancing act. As is typical with major political transitions, these periods are marked with higher than usual activity of policy change and program creation, with some new ideas adopted and some abandoned in the search for legitimacy and control over the new administration.

Moreover, as we have seen in the previous chapters, this creative process of imagining spaces of future-making¹⁵³⁸ is typical in Angolan governance and countries in development more generally as constant institutional shakeups, personnel moves, and program creation are not uncommon.¹⁵³⁹ Tony Hodges noted that between 1987-2000, the government rolled out no less than nine different major economic programs, some lasting years, while others lasted a matter of weeks.¹⁵⁴⁰ This chapter will therefore not attempt to follow each change regarding the rural socio-economic policy enacted since the arrival of João Lourenço, but rather focus on those that represent the strongest trends in either continuity or rupture with the previous administration.

Such an attempt is seriously hindered by even the most adept observers given that the government itself admits that it does not have an integrated national agrarian strategy coordinating both the full range of domestic programs or the strategic importations of foodstuffs.¹⁵⁴¹ This reality means that a full understanding of the country's national agrarian policy requires a deep dive into each institution's policies and programs and analyzing their combined direction and effectiveness. Furthermore, given that the gravity of the situation has been known for some time, many observers remain skeptical of the barrage of policy proposals, at times inconsistent and contradictory on means and objectives in such a short time frame.¹⁵⁴² Rather, this chapter will first attempt to take stock of the Dos Santos legacy by first examining a broad range of indicators showing the country's progression or regression in different aspects, as well as focusing on the state of the agricultural sector and

¹⁵³⁷ Roques, *Angola's new president*, 9.

¹⁵³⁸ This phrase was inspired from the panel I participated in during the European Conference on African Studies (ECAS) in June 2019 in Edinburgh, Scotland: "Rural transformations in Sub-Saharan Africa – spaces of future-making", presided by Professor David Anderson.

¹⁵³⁹ See §3.3.4 for the institutional instability within the Ministry of Agriculture.

¹⁵⁴⁰ Hodges, *Angola: From Afro-Stalinism*, 102-105.

¹⁵⁴¹ MINAGRI, Government of Angola, *Plano de Desenvolvimento de Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário: 2018-2022*, Luanda, April 2017, 50.

¹⁵⁴² Manuel José Alves de Rocha, "OGE 2019 revisto à medida das exigências do Fundo Monetário Internacional", *Expansão*, no. 525, Luanda, 27 May 2019. <http://www.expansao.co.ao/artigo/113234/oge-2019-revisto-a-medida-das-exig-ncias-do-fundo-monetario-internacional?seccao=7>.

the rural population at the time of Lourenço's arrival to the Futungo. Secondly, it will analyze what significant changes have evolved in the relationship with the government and its peripheral spaces. This will be seen through a dual perspective along the analytical lines that have been developed throughout this study: the gradual strengthening of the participatory dialogue with the different Non-State Actors and public policy directed towards the agricultural sector revealing its development priorities and desired methods of social and economic growth.

Ultimately, this chapter therefore hopes to further scrutinize the position of the MPLA-dominated government vis-à-vis its legacy of rural rent capture and structural resource scarcity directed towards the peasantry throughout the peripheries within the context of the first presidential handover in 38 years. A central question that has hovered over the MPLA as a political entity regarding the country's underdevelopment and the mismanagement of major sectors of the economy is whether its source is incompetence, incapacity or disdain. João Lourenço's tenure is an opportunity to provide clarity to this question. How fossilized is the MPLA in its approach to governance? What margins of maneuver exist to allow more independent entrepreneurship and resource accumulation in the peripheries? Has the position of the government evolved in any significant way towards the country's peasantry? Has the loosening of restrictions on freedom of speech emerging in the cities been transferred to the countryside? Was the structural scarcity model imposed during the Dos Santos era a policy directed by the president and his circle of elites, or is it fully engrained within the political ecosystem of the MPLA itself? How much fundamental change can come within this "hyper-presidential" system with the arrival of one man who himself is a creature of the system itself?

7.1 Taking stock of the Dos Santos era

A general review of the major economic and social indicators of Angola in the 21st century allows us a broad understanding of how the country has fared during the reign of José Eduardo dos Santos throughout the period of peacetime. This study has documented various aspects of his government throughout his 38-year tenure, but here we will focus specifically on the post-civil war years considering that leading a country embroiled in war creates obvious structural difficulties in policy creation and implementation. The movement

of indicators since 2000 can shed light on the overall results of Dos Santos's grandiose national reconstruction plans and the ability of the government to enact pro-development policies in response to the dire needs of the country. The movement in indicators and statistics must be understood in their historical context as the country found itself at the turn of the 21st century in its most dire state after decades of war. Looking at the indicators from 2000 onwards allows us to better understand the extent of this social and economic reconstruction enacted by the "architect of peace" José Eduardo dos Santos¹⁵⁴³, though oftentimes the statistics underlying these indicators are not scientifically sound or even completely absent in some cases.

The sustainability of the noted improvements remains an open question given the extreme volatility the country has experienced in the last two decades, spurred on by boom and bust cycles of international oil prices. As of 2018, the trade in oil in global markets comprises 95% of the country's access to foreign currency revenue and 40% of the entire country's GDP.¹⁵⁴⁴ Furthermore, Angola continues to have "one of the least diversified economies in the world" with 96.5% of exports in 2006 divided between oil and diamonds.¹⁵⁴⁵ These two statistics reveal the enormous weight that the oil sector continues to play in the overall economic performance of Angola and the structural limitations moving forward.

7.1.1 EVOLVING DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Following the various economic and social indicators allows us to see how Angola has evolved over the last two decades. The total population of Angola has nearly doubled since 2000 and the phenomenon of rural flight has continued apace with the urban population growing nearly 145% over the last two decades as rural populations grew by 30%. These peripheral populations remaining in the countryside seek social and economic stability, personal security, or simply means to rebuild their lives after their livelihoods had been

¹⁵⁴³ In regard to the major physical reconstruction project led by José Eduardo dos Santos, for an in-depth review on the concrete results of the infrastructure boom, see Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure*, 2018.

¹⁵⁴⁴ Alex Vines, *La politique de transition en Angola : Lourenço boucle sa première année à la tête du pouvoir*. Washington D.C., Centre d'études stratégiques de l'Afrique, 3 Oct. 2018. <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/la-politique-de-transition-en-angola-lourenco-boucle-sa-premiere-annee-a-la-tete-du-pouvoir/>.

¹⁵⁴⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, ix.

destroyed. This consistent move towards urbanization also reflects the failure of the government to reestablish these necessary socio-economic foundations for the rural communities to continue practicing their traditional lifestyles or attempt to move into commercial practice. As public support remained insufficient and relief failed to materialize, the decision to move toward urban agglomerations has remained a popular option.

Over the last two decades, life expectancy has improved significantly by nearly 15 years, representing a 30.5% increase, though the country still stands at 149 out of 188 countries calculated by the Human Development Index produced by the UNDP report in 2019.¹⁵⁴⁶ The fight against poverty, as measured by \$1.90 per day based on 2011 Purchasing Power Parity, has stalled alongside rapid population growth, increasing in absolute numbers throughout the period of peacetime.¹⁵⁴⁷ Poverty remains entrenched in the peripheral spaces for 57% of the 10.6 million residents, as well as 5.3 million (30%) of the urban poor.¹⁵⁴⁸ Though serious advances have been recorded among the overall goal of achieving food security, a significant amount of the population remains affected by undernourishment and malnutrition. Nationally, the number of undernourished people has been cut in half in the last two decades. However, over 5.5 million people remain unable to correctly feed themselves. A major culprit of this entrenched poverty and consistent malnourishment is the weak institutional articulation between policies and programs aimed at reducing these numbers.¹⁵⁴⁹ While undernourishment is present throughout the territory, the rural populations are more likely to suffer given their geographic isolation, the absence of a coordinated food distribution network or an established rural marketplace capable of bringing in a diversified range of food products at an affordable price for the peasantry.

¹⁵⁴⁶ United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Reports, Angola. See: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/69206> (accessed 26 July 2020) and the World Bank database, Angola: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=AO> (accessed 16 Aug. 2020); UNDP, *Angola: The Post-War Challenges, Common Country Assessment 2002*, United Nations System in Angola, Luanda, 2002, ii. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/angola/docs/legalframework/UNDP_AO_CCA_2002.pdf.

¹⁵⁴⁷ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 30.

¹⁵⁴⁸ Angop, “Monetary poverty rate rises to 41 percent in Angola”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 6 Dec. 2019. http://www.angop.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/economia/2019/11/49/Monetary-poverty-rate-rises-percent-Angola,c96d1f24-0361-42d3-b661-d30aefd0bb23.html.

¹⁵⁴⁹ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 70.

Tableau 33 - Evolution of main development indicators (2000-2018)

Indicator	2000	2018	% change
Social			
Total Population	16,440,920	30,774,230	+87.2%
Urban population	8,234,820 (51%)	20,161,540 (65.5%)	+11,926,720 (144.8%)
Rural population	8,206,100 (49%)	10,612,670 (34.5%)	+2,406,570 (29.3%)
Population under 15 years old	45%	47%	+4.4%
Gini Index	52	51.3	--
Human Development Index (HDI)	.394	.574	+46%
HDI world ranking	160/174	147/189	--
Illiteracy rate (% , 15 years or older)	17% (men) 45% (women) 32.6% total	20% (men) (2014) 47% (women) 34% total	+17.6%% +4.4% +4.3%
Life expectancy (years)	46.5	60.7	+30.5%
Fertility rate, births per woman	6.6	5.5	-16.6%
Poverty ratio at \$1.90/day (2011 PPP) (% of pop.)	32.3	47.6	+47.3%
Number of people undernourished	11,400,000	5,700,000	-50%
Economic			
Gross Domestic Product (GDP, current US\$, billions)	9.13	101.35	+1010%
Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, PPP ^a (current international \$)	2,780	6,550	+135.6%
Tax revenue (% of GDP)	28.7	9.2	-68%
Net official development assistance (ODA) received (current US\$, millions)	302.2	159.4	-47.2%
Health expenditure (% of total)	4.5	3.36	-25.3%
Education expenditure (% of total)	5.3	5.41	+2.07%

^a PPP = Purchasing power parity

Source: Angop, "Monetary poverty rate rises to 41 percent in Angola", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 6 Dec. 2019. http://www.angop.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/economia/2019/11/49/Monetary-poverty-rate-rises-percent-Angola,c96d1f24-0361-42d3-b661-d30aefd0bb23.html;

CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2012*, 37; Francisco Miguel Paulo, *Quão Importante é Agricultura para o Governo Angolano?*, CEIC-UCAN, Luanda, 2018, 1; FAOSTAT; Inge Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001 Key Development Issues and the Role of NGOs*, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, no. 1, 2001, 3.

<https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/955-angola-2000-2001.pdf>; UNESCO database¹⁵⁵⁰; UNDP country profile¹⁵⁵¹; World Bank World Development Indicators database¹⁵⁵², percent change calculated by author.

The country has made some progress on the Human Development Index (HDI), but this again has been modest. From 2000 to 2018, its HDI score has grown from .394 to .574, representing a 46% increase.¹⁵⁵³ Given that the country was emerging from nearly 40 years of war at the turn of the century, it should come as no surprise that the country has gained considerable ground in this indicator. The increase in life expectancy at birth, rising nearly fifteen years over the last two decades, also falls into this category of analysis. The MPLA-led government both deserves credit for this HDI improvement, but it also invites serious criticism in its continued languishing among the bottom ranks of the world.

The extremely low investment in the health, education, and agricultural sectors have all contributed to its stagnation in global rankings. Once believed a product of the war, this lack of investment in the human capital of its own people has continued throughout peacetime, thereby dismantling the argument that were it not for the war, the government would have funneled considerably more resources into these sectors.¹⁵⁵⁴ During the decade following the end of the war, the country had never before been so endowed with financial resources. Nevertheless, that wealth was not invested in any meaningful way in the key sectors of education, health and agriculture.

The biggest political risk to continued MPLA dominance arguably comes from its ability to ensure stable economic performance. The GDP expansion (+1,010%) has been massive, but the streamlined, vertical nature of oil rents combined with the systematic misuse of these funds has contributed to equally massive social inequalities.¹⁵⁵⁵ Furthermore, it is the hope behind a future inclusive economic model, or at least a some-what effective ‘trickle down’ method, that undergirds the country’s tenuous social stability amidst rampant poverty and cavernous social inequalities. The MPLA’s grip on power exceedingly depends on its

¹⁵⁵⁰ Unesco, Data for the Sustainable Development Goals, Angola See: <http://uis.unesco.org/country/AO> (accessed 26 July 2020).

¹⁵⁵¹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Reports, Angola. See: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/AGO> (accessed 26 July 2020).

¹⁵⁵² World Bank database, country profile, Angola. See: https://databank.worldbank.org/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=AGO (accessed 26 July 2020).

¹⁵⁵³ UNDP, Brief analysis on Angola state budget 2019, Aug. 2019a, 3. <https://www.ao.undp.org/content/angola/pt/home/imprensa/Angolastatebudget2019.html>.

¹⁵⁵⁴ See §3.3.2 for a review of the agricultural sector spending (2000-2020). See §3.2 for the health and education sector spending (1996-2020).

¹⁵⁵⁵ See §4.2.3 for a review of the allegations regarding the billions of petrol dollars funneled out of the country.

ability to redistribute a larger share of the nation's wealth downward or to restructure its future creation in a way that reaches a larger percentage of the masses.

The massive increase in GDP has effectively translated to a rise in Gross National Income (GNI), up 58% since 2000 to US\$6,550 per capita. However, the country's extremely high cost of living due to an overvalued currency, a high expatriate population and limited supply chains all contribute to making the GNI increase relative to the high prices paid by the average Angolan.¹⁵⁵⁶ Mostly under control since the war, increasing inflation rates have returned as well since 2014,¹⁵⁵⁷ peaking at 40% in December 2016 until falling to 18.6% in December 2018.¹⁵⁵⁸ Notably, despite the huge increase in GDP and GNI, the Gini Index, which measures inequalities through the distribution of income among individuals or households, has hardly changed. This reality means that the wealth accumulated has not contributed to reducing social inequalities. In sum, the decades of peacetime have brought social stability but lacked widespread material benefits.

A major impediment to achieving sustained economic growth not dependent on the global oil market is the fact that growth in Angola has relied on the exploitation of natural resources without a strategy to convert gains into other forms of capital. Without a strategy of reinvesting revenue, public funds are not invested in diversified vehicles for further wealth creation, instead reinvesting money into the already developed oil sector and mining sector, two areas of the economy that already attract the most foreign direct investment (FDI). The lack of diversification in the economy has likewise disincentivized private venture capital investments in other sectors, leading to a situation wherein the country as a whole "has the worst disinvestment rate of any Sub-Saharan African country".¹⁵⁵⁹ Alongside FDI, officials have long depended on Official Development Assistance (ODA) from abroad to make up for their own lack of investment, but with the establishment of social stability and the availability of oil wealth, organizations providing ODA have already begun to move on. The amount of ODA being invested in the country has nearly halved over the last two decades. In response, the government has not moved to fill the void, further exasperating problems.

¹⁵⁵⁶ IFC, *Creating Markets in Angola: Opportunities for Development Through the Private Sector*, Washington D.C., 2019, 31. <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/454d71e2-c965-4951-83b1-ae469d9f1e67/201905-CPSD-Angola-English-v2.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=m-PVp8R>.

¹⁵⁵⁷ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2016*, 63.

¹⁵⁵⁸ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 2.

¹⁵⁵⁹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, iii. See §4.2.3 for information on the foreign direct investments in the agricultural sector.

The last years of the José Eduardo dos Santos era were marked by economic stagnation. The economy in 2016 grew by only .1%, essentially a year of stagnant growth, while 2017 saw it grow marginally better by 1.1%.¹⁵⁶⁰ Moreover, this low growth rate needs to be combined with the systematic unpaid salaries of workers in the public sector,¹⁵⁶¹ further undermining the public's faith in the government and the image of the MPLA itself in its inability to ensure payments for its own workforce, let alone provide for those outside of the public sphere. While a product of the Dos Santos administration, it was the government of João Lourenço that ultimately bore the brunt of these criticisms and had to formulate an adequate response to striking workers and growing frustrations directly at the party-state. These are the indicators with which João Lourenço took office. Significantly reversing course on any number of these structural indicators will require more than one five-year term.

7.1.2 STAGNATING AGRICULTURAL INDICATORS

Concerning the evolution of the agricultural sector itself, the results are difficult to discern as statistics have been shown to be faulty and unreliable, particularly during wartime. Nevertheless, a broad view of the evolution of the sector can be highlighted through a range of current selective indicators, which leaves us to reason that the indicators would have been considerably worse two decades prior.

¹⁵⁶⁰ Joel Muzima, *Angola*, 2018 African Economic Outlook, Country Note, Abidjan, African Development Bank Group, 2018. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/country_notes/Angola_country_note.pdf. See §3.3.2 for the GDP figures from 2000 until 2020.

¹⁵⁶¹ See §6.2.1 for a review of the different cases of unpaid salaries throughout the rural economy.

Tableau 34 - Select indicators of the evolution and state of agricultural sector

Indicator	2000 (in %)	2018 (in %)
As % of total GDP	6	10.2
Food production as % of total needs	50, dependent on World Food Program (WFP)	50
% of agriculture in state budget	.8	.3
% of land under commercial production	2	8
% of land under peasant production	98	92
% of national production done by peasantry	N/A	80
% of total source of employment	60-70	44.9
% of formal employment	N/A	3
% of food distribution using informal networks	N/A	70
Land prepared manually	N/A	72/98
Land prepared by animal traction	N/A	25%
Land prepared mechanically	N/A	3%

N/A signifies “not available”.

Source: Allen, *et al.*, *A Framework for Transitioning to Rural Economic Growth in Angola*. Washington D.C., USAID, Dec. 2003, 5. https://sarpn.org/documents/d0001150/P1269-PNADB799_Angola_Dec2003.pdf; Paulo, *Quão importante*, 5; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 1, no. 3, Fortaleza, Oxfam Novib, Sept. 2008a: 124; IFC, *Creating Markets*, 45-46; Lusa, “Angola vai privatizar fazendas agrícolas estatais”, *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 9 April 2019. <https://www.dn.pt/mundo/interior/angola-vai-abrir-este-mes-o-concurso-para-privatizar-fazendas-agricolas-estatais-10777884.html>; MINAGRIF, Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatísticas, *Relatório de resultados da campanha agrícola 2018/2019*, Luanda, July 2019, 11. https://assets.website-files.com/5a8e71e3c7881c000130ff13/5ef9a5fa04117d2577e30184_RELATORIO_DA_CAMPANHA%20AGRICOLA%202018-2019.pdf; World Bank, *Angola Country Economic Memorandum: Oil, Broad-Based Growth, and Equity*, Report No. 35362-AO, Washington D.C., 2 Oct. 2006, 94. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/591191468002432699/pdf/35362.pdf>; CIA Factbook.

As seen in §3.3.2, the national contribution of the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors as a percentage of GDP remained largely stagnant from 2000 until 2012, averaging 5.9%. From 2012 until 2017, the sector consistently increased from 6% in 2012 until 10% in 2017, before dropping slightly to 8.6% in 2018. The sector has been able to increase as a percentage of total GDP despite being consistently allocated below 2% of total public spending from 2000 until 2019 for two main reasons. Firstly, overall GDP growth has fluctuated between negative growth and barely registering since 2015, so the increase in the agricultural sector at that same time is directly correlated with the decrease in global oil prices having a distortionary effect on the country’s GDP as a whole. Secondly, the series of Chinese-built agro-industrial state farms described in §6.3.1 were constructed between 2011 and 2014, the same year that the agricultural sector began consistently trending upward as the farms would have been coming online and increasing production output.

Given the major investments made on selective modernization projects, this eventual increase is to be expected, though the peasantry’s contribution to the growth is likely minimal. Finally, the drop from 10% to 8.6% between 2017-2018 is troublesome as the tendency should have been to continue growing or at least stagnate. This time period

corresponds to the post-election instability provoked by the government's takeover of the farms' management from Quantum Global via the Sovereign Wealth Fund (FSDEA). The constant instability of these farms' management structure and its final return back under government control surely had serious negative impacts on their capacity to scale up production to their potential, as shown in their significant depreciation as state assets currently awaiting privatization as discussed below in §7.3.3. While reliable figures on food imports are difficult to obtain, in 2003 it was estimated that national production provided only about half of the country's needs.¹⁵⁶² Two decades later, the country continues to import over half of the required foodstuffs. Though increasing, national production has proven inadequate to meet the needs of the growing population.

The weak contribution to food security is due to the overall structural difficulties facing the sector as discussed throughout this study, with the lack of investment and serious engagement by authorities being the source of its stagnation and, in some cases, degradation. Without financial support for the peasantry and mismanagement of the state assets, neither production model has been able to properly develop. Over the last two decades, the amount of land cultivated for explicitly commercial purposes rose from 2% to 8% nationally, leaving the rest of the land cultivated to the peasantry, with its part slightly reduced from 98% to 92%.¹⁵⁶³ This translates to smallholders now representing 80% of overall production, leaving 20% for the commercial sector, while 70% of all of this production is distributed through informal networks.¹⁵⁶⁴ It can be assumed that a considerable part of the 30% being distributed through the few formal networks that exist come from the 20% produced by the commercial sector.¹⁵⁶⁵ The high level of informality of the distribution network is even more pronounced in the sector's overall employment. While agriculture today accounts for approximately 45% of total employment, down from between 60% and 70% in 2000, nearly all of the workers are employed informally as only 3% of these jobs account for direct employment by a registered company.¹⁵⁶⁶

¹⁵⁶² Allen, *et al.*, *A Framework*, 5; CCPE, *Angola: Relatório Final*, 124.

¹⁵⁶³ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 45; MINAGRIF, *Relatório de resultados*, 11.

¹⁵⁶⁴ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 45.

¹⁵⁶⁵ See §4.3.3 for an overview of the agricultural distribution networks. Our assumption relies on the evidence of how some supermarket chains (Pomobel, Maxi, Kero) are producing their own farm-to-supermarket distribution networks.

¹⁵⁶⁶ *Ibidem*; World Bank, *Angola Country*, 94.

Finally, the question arises as to what extent the modernization policies have been implemented during the era of José Eduardo dos Santos in the most fundamental aspect of farming: preparation of the land itself. The results are grim. The techniques used for preparing the ground for planting is a strong indicator for the size of operations, the resource capital of the agricultural producer, as well as the level of modernization employed in the overall production cycle. According to the latest MINAGRIF study, 72% of all land prepared in the 2018-2019 season was done manually (3,740,784 ha), 25% using animal labor (1,298,883 ha), and only 3% using machinery (155,866 ha).¹⁵⁶⁷ However, as mentioned previously it was reported in May 2017 that the former Minister of Agriculture Marcos Alexandre Nhunga (2016-2019) admitted that manual labor was the source of 98% of land preparation in the sector, leaving only 2% for “both mechanization and animal labor”.¹⁵⁶⁸ Modernization on a popular scale never arrived.

Given that the country has gone through serious economic difficulties since 2017, and there has been no significant increase in sector spending until 2020, it does not seem plausible that the situation would have improved in any significant way. The use of animal labor in land preparation therefore needs further analysis to better understand this vast difference. Nevertheless, both sources admit that mechanization is only used to prepare between 2% and 3% of all land, representing a serious failure in the decades long bid to bring modernization to the periphery, remaining a resource almost exclusively destined for the limited commercial sector and the ‘new rural bourgeoisie’.

7.1.3 SECURITY, STABILITY AND A PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

Perhaps the most positive and fundamental legacies of the post-war Dos Santos era are enshrined in the establishment of Angola’s peacetime character, shoring up the authority of the state’s principal national institutions and laying the ground for social stability. These legacies were quickly exploited however for political means of excessive authoritarian

¹⁵⁶⁷ MINAGRIF, *Relatório de resultados*, 11.

¹⁵⁶⁸ Lusa, “Agricultura ainda é feita à mão em 98% dos terrenos de cultivo em Angola”, *Diário de Notícias*, Luanda, 11 May 2017. <https://www.dn.pt/lusa/agricultura-ainda-e-feita-a-mao-em-98-dos-terrenos-de-cultivo-em-angola-8467768.html>.

control. Over time, this has culminated into “a securitized state and society, where the military, intelligence and police apparatuses form a defining and stabilizing pillar of political and social power”.¹⁵⁶⁹ A large part of the benefits of social stability gained came at the expense of stifling democracy. While crackdowns on freedom of expression loosened before the election, palpable fear remained.

During the campaign season, political paraphernalia was a common sight, with different political parties mingling together without provoking social conflict as had been the case during past elections. While elections in Angola have been historically marred by violence, the historic 2017 elections were held in a relaxed environment mostly characterized by tolerance and overt political discourse.¹⁵⁷⁰ This level of political tolerance was historic and not present in previous elections.¹⁵⁷¹ Nevertheless, anecdotes of the past electoral violence were still present in the public space. A flyer found strewn about on the streets of Luanda just prior to the election was an exercise in extreme political messaging based on provoking fear. Evoking the recent history of political violence was clear as the flyer claimed that a vote for CASA-CE or UNITA was a vote for the “Somaliaization” of Angola”.¹⁵⁷² Whether the average Angolan knows much about Somalia or not, the most likely connotation they would have is that of violence and *confusão*.

¹⁵⁶⁹ Paula Cristina Roques, *Angola's new president. Reforming to survive*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report, no. 38, April 2020, 24 p. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/sar38.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷⁰ Zefanias Matsimbe & Nelson Domingos, “Angola’s 2017 Elections and the Start of a Post-Dos Santos Era”, *Journal of African Elections*, 17, no. 1, (2018), 3. DOI: 10.20940/JAE/2018/v17i1a1.

¹⁵⁷¹ This sentiment was shared by various Angolans throughout the country, including in conversations with Saudio Mango and Manuel “Bumba” Gaiola of the *Espiritanos* community, Carlos Pacatolo, director of Jean Piaget University of Benguela, and José António Martins Patrocínio, former director of the NGO OMUNGA.

¹⁵⁷² The flyer translated reads: “Never Somaliaization! 1. They betrayed UNITA, but, during the campaign, hid that they always belonged to that party. 2. They also hid that they were trained by foreign secret police. 3. They are ingrates. They still don’t recognize that they are alive thanks to the generosity of the Angolan people. 4. They only make irresponsible and criminal promises to trick the most distracted (people). 5. As they always lived off of blood diamonds, now they want to end the country’s diamond trade, allowing illegal prospecting, even for foreigners. 6. They take about change, but they really want to take revenge against those that don’t vote for them and have always fought them. 7. They want to destroy all the achievements of the Angolan people. 8. They want to burn and raze everything, create confusion, as they promised at their own rallies. THEY ARE FAKE! THEY ARE WOLVES IN SHEEP’S CLOTHING! Don’t take the risk! Vote for who has already done a lot and will continue to do better! Vote for who is going to make change with creating confusion! Vote for experience and security! Vote 4 – Vote MPLA – Vote João Lourenço!”

Image 14 - 2017 election flyer



Source: Author's personal photograph. Flyer found on the *Avenida 4 de Fevereiro* along the marginal.

Centered on the initial evocation of Somalia, this document harkens back to the electoral violence associated with past elections. The targeting of the fearmongering is visible before even reading any of the text, while understanding who is behind it requires more attention. The dual colors of yellow and blue make a direct connection to the political party of CASA-CE, the same color of its party flag seen in the photo below. This *trompe d'oeil* gives the initial impression that the document is political propaganda produced by and for CASA-CE. Yet the major block letters that first attract the eye after seeing the initial colors read “NEVER SOMALIAZATION” and “THEY ARE FAKE”. This effect creates an automatic connection to the CASA-CE party, “Somalia” and “fake”.

The first point of the document's text then connects these ideas indirectly to the major opposition party UNITA by claiming that CASA-CE members betrayed UNITA by claiming to be a different party, but in reality they betrayed the Angolan people because they supposedly do belong to UNITA. In the mind of the reader, this statement has the effect of merging both UNITA and CASA-CE, the two major opposition party to the MPLA, into

one and the same entity. The document then evokes images of foreign-trained secret police, before later claiming that their candidates promote foreigners profiting off of “blood diamonds” just like they did, evoking a clear connection to UNITA’s role in the diamond trade to finance its war efforts. The third point is perhaps the most ominous, as it claims the MPLA’s opposition is “ungrateful” because they still have not recognized that the fact that they are even alive is thanks to the “generosity of the Angolan people”.

This statement conditions the survival of these political opponents, opening up the idea that the opposite could have been true, i.e. the winner of the war (the MPLA) could have killed them all for “betrayal” of the Angolan people. However, rather than connecting the potential of political violence to the MPLA, point six claims that the real motivation behind the other political parties (UNITA and CASA-CE) is to take revenge against anyone that does not vote for them and they will in fact always be fighting against those people.

This notion is directly related to our analysis developed in chapter three questioning to what extent the remnants of the civil war still affect the MPLA’s decision-making today, most notably towards the former strongholds of UNITA and its supporters. In this sense, this document could be seen as projection of the MPLA’s own lasting impressions that UNITA *and its supporters* who vote against the MPLA are “ungrateful” and constitute a threat to the country’s progress. The document then doubles down on this theme of violence, arson, and destruction of the progress that Angolans have been building upon since the end of the war. After claiming these politicians are really just wolves in sheep’s clothing, we finally learn at the bottom of the document who is actually being promoted with this propaganda as it calls for the reader to vote for João Lourenço and the MPLA. Before evoking the final words of “experience” and “security”, the revelation of the MPLA is psychologically separated from the menacing threats located within the blue and yellow colored portion of the page by finally moving the message into a more traditional black and white format.

As embodied in this document, prior to 2017 political elections were still tightly linked with political violence. The deep wounds of the civil war between the MPLA and UNITA membership and allegiance remained fresh, though signs were clear that this atmosphere was dissipating.

Image 15 - Political party flags prior to elections in downtown Lubango



Source: Personal photograph, Aug. 2017.

As the photo above demonstrates, the red, black and gold political party flag of the dominant MPLA waved in unison alongside the yellow and blue CASA-CE flag in downtown Lubango in the weeks prior to the parliamentary elections of 2017. At the base of the light pole flew the white, red and yellow FNLA flag, while the emblematic red and green UNITA flags can be seen further down the road.

The photo is symbolic of the controlling role that the MPLA plays in the political scene as its flags formed the central nexus of the roundabout, the other major parties pushed to the peripheries. The centralizing force of the light pole is also significant as it represents a physical form of the infrastructure project that the MPLA has built its political agenda upon. At dusk, the light illuminates first and foremost the MPLA flags, again occupying privileged space while the other party flags remain lower in the shadows. The photo therefore demonstrates how the MPLA maintains its dominance both horizontally and vertically.

However, its vertical dominance also portrays its elitism, being the furthest away from the streets and out of reach to regular Angolans in the spaces where they live their lives. It is precisely this historical disconnect from everyday Angolans that João Lourenço will have to negotiate as he takes the reins of a country shedding its fear of authoritarian tactics, with a large young population growing up without direct memories of war, amid a scenario where economic expansion does not contribute to increased employment and social misery has

remained engrained.¹⁵⁷³ The Angolan population has thus far been mostly treated as subjects by the elite claiming the maintenance of security and stability as the basis of their legitimacy. Now a growing chorus is reclaiming recognition of active citizenship.

The changing attitudes towards democracy, citizenship, and political tolerance are also symbolized in the literature produced by the NGO OMUNGA headquartered in Lobito, Benguela province. The NGO was actively focused on encouraging participation in the 2017 parliamentary elections and produced literature promoting pro-democratic behavior ahead of the election. The use of comics is a useful strategic tool to reach multiple generations with their message, as well as the ability to pass their message along to Angolans with a lower level of literacy. In 2015, it was estimated that 47% of women and 20% of men were illiterate, with illiteracy more prominent in the rural areas where access to education is severely limited.¹⁵⁷⁴ Two of the comics produced are shown below, with both of the entire comics available with their respective translations found in the appendix section, numbers eight and nine.

Image 16 - OMUNGA electoral campaign literature (I)



Source: Omunga (2017).

¹⁵⁷³ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, iv.

¹⁵⁷⁴ IFAD, *Republic of Angola*, Country strategy note, Main report, Rome, 27 April 2017, 1. <https://operations.ifad.org/documents/654016/69d212a2-139a-4f9b-9a01-2f79d41c8cd8>.

The comic on the left intitled “The people are free” focuses on the right to vote. It presents two *sobas* (traditional leaders) in their MPLA-issued modern military uniforms. Given the central role of the *sobas* as the main characters and the evocation of both “*aldeia*” (small village) and “*kimbo*” (an Umbundu word meaning a group of rural homes that form an agglomeration), in the first two panels, this message is clearly oriented towards a more rural audience. The conversation turns around the fact that soba Livongue, on the left-hand side, explains to soba Tchindulo that he has directed all of the people in his village to vote for the party that has brought them goods. The problem with the statement, is that this “help” is attributed to a range of physical goods including motorcycles, televisions and generators. Furthermore, the comic leaves out the question of who is really on the receiving end of these gestures, whether they were distributed throughout the villages or remained with the *sobas* themselves.

It is common practice in Angola’s short history of electoral politics for the dominant political parties to arrive shortly before the elections to hold rallies and distribute a range of goods for free to the attendees as a demonstration of how they work to bring resources to the people. This practice both further engrains the dependency contract that most Angolans have with their government, expecting them to solve the people’s problems, but it also further anchors the petty corruption dynamic at the local level where nothing is truly ‘free’. Actions that should be part of the daily routine of business or administration, free of charge, are instead explicitly or implicitly done in exchange for a ‘favor’, whether monetary (*‘gazozas’* or bribes) or otherwise. The second soba, Tchindulo, questions why he would connect the reception of goods to the need to vote for a specific party, asking whether the goods were an “offering” or rather designed to “buy their votes”. Tchindulo embodies the new Angola, espousing a more critical, mature vision of democracy, while Livongue characterizes the simplified nature of a clientelist logic, using political patronage to assure support. The physical appearance of Livongue, with his excessive smile and missing teeth, projects a degraded image lacking in seriousness. Tchindulo lectures Livongue about the role that sobas should play in local politics, which is to ensure that people are free to decide whomever they wish to support, regardless of the political party and whether one has provided the community with party “donations” recently.

The second comic on the right intitled “Adversary is not an enemy” promotes political tolerance and the diversity of political parties and ideas. It shows the differences in

generational thought as the father, having lived through political sectarianism and civil war, advises his son to take a more open-minded stance in the difference of ideas. He emphasizes the more important qualities of an individual character rather than their political positions, which should be separated entirely. The role of the wise father demonstrates the experiences learned from the recent past of the older generations of Angolans growing up amid the war, seeing recent political changes through this prism. In the comic, the son approaches his father worried about their neighbor who has been campaigning for his political party in the neighborhood. The son is incredulous that he would do so given that everyone else follows a different party, seeing these actions as a grave provocation by promoting “strange” or “odd” ideas. The father, playing his role as the wise elder, calms his son by reminding him that their neighbor is a good person and that not everyone is required to have the same ideas or follow the same political party. The story then unfolds with a man stealing the goats of the son and father, with the neighbor catching the thief and returning the goats to the family. In a gesture of thanks, the son offers the neighbor a goat, but the neighbor claims that would not be necessary and instead only asks to be invited for lunch with his wife.

Image 17 - OMUNGA electoral campaign literature (II)



Source: Omunga (2017).

The last panel of the comic changes from the colors of black, white, and sepia to full color with the two families eating around the same table. The lesson of the story is then clearly pronounced as the father demonstrates to this son that “He who sees a face, doesn’t see the heart. And he who sees the [political] flag, doesn’t see the soul.” The son, responding approvingly, declares that the problem is not belonging to different political parties, but rather “being too ignorant to be able to live with the differences.”

The theme of tolerance and diversity of opinion is clearly evoked throughout. As these comics constitute political propaganda created by a pro-human rights NGO, they could be seen as promoting democratic values that did not yet exist in society, but that were being actively nurtured. However, personal observations during my fieldwork around election time found similar sentiments being widely shared spontaneously by everyday Angolans. These conversations could have been taking place throughout the country at the same time of their creation and distribution. While there is still much work to do, the violence-free political transition shows that the practices of democracy have markedly matured among the population. It is in this new, transitory phase of opening participatory spaces that the new president came to power.

7.2 João Lourenço takes the reins

According to the new President's official biography,¹⁵⁷⁵ João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço was born on 5 March 1954 in Lobito, Benguela province. He played a key role in the fight for independence, but got a later start by entering the war in August 1974. By that time, the war was centered on the control for Luanda as the MPLA fought to expel the FNLA and UNITA from the capital.¹⁵⁷⁶ After independence, he pursued military training specializing in heavy artillery and a Master's degree in Historical Sciences in the Soviet Union from 1978 to 1982. He entered into the Central Committee of the MPLA in 1985 and became a member of the Politburo in 1990.

In Parliament, he was the President of the MPLA Parliamentary Group from 1991 to 1998 and played the role of first Vice President of the National Assembly from 2003 to 2014. That same year, he was nominated by presidential decree to the Minister of National Defense, which he held until the electoral campaign in 2017. In the meantime, he became Vice President of the MPLA in 2016. He therefore played an important role integrated in the military and security services, which has provided him a strong internal support mechanism in his eventual attempts at taking over the helm of the party and the government as a whole, while his long history in the inner political circle has allowed him an intimate seat at the table

¹⁵⁷⁵ See: <https://www.angola.or.jp/pt/2020/08/24/biography-pr-joao-lourenco-pt/> (accessed 21 Sept. 2020).

¹⁵⁷⁶ Michel Cahen, "Syndicalisme urbain, luttes ouvrières et questions ethniques : Luanda (Angola), 1974-1977/1981", in *Vilas et Cidades : Bourgs et Villes en Afrique lusophone*, (ed), Michel Cahen, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989), 200-279.

of state power. This insider knowledge and deep military and political connections would become his greatest assets in taking over the party from the entrenched Dos Santos clan. With this institutional support, he would have to formulate his own strategy to revitalize the party's connection with a population anxious for change.

In January 2020, President João Lourenço paid a private visit to Tunda dos Gambos to see for himself the rich biodiversity and the economic potential of the central cattle-raising region. A tour by the president of the *Cooperativa dos Criadores de Gado do Sul de Angola* (CCGSA, Cattle Breeders Cooperative of Southern Angola), Salvador Rodrigues, demonstrated the heavy political influence played by the ranching sector and their privileged connections to the government.¹⁵⁷⁷ In this gesture, João Lourenço has followed his predecessor declaring support for the expansion of an agro-business model built around the new rural bourgeoisie as a means to expand its part of the national economy.¹⁵⁷⁸ The peasantry factors little into this calculation. During his visit with the CCGSA, the essential topic of water was brought up as a key resource for the continued development of the region. This issue links back directly to the provincial government's decision merely four months earlier in September 2019 to officially end its planned water project diverting the water from the local Gambos communities to these same ranchers, developed in §6.3.6.

This visit represented a microcosm of how João Lourenço's administration seeks to find a balance among the social and economic transformations stirring within the country under his watch, whereas he seeks to enact an agro-industrial development agenda focused on modernization and agro-business while both acknowledging and at times acquiescing to certain demands of particularly cohesive rural populations characterized by a modest accumulation of rural agency. The new administration would have to find a balance within the machinery of the government to pursue the need for economic growth amid a stagnating economy with the rising voices of a rapidly developing civil society slowly shedding its fear of authoritarian reprisals.

¹⁵⁷⁷ Arão Martins, "Chefe de Estado constata as riquezas dos Gambos", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 10 Jan. 2020. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/politica/chefe-de-estado-constata-as-riquezas-dos-gambos>.

¹⁵⁷⁸ Olga Leite, "Joao Lourenço quer o agronegócio entre os grandes contribuintes para o Produto Interno Bruto", *Expansão*, Luanda, 21 July 2020. <http://expansao.co.ao/artigo/134758/joao-lourenco-quer-o-agronegocio-entre-os-grandes-contribuintes-para-o-produto-interno-bruto?seccao=5>.

These two issues fold into the two political priorities of the first year of João Lourenço's mandate: stabilize the economy and take total control of his party amid these rapid social changes.¹⁵⁷⁹ The first tests would come early and often, with one of the first being to quell the rising anger over unpaid salaries to public workers as described in §6.2.1. Whether engineered as such by his predecessor or simply chronic mismanagement, these missed paychecks set up an immediate challenge to the new government as a direct inheritance from the previous administration. Correcting past elitist practices would be required before looking to turn the page for a new future.

7.2.1 STRUCTURAL RESTRAINTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

In 2010, the Constitution made significant changes in the distribution of power and authority through a modification of the electoral system to mirror that of South Africa. Direct presidential elections were replaced by parliamentary elections whereby the party winning the majority of deputies *de facto* wins the presidency. Ironically, the anti-democratic nature of these changes could theoretically allow for a nearly absolute reach of the anti-corruption campaign waged by a president truly intent on pursuing such a mission. In this new system, the ruling party has a “monopolization of the local state apparatus due to the veritable *winner takes all* system in place”.¹⁵⁸⁰ In a true “winner takes all” system, Lourenço could then theoretically change out each official or administrator deemed disloyal to his agenda or found to have improperly profited from his or her position.

Practically, however, this would pose significant risks. The quality and efficacy of the administrative state already bears significant structural problems throughout, and the issue of finding not only qualified but experienced workers to replace them would require massive investments itself. Furthermore, the ever-present elephant in the room reappears: is replacing

¹⁵⁷⁹ Alex Vines, *La politique de transition en Angola : Lourenço boucle sa première année à la tête du pouvoir*. Washington D.C., Centre d'études stratégiques de l'Afrique, 3 Oct. 2018. <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/la-politique-de-transition-en-angola-lourenco-boucle-sa-premiere-annee-a-la-tete-du-pouvoir/>.

¹⁵⁸⁰ Aslak Orre, “Who’s to challenge the party-state in Angola? Political space & opposition in parties and civil society”, Conference: Election processes, liberation movements and democratic change in Africa, Maputo, 8-11 April 2010, 11. https://www.iese.ac.mz/~ieseacmz/lib/publication/proelit/Aslak_Orre.pdf.

the older MPLA cadres with newer officials instilling veritable change, or playing musical chairs?

An ongoing experiment in Angolan politics is the ability of the new president to enact significant social and economic change when taking over a political system after being an embedded actor within the same dominant political party. Looking at the issue through an institutional approach, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson state that the ultimate economic outcomes of a country “depends on the interaction between *de jure political power*, whose allocation is determined by political institutions, and *de facto political power*, which is determined by the equilibrium investments and organizations of different groups”.¹⁵⁸¹

The power center rests within the personalized *de facto* power as it is the group of elites running the institutions that will ultimately decide policies on the distribution of economic resources. This has been clear for the agricultural sector throughout the reign of José Eduardo dos Santos as institutions with mandates to develop the sector languished due to predatory priorities of rent capture and social control. The *de facto* political power bestowed upon the presidential transition to João Lourenço could therefore enact serious structural changes in the distribution of economic resources, yet considerable structural impediments remain.

If the change in president does not lead to a change in the dominant party, then the changes sought could be undermined through bribery or the undercutting of policies due to a continued subservience of the MPLA to the Dos Santos clan for example. Likewise, major disruptions of engrained *de facto* political power systems leading to changes in how institutions function could lead officials “to partially or even entirely offset changes in *de jure* power brought about by reforms in specific political institutions” in order to continue to wield their political power regardless of changes enacted.¹⁵⁸²

In a system with a mixed combination of weak and strong institutions, the power and influence of the president is magnified. This extreme concentration of power within the executive presents the possibility for medium- to long-term risk if the mandate of João Lourenço fails to achieve its development objectives given that the other branches of

¹⁵⁸¹ Daron Acemoglu & James A. Robinson “Persistence of Power, Elites, and Institutions”, *American Economic Review*, 113, no. 1, (2008): 268. Authors’ emphasis.

¹⁵⁸² *Ibidem*.

government lack the power and credibility to serve as an effective counterweight (Vines 2018).¹⁵⁸³ A potential check on this centralized executive power, and that of the MPLA's overall domination throughout the territory, is the holding of the first planned elections ever held in the country.

These elections planned for 2020 would represent the first time in Angola's short democratic history that elections would be held at the local level, bringing a whole new category of local actors into the political machinery of the country. It could also spell the end of the MPLA's stranglehold on power and control. Many if not all of João Lourenço's reform proposals should be understood with this new reality of impending local elections in mind. However, as we will see later on with the hesitation of the privatization process ceding too much control, the MPLA-led government appears to have no intention of ceding their dominant position in this moment. Despite the municipal elections being planned for 2020, as of this writing (August 2020) there has been no date set and no candidates announced.¹⁵⁸⁴ The MPLA's cold feet come after the parliamentary head of the MPLA Américo Cuononoca "guaranteed" in January 2020 that the elections would be held, declaring that the elections were both Constitutionally mandated and a promise made by the Head of State.¹⁵⁸⁵ The Covid-19 pandemic surely weighs also on the ability and willingness to organize national elections in this moment.

7.2.2 RUPTURES & CONTINUITIES: PERSONNEL

The supercharged presidential position written into Constitutional law and strengthened through unwritten rules, norms, and practices has come to dominate the political system. Not surprisingly, the new president has sought to entrench his position and ensure loyalty to his political agenda through the appointment of new officials and administrators. The presidential transition began with a dual strategy of personnel shakeup and administrative reform, though the process has been haphazard at times, demonstrating a lack of preparation and strategic vision upon coming to power and attempting to take

¹⁵⁸³ Vines, *La politique de transition*, 2018.

¹⁵⁸⁴ Lusa, "Angola: Caminho até eleições autárquicas mostra-se sinuoso", Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 23 July 2020. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/angola-caminho-até-eleições-autárquicas-mostra-se-sinuoso/a-54297000>.

¹⁵⁸⁵ Garrido Frago, "MPLA garante realização das eleições autárquicas", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 11 January 2020. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/politica/mpla-garante-realizacao-das-eleicoes-autarquicas>.

control over the party-state. The first major step was taking control of the party itself, rising to the presidency of the MPLA on 8 September 2018, officially dethroning the previous president José Eduardo dos Santos from his 39 years in that position. The new president immediately went about reorganizing the party in his image, replacing nearly half of the party's Political Bureau, many of whom are younger members with little relation to Dos Santos.¹⁵⁸⁶ In total, President Lourenço replaced seventeen ministers and 24 secretaries of state while streamlining the government by reducing the total ministries from 28 to 21.¹⁵⁸⁷ Some of the restructuring was disorganized, however.

In his first fifteen months in office, Lourenço dismissed two ministers, five secretaries of state and six provincial governors, all people that he himself nominated to their positions but were later pushed out through institutional restructuring.¹⁵⁸⁸ This institutional consolidation also significantly reduced the lower level heads of departments and directors from 559 to 313, saving around 96.5 million kwanzas (US\$172,967) per month.¹⁵⁸⁹ The consolidation of the party continued into the strategically important security apparatus as well, nominating 62 generals and admirals to the army and sending 58 others into retirement within his first year in office, with a further plan to reduce country's 100,000 soldier army by half while professionalizing and depoliticizing numerous positions.¹⁵⁹⁰ However, the replacement of officials does not necessarily replace the learned behavior of self-dealing built into the ethos of the government apparatus through the decades.

There has been a constant rotation of the officials in charge of managing their respective ministries. This makes it difficult to follow who is wielding the most influence in which area, but it could also serve as a strategy of João Lourenço to ensure that oversized personalities do not interfere with the goals of his administration. However, constantly changing ministerial portfolios is inevitably going to lead to lost efficiency as the processes of finding replacements and getting them up to speed in training also require significant investments. A further hypothesis to this broad personnel change between ministers and

¹⁵⁸⁶ Vines, *La politique de transition*, 2018.

¹⁵⁸⁷ Roques, *Angola's new president*, 4.

¹⁵⁸⁸ Miguel Daniel, "Nomeia, exonera, nomeia, exonera", *Nova Gazeta*, Luanda, 20 Dec. 2018. <https://www.novagazeta.co.ao/artigo/nomeia-exonera-nomeia-exonera>.

¹⁵⁸⁹ Angop, "Novos ministérios já têm estatutos orgânicos", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 14 May 2020. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2020/4/20/Novos-ministerios-tem-estatutos-organicos,1656518f-0d09-49d4-b9a8-48bc422e9693.html.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Vines, *La politique de transition*, 2018.

secretaries of state could be that the strong elite inner circle built by Dos Santos has in fact absorbed the major responsibilities of the different ministries, effectively running them out of the presidential *Casa Civil* while the ministers themselves play a more symbolic, figurehead role. If this were the case, then the mass personnel change would have less of an impact in the day-to-day functioning of the affected institutions as the true source of stability is assured by the Futungo.

During his tenure, João Lourenço has had two different agricultural ministers. The leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture has therefore been characterized by continuity. Upon taking power, the minister in place was Marcos Alexandre Nhunga, who had only recently been installed in the position in 2016. He replaced Afonso Pedro Canga who was in place for nearly a decade (2007-2016), making him by far the longest-serving Minister of Agriculture who oversaw the implementation of the expansion of the state into the agricultural sector. His replacement, Marcos Nhunga, comes straight from the 'Marxism-Leninism' wing as a member of the MPLA Politburo as his Bachelor's in Agronomy was earned in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in 1990.¹⁵⁹¹ Afterwards, he spent a year at the University in Wageningen in the Netherlands specializing in rural extension and spent another year studying the management of cotton cultivation in Egypt in 1992.

Upon his return to Angola, he held various positions within the *Instituto de Desenvolvimento Agrário* (IDA, Institute of Agrarian Development) from 1993-1994, rising to become its general director from 2007-2017. He was nominated to the position of Minister of Agriculture in 2016, arriving one year prior to the elections of 2017. Allowed to stay on until 2019, he was later nominated to become governor of Cabinda, replaced by António Francisco de Assis.¹⁵⁹² According to his official biography, he has spent his entire career in the agricultural sector being initially director general of a company of sugar cane production before moving to the direction of Frescangol for ten years, the director of the *Instituto Nacional de Apoio às Micro, Pequenas e Médias Empresas* (INAPEM, National Institute for Support to Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) for ten years, and finally arriving to

¹⁵⁹¹ According to the official biography of Marcos Nhunga provided by the government. See: <https://www.governo.gov.ao/VerSintese.aspx?Ministro=4085> (accessed 31 July 2020).

¹⁵⁹² Angop, "PR empossa novos membros do Executivo", *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 26 July 2019. https://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2019/6/30/empossa-novos-membros-Executivo,044ab7ef-a9f9-48b5-8496-d653dce20e24.html.

MINAGRIF in July 2019.¹⁵⁹³ While there has been stable continuity at the helm of the Ministry under João Lourenço, the personnel instability comes when moving below to the level of the secretary of state. It was in inquiring about the continued role Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime, referenced previously in §3.3.3, that this was uncovered.

Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto, known to be a cousin of the President, has been a central player in the agricultural sector for decades from his different positions as Head of the Board of Directors of Gesterra, Secretary of State for the Business Sector of Agriculture, and director of the now-closed public company Mekanagro. Besides his official titles, he has also played a role as a shadow minister for the Ministry of Agriculture for decades.¹⁵⁹⁴ Despite his generally poor performance in his different key positions governing the agricultural sector, “Calabeto” has remained an active actor within the government, though his actual role is reportedly as “shadowy” as his past decades as “shadow minister”.

Remaining within the agricultural sector, he was appointed to the position of Secretary of State for Agriculture and Livestock by President Lourenço in October 2017.¹⁵⁹⁵ The senior position maintained him as a central player within the Ministry of Agriculture, signaling a clear continuity with the previous administration’s personnel. He held that position until January 2019, when he was nominated by decree n° 4580 of 30 September 2019 to the position of Advisor to the Cabinet of Special Works in the Security House of the President of the Republic. In order to follow the different positions that Jaime Pinto has occupied, the study has chosen to follow the official declarations posted in the *Diário de República* to ensure the timing and positioning of these changes. Following the national press provided conflicting timelines about when his positions are changed, adding to the mysterious aura around Jaime Pinto.¹⁵⁹⁶

¹⁵⁹³ According to the official biography provided by the government. See: <https://www.governo.gov.ao/VerSintese.aspx?Ministro=4088> (accessed 31 July 2020).

¹⁵⁹⁴ See §3.3.3 for a detailed review of his role in the agricultural sector.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Angop, “Angolan President swears in Secretaries of State”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 14 Oct. 2017. http://www.angop.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/politica/2017/9/41/Angolan-President-swears-Secretaries-State,88f89401-8dde-4cf4-bfa7-296f6f2772b8.html.

¹⁵⁹⁶ For example, Club-K placed Jaime transfer from his job as Secretary of State of Agriculture and Livestock in January 2018, instead of January 2019 (Club-K, “‘Calabeto’ acomodado na Casa de Segurança do PR”, Luanda, 10 Oct. 2019. https://www.club-k.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37806:calabeto-acomodado-na-casa-de-seguranca&catid=8&Itemid=1071&lang=pt).

Tableau 35 - Secretary of State for Agriculture and Livestock

Name	Date of arrival	Date of departure	Weeks in office ^a
Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto	Oct. 2017	Jan. 2019	66
José Carlos Lopes da Silva Bettencourt	Jan. 2019	July 2020	78
João Manuel Bartolomeu da Cunha	July 2020	--	15 ^b

^a Weeks are calculated from the beginning of respective months.

^b As of writing (21 Sept. 2020).

Source: Author’s compilation based on the official gazette *Diário da República* (decree n° 248 of 13 Oct. 2017, decree n° 8 & n° 12 of 8 Jan. 2019, decree n° 191 & n° 192 of 23 July 2020).

According to the government’s website itself as of July 2020, Jaime Pinto is listed as Secretary of State for Agriculture and Livestock under the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development,¹⁵⁹⁷ though the rest of his biography is not present. Not only does his page currently put him in a position he is not occupying in a Ministry that no longer exists in that form, but the rest of his extensive service linked to the agricultural sector is absent, adding fuel to the idea of his role as a “shadow” actor. His public-facing profile is less descriptive than other officials listed, despite his extensive career in government. This stands in stark contrast to his successor, José Carlos Lopes da Silva Bettencourt, whose biography¹⁵⁹⁸ on the government’s website is much more extensive.

He took over the role of Secretary of State for Agriculture and Livestock from January 2019 until July 2020. Before this position, he was a central actor in the agricultural sector from his position as a consultant to MINAGRIF, a consultant to the same State Secretary position he was nominated to, as well as National Director of Agriculture since February 2018. The current occupant of the position is João Manuel Bartolomeu da Cunha who defended his PhD in France in rural studies at the University of Toulouse 2 intitled “*Recomposition sociale et territorial de la zone périurbaine et agricole de Luanda : la vallée du fleuve Bengo*”.¹⁵⁹⁹ Before being nominated, he was an executive administrator of the Development Bank of Angola.¹⁶⁰⁰

¹⁵⁹⁷ See: <https://www.governo.gov.ao/VerSintese.aspx?Ministro=1854> (accessed 27 July 2020).

¹⁵⁹⁸ See: <https://www.governo.gov.ao/VerSintese.aspx?Ministro=4062> (accessed 27 July 2020).

¹⁵⁹⁹ A digital version of the doctoral dissertation was unable to be found, but the references can be found at: <http://www.theses.fr/2005TOU20107> (accessed 21 Sept. 2020).

¹⁶⁰⁰ Angop, “PR nomeia novo secretário de Estado para Agricultura”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 16 July 2020. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/politica/2020/6/29/nomeia-novo-secretario-Estado-para-Agricultura,96ba47fa-f4f9-4d6a-9c6a-b6548070cce2.html.

Following the different positions that Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto has held reveals another instance of instability within the Ministry of Agriculture among the personnel and positions key to the functioning of the institution. The fact that João Lourenço has specifically chosen to keep Carlos “Calabeto” Alberto Jaime Pinto in positions of major decision-making within the agricultural sector gives credence to the idea that João Lourenço has chosen to pursue a policy of strategic continuity when it comes to pursuing his agricultural policy. Jaime Pinto’s appointments by João Lourenço are not apparently made based on objective performance measures, but rather experience, loyalty, personal and professional connections, and elite interests.

7.2.3 RUPTURES & CONTINUITIES: INSTITUTIONS

Turning now from the personnel to the institutions themselves, as highlighted in §3.3.3 the agricultural sector has been characterized by constant institutional instability. Since 1990, the Ministry of Agriculture has taken eight different forms. That averages out to an institutional shakeup every 3.75 years. President João Lourenço has been an active participant in this tradition as well. While the leadership at the helm of these different Ministries of Agriculture has remained largely stable, with Marcos Alexandre Nhunga staying on from 2016 until 2019, being replaced by the current Minister António Francisco de Assis, the institutions themselves have undergone considerable portfolio expansions. One of the main questions provoked by these ministerial consolidations was whether the approach to formulating the government’s approach to the socio-economic development of the peripheries would be likewise altered significantly. In order to follow this complicated development, we will have to return to the period of 2012.

For a reminder, the bifurcation of social policy and economic policy officially split into two separate ministries in 2012¹⁶⁰¹. This institutional shakeup was provoked when the *Ministério da Agricultura* (MINAGRI, Ministry of Agriculture), which had been operating from May 2014 until January 2018, was replaced by the *Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas* (MINAGRIF, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry). It was under the previous MINAGRI, in operation from December 2012 to May 2014, that the socio-economic divergence

¹⁶⁰¹ This initial schism was previously described in §3.3.4.

occurred between the stewardship of the agricultural sector (economic) and the portfolio of “rural development” (social). The role of “promoting rural development” was transferred in 2012 to the *Ministério da Família de Promoção da Mulher* (MINFAMU, Ministry of Family Affairs and for the Promotion of Women).¹⁶⁰² This split was not clean, however.

For example, in June 2012 the government created the *Programa Nacional de Apoio à Mulher Rural* (National Program Supporting Rural Women) through the decree n° 138 of 20 June 2012 under the stewardship of the *Ministério da Agricultura do Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas* (MINADERP, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries) supporting agricultural and livestock production among other activities.¹⁶⁰³ Only six months later on 3 December 2012 MINADERP became MINAGRI, but the Program was moved over to MINFAMU, putting it in charge of some agricultural (economic) support.

Furthermore, the 2014 version of MINAGRI adopted the mission of the “promotion and development of commercial and family-based agriculture” as well as the participation in the actions oriented to “the social development of rural communities”.¹⁶⁰⁴ However, a later April 2017 document of the same version of MINAGRI does specifically include social development in its core missions, noting four main institutional objectives: (1) the reduction of hunger, (2) reduction of extreme poverty, (3) increase revenue for rural families, (4) the development of rural communities (social and economic/production stability).¹⁶⁰⁵

While MINAGRI’s founding document did not explicitly lay out the social/economic connection, in what can be described as either mission creep or simply the later realization and/or acceptance that the two issues are intimately linked, by 2017 the Ministry of Agriculture was once again concerned with rural social and economic development. Shortly afterwards in January 2018, the forestry sector was added to its portfolio becoming the *Ministério de Agricultura e Florestas* (MINAGRIF, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry) replaced MINAGRI. Once again, its institutional character was modified in June 2020 by adding the fisheries portfolio to create the *Ministério da Agricultura e Pescas* (MINAGRIF, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries).

¹⁶⁰² CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2012*, 64; CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2014*, 86.

¹⁶⁰³ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 117, Luanda, 20 June 2012: 2735-2737.

¹⁶⁰⁴ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 87, Luanda, 9 May 2014: 2181.

¹⁶⁰⁵ MINAGRI, Government of Angola, *Plano de Desenvolvimento de Médio Prazo do Sector Agrário: 2018-2022*, Luanda, April 2017, 77.

In the newest version of MINAGRIF, article 2 of its declared missions is the goal “to promote and support the development of family and commercial agriculture” as well as the “associative and cooperative movement in the agriculture, cattle and forestry sectors”.¹⁶⁰⁶ Furthermore, MINAGRIF now includes within it the *Direção Nacional de Agricultura* (National Directorate of Agriculture), which is divided into three departments: (1) *Departamento de Agricultura, Hidráulica Agrícola e Engenharia Rural* (Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Hydraulics and Rural Engineering), (2) *Departamento de Protecção de Plantas e Controlo da Qualidade e Salubridade dos Alimentos* (the Department of Plant Protection, Quality Control and Food Wholesomeness) and (3) *Departamento de Economia Agrária e Sociologia Rural* (Department of Agrarian Economy and Rural Sociology).¹⁶⁰⁷ This Directorate appears to have replaced the *Direção Nacional de Desenvolvimento Rural* (DNDR, National Directorate of Rural Development) set up in April 2011 under the *Ministério de Agricultura, Desenvolvimento Rural e das Pescas* (MINADERP, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries).

The supposed goal promoting and supporting the ‘development’ of family and commercial agriculture does not provide an explicit connection between social and economic development. However, the creation of the department of agrarian economy and rural sociology does bring the two disciplines together and could be a concrete step by the government to begin better scientific understanding of the traditional rural livelihoods through sociological studies and research. This remains a hypothetical for now.

These changes enacted by João Lourenço represent both a rupture and continuity in Angolan governance. Rupture in the sense that his administration continued the tradition of disrupting the continuity of the institutions governing the agricultural sector and continuity in the habit of doing so. As the internal dynamics and personnel changes within the ministries are difficult to decipher, the continued dearth of trained and experienced officials working within the agricultural sector means that further burdening the ministry’s workload would inevitably have negative repercussions on its overall performance. If the direct consequences have yet to be revealed, what is sure is that the evolving character of the ministry tasked with formulating and enacting policy for the rural economy continues a pattern set forth decades ago.

¹⁶⁰⁶ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 10, Luanda, 25 Jan. 2018, 118.

¹⁶⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

Beyond the many Ministries of Agriculture, the institutional transfers and consolidations continued apace in other key areas concerning the governing of peripheral spaces. Through decree n° 19 of 29 January 2018 the *Ministério da Família e Promoção da Mulher* (MINFAMU, Ministry of Family Affairs and for the Promotion of Women) combined with the *Ministério da Assistência e Reinserção Social* (MINARS, Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration)¹⁶⁰⁸ to form the new *Ministério de Acção Social, Família, e Promoção da Mulher* (MASFAMU, Ministry of Social Action, Family, and Women Promotion) which does not claim any institutional responsibility to “rural development” as such, but rather it appears to solidify the separation of the notion of socio-economic development.¹⁶⁰⁹ From the social development perspective, MASFAMU now houses two separate organizations specifically tasked with providing public assistance to rural populations.

The *Direcção Nacional de Acção Social* (National Directorate of Social Action) “promotes transversal policies and programs to respond to rural and peri-urban problems aimed at improving quality of life”, while the *Direcção Nacional para as Políticas Familiares* (National Directorate for Family Policies) promotes the participation of female rural peasants in decision-making within peasant associations and cooperatives, as well as the promotion of projects specifically designed for rural families, especially those headed by women.¹⁶¹⁰ While both are designed to specifically assist rural populations, neither of these organizations specifically links the development of agriculture to the development of rural communities. Institutionally, it appears that these issues are again approached separately.

MASFAMU’s flagship program for fighting poverty of the new government is the *Programa de Desenvolvimento Local e Combate à Pobreza* (PIDLCP, Integrated Local Development and Poverty Alleviation Program) supervised by the Executive and implemented by MASFAMU.¹⁶¹¹ The only mention of “rurality” in its mandate comes under section V, article 18, establishing the National Direction of Social Action declared as “the executive service

¹⁶⁰⁸ MINARS was primarily responsible for enacting social protection programs. The creation of MASFAMU consolidated 44 programs and projects into 12 programs (World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country Diagnostic. Creating Assets for the Poor*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2018b, xxxviii. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/337691552357946557/pdf/angola-scd-03072019-636877656084587895.pdf>).

¹⁶⁰⁹ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 12, Luanda, 29 Jan. 2018: 181-192.

¹⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 188-189, 193.

¹⁶¹¹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, xxxiii.

<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/337691552357946557/pdf/angola-scd-03072019-636877656084587895.pdf>.

charged with defining and supporting the implementation of policies, strategies, programs and projects in the domain of combating poverty, community development, bringing social services to the municipal level, supporting entrepreneurship and the social economy”.¹⁶¹² Under section F of the same article 18, this entity is charged with “promoting transversal policies and programs to respond to rural and peri-urban issues with the goal of improving quality of life”.¹⁶¹³ MASFAMU’s main objective currently is taking care of the country’s war-related social assistance (76.8%) and the national demining program (14%) of its 2018 budget.¹⁶¹⁴ According to a UNICEF and ADRA report, however, MASFAMU in 2019 lost one-third of its overall budget allocation compared to 2018, representing a clear sign of waning priorities.¹⁶¹⁵

In the organigram of MASFAMU’s structure, there is no reference to rurality in any of its organizations,¹⁶¹⁶ posing the question to what extent the government sees the deep geographical divide between urban and rural realities. The mandate of “rural development” has thus migrated through the national institutions, namely from the Ministry of Agriculture to MASFAMU, seemingly separating the policy links between the agricultural sector and the social development of rural communities and leaving ambiguities as to their theoretical and practical connections according to the policymakers of the Politburo. As the concept of “rural development” was dropped from the title of the future ministries of agriculture after its responsibilities were transferred to MINFAMU in 2012, the likewise DNDR lost its mandate within the Ministry of Agriculture. Its modern-day successor seems to be a combination of directorates stemming from both the MINAGRIF with its National Directorate of Agriculture including its Departments of Rural Sociology and Engineering, as well as MASFAMU’s Directorates of Social Action and Family Policies. The disappearance of the “rural development” title alongside this multiplication of Directorates further confirms the separation between the social and the economic sectors of policy-making regarding the socio-economic development of the rural populations.

¹⁶¹² *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 12, Luanda, 29 Jan. 2018: 188.

¹⁶¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶¹⁴ World Bank, *Angola Social Protection Public Expenditure Review (PER)*, Main Report, Washington D.C., 21 June 2018, 58.

¹⁶¹⁵ UNICEF & ADRA, *Investimento na criança e nas famílias: Análise da proposta de orçamento geral do estado 2019*, Luanda, 2019, 16. <https://www.unicef.org/angola/sites/unicef.org.angola/files/2018-12/Analise%20OGE%202019%20v1.pdf>.

¹⁶¹⁶ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 12, Luanda, 29 Jan. 2018: 193.

While both ministries could work in horizontal collaboration on socio-economic development, it is important to note the ideological and political schism between the promotion of economic development and the accompanying social development, both goals being effectively sought separately since 2012. An internal review of MINAGRIF elaborated in 2017 found that some programs linked to the agrarian sector were led by other ministries, specifically including “rural development”, and that this situation resulted in the doubling up of structures as well as an inefficient use of resources creating difficulties in effectively fulfilling these “incredibly important” programs (*importantísimos programas*).¹⁶¹⁷ Despite this finding, based on the consolidations of these ministries effectuated upon João Lourenço’s arrival, this approach has been solidified and continued under his administration as well. The rupture of the economic and social aspects of rural development will continue for the foreseeable future, though if past is prescient, future institutional makeovers are likely on the horizon. In what direction, remains to be seen.

7.2.4 ANTI-CORRUPTION AND EVOLVING ACCEPTABILITY

Beyond incomplete projects and underfinancing development, one of the most nefarious political realities consolidated by the elite circle directed by Dos Santos has been the merging of the public and private spheres within the country. This has had the effect of not only normalizing a culture of endemic corruption among elites siphoning off public funds for private gain, but also cementing a reputation of corruption, mismanagement, and lack of transparency among international financial institutions and major donor agencies. This has severely damaged the institutional reputation of the country among these key organizations. Rectifying this degraded image has been among the principal tasks of João Lourenço’s first mandate as he has embarked on a wide-ranging though heavily criticized anti-corruption campaign.

The situation remains in full flux and requires a more serious person-by-person investigation to truly understand who is being pushed out of political power, who is being brought in, who is being retained, and overall who is wielding decision-making power. As this is not necessarily central to this study, the campaign of reform will be analyzed more

¹⁶¹⁷ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 10.

broadly. This process has brought fear and uncertainty into the gilded halls of the previously untouchable *nomenklatura* for the first time since the failed coup d'état in May 1977.¹⁶¹⁸ This has far reaching effects on the overall economy given that the nucleus of the richest elites in the country, having mixed their private interests with public finances, now find themselves not only out of political power, but also ostracized by the political system they built and dominated for nearly four decades.

In Huíla province, for example, the revelation of three administrators accused of embezzling 200 million kwanzas (approximately US\$360,000) that was destined for the provincial education budget paying for three years of teacher salaries and the installation of new school laboratories¹⁶¹⁹ led President Lourenço to replace then governor Marcelino Typinge, in the position since 2012, with Luís Manuel Nunes.¹⁶²⁰ As a secondary effect of this replacement, it was this new governor who finally decided to calm the tensions with the Gambos community.

The anti-corruption campaign has produced mixed results. Reality is that deviancy among officials is both sweeping and systematic. Overall, these judicial cases being aimed at some but not others have led some analysts to consider that corruption in Angola has taken on innovative, less traceable strategies rather than actually being significantly reduced or eradicated.¹⁶²¹ Despite the criticisms, the anti-corruption campaign has exposed various levels of misconduct throughout the political system, seemingly engrained within each institution and present across the territory. The common practice of paying bribes to make connections or obtain favors is a demonstration of lower-level officials modelling their superiors. Furthermore, the meager salaries afforded to these lower officials makes bribery a common reality of the informal economy in order to 'make ends meet'. The normalization of the practice is instilled by the elites' sanctioning the behavior, as this broad activity in turn provides cover for their own large-scale pillaging of the state coffers.

¹⁶¹⁸ Roques, *Angola's new president*, 9.

¹⁶¹⁹ Borralho Ndomba, "Angola: Devolver dinheiro é parar processo de corrupção?", Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 12 April 2019. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/angola-devolver-dinheiro-é-parar-processo-de-corrupção/a-48309861>.

¹⁶²⁰ Miguel Daniel, "Nomeia, exonera, nomeia, exonera", *Nova Gazeta*, Luanda, 20 Dec. 2018. <https://www.novagazeta.co.ao/artigo/nomeia-exonera-nomeia-exonera>.

¹⁶²¹ Anita Powell & Salem Solomon, "Is Angola's Anti-Corruption Drive Real or Cosmetic?", Voice of America, Washington D.C., 10 Jan. 2020. <https://www.voanews.com/africa/angolas-anti-corruption-drive-real-or-cosmetic>.

According to Transparency International, a German NGO focused on exposing corruption, Angola improved its position from 2018-2019 from 165th to 146th globally, a significant increase of nineteen points. It also improved seven points in its Corruption Perception Index between 2018 (19 points) and 2019 (26 points), though it still remains far below the global average of 43 points.¹⁶²² Improving the country's image abroad is a key step for attracting private investors. While money has been returned to state coffers, important figures have been (temporarily) jailed and others are being processed in the judicial system, corruption remained endemic as three years is far too short of a time frame capable of rooting out decades of accepted state patronage, cronyism and clientelism. Actions and practices that were deemed legitimate pre-presidential transition are now under legal scrutiny. The notion of legitimacy is not a fixed quality, instead it “varies between and within cultures and over time, and is continuously (re)-established through conflict and negotiation”.¹⁶²³

The presidential transition has created a case study in the negotiation of legitimate actions and behavior within Angola's political system, not only changing behavior within the walls of power, but also the demands emanating from the streets. So far, however, any truly structural change remains superficial as the MPLA remains unopposed across the state apparatus and the “hyper presidential” system remains intact. The exposure of this systematic corruption through the progressive frame of acceptable norms and behaviors has however energized the civil society actors advocating for the end of elite impunity, more transparency, the investment of better social services, and the adoption of good governance practices.

7.2.5 CALCULATED RISK REENGAGING A REINVIGORATED CIVIL SOCIETY

Angola's civil society has grown more and more restless throughout the last decade, with anti-government protests beginning to emerge in 2011, expanding in 2013 and 2014 amid plummeting oil prices and economic turmoil¹⁶²⁴, ultimately simmering until the elections in 2017 and beyond. Prior to the election, the different security services were frequently

¹⁶²² Statistics sourced directly from Transparency International website. See: Corruption Perceptions Index, 2019, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/results> (accessed 23 July 2020).

¹⁶²³ Christian Lund, “Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa”, *Development and Change*, (The Hague, International Institute of Social Studies), 37, no. 4, 2006: 693. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2006.00497.x>.

¹⁶²⁴ Matsimbe & Domingos, “Angola's 2017 Elections” 5.

mobilized, violently dispersing and arresting demonstrators. The escalating grievances, spurred on by heavy economic headwinds sharpening social divides, have posed a serious threat to João Lourenço's legitimacy as he was faced with the decision of continuing the violent oppression chosen by Dos Santos or attempting to deescalate the situation through other means. Bringing further support to the critical nature of the civil society was the increasingly open criticism of the government by the Catholic Church, providing cover and legitimacy to the wider public demands for reform. The Church has historically stood beside the government in a conciliatory role among the different social actors in the country being a key intermediary in the establishment of Angola's peacetime character. However, in the last few years it has taken a more critical stance denouncing corruption, endemic poverty, and mismanagement of the country's resources.¹⁶²⁵ Cognizant of its position in the social sphere between the government and civil society, it remains careful to avoid losing its privileged status in the country, engaging in criticism that is strategic and measured in its messaging.

The resort to state violence remains a useful tool for authoritarian rule, but its use and abuse are less accepted by average Angolans more willing to speak out against such measures. With a relatively short life expectancy, increasing from 46.5 in 2000 to 60.7 in 2018, and such a young population overall, the youth bulge¹⁶²⁶ coming of age in a time having never experience war and with connection to the Internet and social media will inevitably have a different approach to a heavy police and security presence.¹⁶²⁷ In 2000, 45% of the population was 15 years old or younger, representing 7,398,414. The latest statistics of July 2020 put the estimated total population at 32,522,339.¹⁶²⁸ The 15 year olds in 2000 are now 35 years old in 2020. With an annual population growth of over 3%, the country's demographics have been in constant flux and even the most reliable statistics remain estimations.¹⁶²⁹

¹⁶²⁵ BTI, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Angola*, Gütersloh, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018, 7. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1427448/488345_en.pdf.

¹⁶²⁶ Henrik Urdal, *Demography and Armed Conflict: Assessing the Role of Population Growth and Youth Bulges*, Working Paper no. 2, Centre for Research on Peace and Development, Leuven, University of Leuven, 2011.

¹⁶²⁷ Juliana Lima, "Des « printemps arabes » à la « nouvelle révolution » en Angola » Mobilisation et contestation politique dans l'après-guerre", *Afrique contemporaine*, 245, no. 1, (2013): 28.

¹⁶²⁸ According to the CIA Factbook, country profile, Angola. See: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/print_ao.html (accessed 21 Sept. 2020).

¹⁶²⁹ For the following table, the estimations for the age group 0-25 was sourced from the CIA Factbook with estimates from 2000. For the age groups 25-29 and 30-34, the statistics were sourced from the World Bank database and were calculated from the average between males and females of their respective age groups based on 2019 estimates.

Tableau 36 - Current estimates of population with little to no direct connection to wartime (2020)

Age group (in years)	As % of total
0-14	47.83
15-24	18.64
25-29	7.75
30-34	6.15
Total pop. under 34	80.37

Source: CIA Factbook, World Bank database.

According to today's estimates, nearly 80% of Angola's entire population is 34 years old or younger, meaning the oldest of this group would have been 16 when the peace accords were signed in 2002. For most of these Angolans, the years of war and destruction are felt through painful family histories of suffering rather than personal experience. These demographics represent a serious challenge for the government to channel this enormous human capital into positive directions, calling upon the need for major social and economic reforms as the status quo creates ever-rising tensions.

The alternative to the authoritarian reflex of social control presents inherent risks too. Pulling back the security apparatus and engaging in dialogue expands and strengthens the participatory spaces that such a position would open up for the increasingly engaged civil society. The anti-corruption campaign being waged is used as a tool to ease the pent-up social frustrations, sparking a wide-ranging effort at political overhaul. Whether it goes far enough to ease frustrations and deliver a sense of justice seems unlikely, especially given how 'corruption' is notoriously difficult not only to define but also to prove.¹⁶³⁰ Furthermore, when the corruption is denounced by the public at large, there is a risk that this will elevate the voices and opinions of the most extreme and outspoken members, with their private views molding overall public opinion itself.¹⁶³¹ When this is done for political purposes to replace those in power, the behaviors risk repeating themselves.

There have been some well-orchestrated attempts at trying to heal the distrust felt between the government and everyday Angolans. In a bid to demonstrate a greater acceptance of transparency in government, the new president invited around 100 national

¹⁶³⁰ For a discussion on the difference between the concepts of "clientelism" and "corruption", see Jean-François Médard, "Clientélisme politique et corruption", *Tiers Monde*, 41, no. 161, (2000): 75-87. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3406/tiers.2000.1051>. As he puts it: "Clientelism may be opposed to corruption in terms of commercial exchange, but not to corruption in terms of social exchange" (*Ibid.*, 75).

¹⁶³¹ Joseph Patrick Ganahl, *Corruption, Good Governance, and the African State: A Critical Analysis of the Political-Economic Foundation of Corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (Potsdam: Potsdam University Press, 2013), 58.

and foreign journalists into the Presidential Palace in Luanda to commemorate his first 100 days in power and take stock of the anti-corruption campaign and send a message to the press that business as usual would no longer be tolerated.¹⁶³² Such a gathering of media figures was itself a presentation of a more transparent, though controlled and choreographed, presidency. President Lourenço announced his intentions to seek out corruption where political impunity allowed such practices to fester at all levels of government.

Furthermore, in one of the earliest, most prominent examples of how much the government-civil society organization collaboration has advanced since the *Rede Terra* experience (2001-2004) was the participation of over 100 members of various CSOs speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on 19 of January 2018 at the invitation of the Commission of Economics and Finance to share their views on the government's proposed national budget of 2018. The main issues advocated for were more emphasis on the social sector, the inclusion of agriculture as an important factor in the country's development and rural livelihoods, support for the entrepreneurial and private sector, as well as more focus on gender issues.

This collaboration represented one of the first major instances under the leadership of the President João Lourenço. Interestingly, rather than leaving it to the state media networks to report on the event, it was also detailed directly on the parliament's official website with a prominent photograph of the people speaking on the floor of the 'people's house', demonstrating a more open approach to the civil society actors and a modified media strategy putting the government in the middle of the relationship rather than as an oppositional figure.¹⁶³³ This is particularly interesting as the country was then being led by President João Lourenço, but the MPLA chairmanship was still being occupied by former president José Eduardo dos Santos. The government was widely praised for this new level of collaboration, though whether the public demands were taken into consideration is the real measure of effective collaboration.

In regard to larger investments in the agricultural sector, the national budget for 2018 allocated 29 billion kwanzas, or about US\$176 million, representing a mere .3% of the total

¹⁶³² Susana Salvador, "João Lourenço defense que impunidade permitiu generalização da corrupção", *Diário de Notícias*, 9 January 2018. <https://www.dn.pt/mundo/joao-lourenco-defende-que-impunidade-permitiu-generalizacao-da-corupcao-9032724.html>.

¹⁶³³ The official website can be retrieved from: http://www.parlamento.ao/fi/noticias/iii-legislatura/-/blogs/466568#http://www.parlamento.ao/glue/AN_Navigation.jsp (accessed 16 May 2020).

budget.¹⁶³⁴ This meager amount remained on par with previous years and failed to signal a significant break with past policies, despite claims that the new administration would place reinvigorating the agricultural sector as a key policy goal for the economic agenda. However, the 2019 budget was the first with João Lourenço having full control over both the party and the presidency. The 2019 budget was similarly critiqued by specialists as wholly insufficient.¹⁶³⁵ The Angolan economist Alves da Rocha points to a combination of poor overall economic performance with the country barely avoiding a recession, the strict budgetary demands of the IMF under the conditions of its structural readjustment program, as well as the continuation of general underinvestment as the main reasons that the 2019 budget originally allocated .6% of the total budget to the agricultural sector, before being revised down to .3%.¹⁶³⁶

The 2020 budget has begun to reverse course by allocating 3.1% of its total budget to the agricultural sector, a significant increase but only based on a previous benchmark of less than 1%.¹⁶³⁷ As a reminder, Angola joined the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) Compact on 5 August 2014, which sought a goal of dedicating 10% of the national budget for the proper development of the agricultural sector.¹⁶³⁸ This goal is clearly far from reality. The continued underfunding of the agricultural sector is a clear indicator that the discourse of reviving the agricultural sector will encounter serious complications as it continues to operate under a severe resource shortage, structured as such throughout the decades set by political priorities.

7.3 Ideological fractures: between resiliency and efficiency

While the low budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector will diminish the transformative capacity that serious public investment could enact, President João

¹⁶³⁴ Paulo, *Quão Importante*, 2.

¹⁶³⁵ Manuel José, “Especialistas criticam pouco investimento na agricultura angolana”, *Voice of America*, Luanda, 5 Dec. 2019. <https://www.voportugues.com/a/especialistas-criticam-pouco-investimento-na-agricultura-angolana/5194384.html>.

¹⁶³⁶ Manuel José Alves da Rocha, “OGE 2019 revisto à medida das exigências do Fundo Monetário Internacional”, *Expansão*, no. 525, Luanda, 27 May 2019. <http://www.expansao.co.ao/artigo/113234/oge-2019-revisto-a-medida-das-exigencias-do-fundo-monetario-internacional?seccao=7>.

¹⁶³⁷ Vera Daves de Sousa, “OGE 2020: Entre apertos e suspiros”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 9 Dec. 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/reportagem/oge-2020-entre-apertos-e-suspiros>.

¹⁶³⁸ See §3.3.2 for a review on the history of funding the agricultural sector and its programs.

Lourenço's economic diversification discourse has again raised hopes for more economic dynamism in the countryside, adhering to the same long tradition of continuity in political discourse. Nothing less than a sustainable, inclusive rural economy rests in the balance between the dueling visions of resiliency and efficiency. The concept of resiliency

is defined as the ability of a system, community, or society exposed to climate and natural hazard to resist, absorb, accommodate to, and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and structures.¹⁶³⁹

Instilling resiliency therefore calls for the implementation of safeguards and support to all levels of producers, but particularly smallholders who are more likely to lack the resource base to provide an adequate level of protection in the face of difficulties and unexpected downturns. As climate change heats up and weather patterns become more irregular, the building up of resiliency among rural communities will be ever more necessary. The Southern portion of the country has already been dealing with severe droughts on a frequent basis, which becomes increasingly costly to attempt to correct.¹⁶⁴⁰

On the other hand is the argument for improved efficiency, heavily connected to the ideologies of mechanization, modernization, and industrialization. The prioritization of efficiency requires a whole different set of investments and focuses more on short-term gains aimed at consistently improving current production yields rather than a medium and long-term vision of setting up firm social and economic foundations. According to the neoclassic economics discussed in chapter three, the production model supercharged through modernization and scientific progress should overcome difficulties otherwise present in food production.

The problem with the neo-liberal argument for efficiency among Angolan authorities is the ineptness in maintaining its assets, exemplified by the depreciation of the agro-industrial farms built on Chinese loans and the continued underperformance among its

¹⁶³⁹ World Bank, *Options for Increased Private Sector Participation in Resilience Investment: Focus on Agriculture*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2017, 24. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/969921521805628254/pdf/Options-for-increased-private-sector-participation-in-resilience-investment-focus-on-agriculture.pdf>.

¹⁶⁴⁰ For an in-depth look at a key study into these dynamics, see the *Avaliação das Necessidades Pós-Desastre (PDNA), Seca em Angola 2012-2016*, Comissão Nacional da Protecção Civil, Luanda, July 2017. The study focuses on the severe drought affecting parts of Cunene, Namibe, and Huíla province since 2011.

regional neighbors as will be examined below. These facts demonstrate that the government's approach is inefficient, extremely costly for the treasury, and leaves the issue of resiliency reliant on outside actors as the government itself does not provide the necessary resources. All of these costs are subsidized by the public, while benefitting an elitist few. This does not mean however that significant progress in overall production has not been achieved.

Given its vast expanses of land with high quality soils and vast water resources, the agricultural sector in many areas of the country has enormous potential, some of which has been exploited. Overall in 2018, the sector accounted for 12% of total GDP while employing 70% of the country's workforce with output growing by 5.9% in 2018 compared to 4.4% in 2017.¹⁶⁴¹ The weakness of the sector lies in the difficult task of durably modernizing the sector to produce consistently increasing yields through value chains development. The agricultural sector as conceived under the helm of José Eduardo dos Santos has both undercut the establishment of resiliency due to its chronic absence in rural assistance while also severely underperforming in efficiency among the fellow regional South African Development Community (SADC) members.¹⁶⁴²

Figure 18 - Fertilizer (nitrogen) use

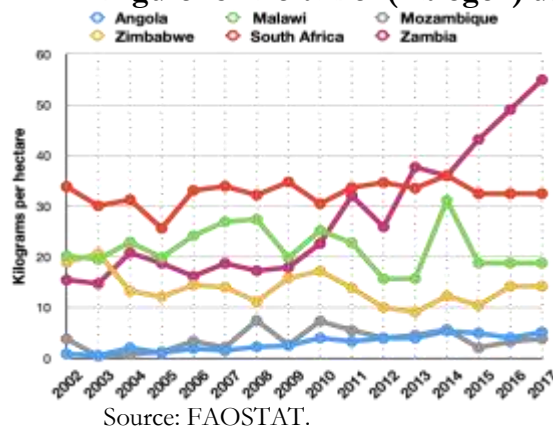
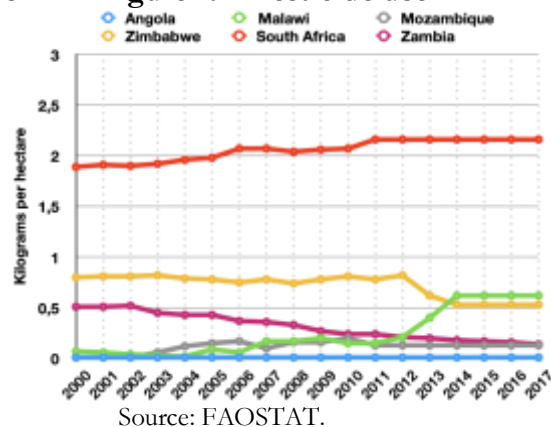


Figure 19 - Pesticide use

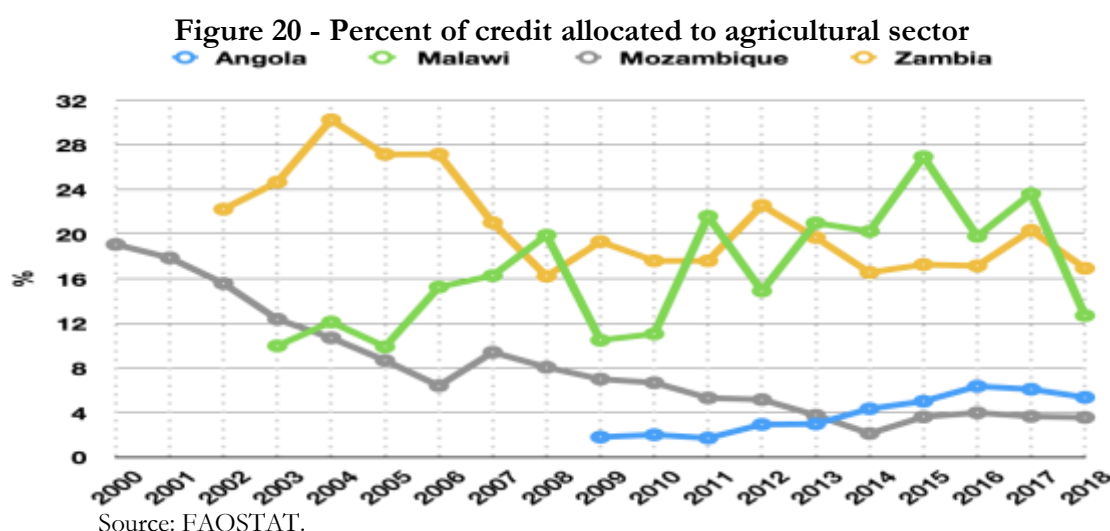


First of all, Angola ranks last among its neighbors, alongside Mozambique, in providing agricultural in-puts to increase production, notably nitrogen fertilizers. A weak national production has required importing fertilizers, but a lack of foreign currency made it extremely expensive to procure. Similarly, Angola has essentially not used pesticides against

¹⁶⁴¹ Joel Muzima, *Angola*, 2018 African Economic Outlook, Country Note, Abidjan, African Development Bank Group, 2018, 2. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/country_notes/Angola_country_note.pdf.

¹⁶⁴² The raw numbers of the following FAOSTAT statistics are found in Appendix #5.

invasive insects since 2000. The relatively small amount of pesticides and fertilizers actually used are nearly all imported. Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has pushed the government into action given the breakdown in the distribution chain importing foreign products. This has led the Ministry of Economy and Planning Sérgio Santos to announce the establishment of a credit line through the Angolan Development Bank of approximately €30 million to help finance the creation of companies to produce fertilizer, pesticides and high-quality seeds.¹⁶⁴³ The lack of inputs into the agricultural sector undermine its production, which results in a general impoverishment of the sector's potential overall, further exacerbated by the lack of financial credit availability to otherwise investment in improvements.



The generalized lack of in-puts has led to stagnating yields across the spectrum, with bananas and cassava being the principal exceptions, though their considerable increase in production are also directly linked to expansion in total area cultivated. The amount of hectares dedicated to banana production has seen a huge expansion since the end of the civil war, which has in turn led to an explosion of banana production compared to its regional neighbors.

¹⁶⁴³ Lusa, “Governo garante financiar indústria de fertilizantes e pesticidas para reduzir importações”, *Sapnoticias*, Lisbon, 22 May 2020. <https://noticias.sapo.ao/economia/artigos/governo-garante-financiar-industria-de-fertilizantes-e-pesticidas-para-reduzir-importacoes>.

Figure 21 - Banana harvest (total area)

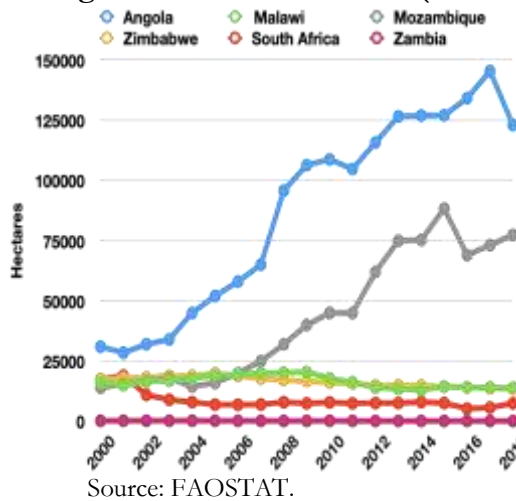
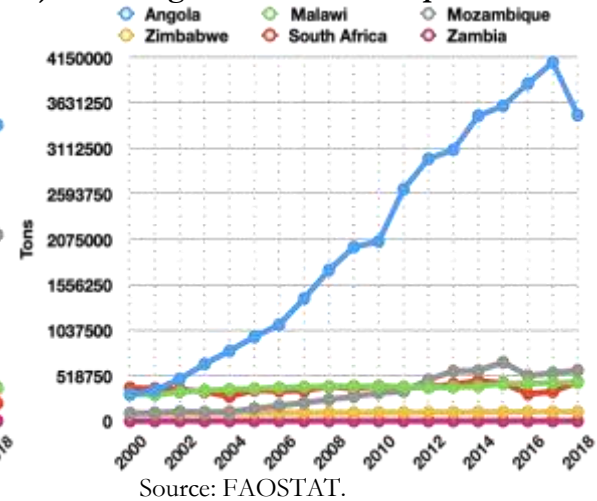
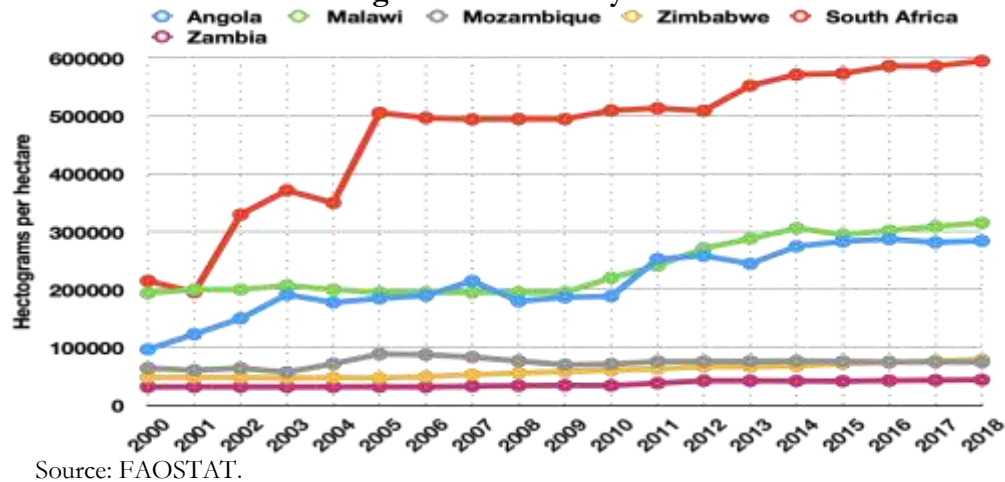


Figure 22 - Banana production



Looking at how much land (surface area) has been invested into banana production, it becomes more clear as to why Angola has so outperformed its neighbors with this fruit in particular. However, surface area only tells half the story as can be seen through Mozambique's respective performance. We can see a similar expansion in total area beginning in 2004, though this has only led to a modest increase in actual production. The key to agricultural efficiency does not lie in total surface area alone, but rather production yield, measured in hectograms per hectare. This is where we can explain the diverge between Angola and Mozambique.

Figure 23 - Banana yield

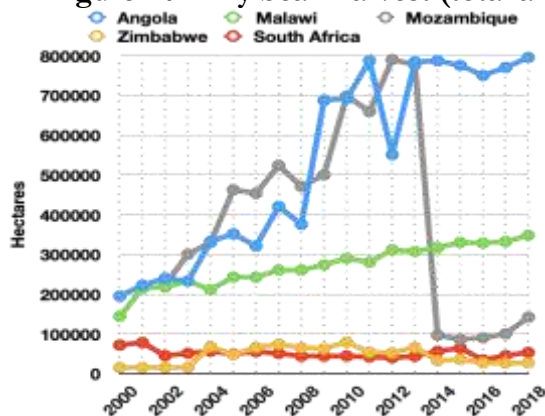


Angola's consistently increasing banana yield (hectograms per hectare) coupled with the considerable increase in land dedicated to the crop demonstrates the results that come with increased yield. However, Angola's yield capacity is significantly lower than that of

South Africa, which has a relatively little overall banana production, but the bananas it produces are extremely high performing. Returning to the case of Mozambique, its banana yield actually started decreasing into a weak stagnation beginning in 2005. This occurs at the same time it began significantly expanding its surface area, meaning its banana production became less efficient (yield) as it expanded in production area, thereby explaining its insignificant increase in production.

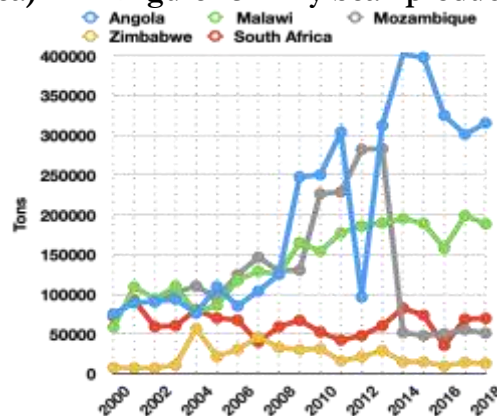
Next we will move to dry beans. Apart from the banana production, the rest of Angola's significant growth in agricultural production is sourced from the expansion of harvest area rather than improved yield. The expansion for bean production follows the exponential growth of bananas, but covers a significantly larger area, reaching up to 800,000 hectares while banana production achieved nearly 150,000 hectares at its apex.

Figure 24 - Dry bean harvest (total area)



Source: FAOSTAT.

Figure 25 - Dry bean production



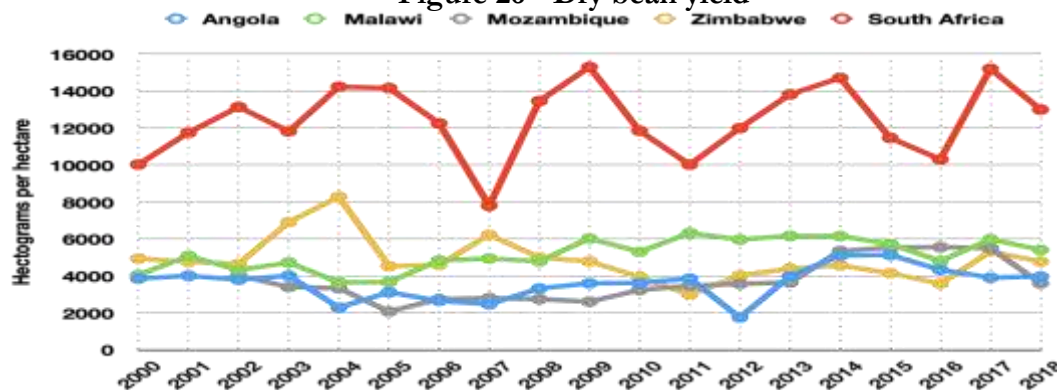
Source: FAOSTAT.

As can be seen above, the total bean production has approximately mirrored the growth in geographic expansion for each country, Angolan included. Mozambique's drastic fall in 2013 is explained by the government's sudden inability to finance its seed subsidy program that it had been running in partnerships with NGOs, thereby provoking a massive seed shortage.¹⁶⁴⁴ Looking at the key indicator of bean yield, however, the modernized agricultural sector of South Africa once again dominates the region. Angola consistently records the lowest yields in the group, alongside Mozambique. Angola's bean production increase is therefore only

¹⁶⁴⁴ USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade da Organização da Sociedade Civil para Angola em 2017*, Washington D.C., 2017, 4. <https://adpp-angola.org/images/Civil-Society-Organization-Sustainability-Index-CSOSI-report.pdf>.

possible through considerable expansion of area harvested, requiring significantly more work for increased production.

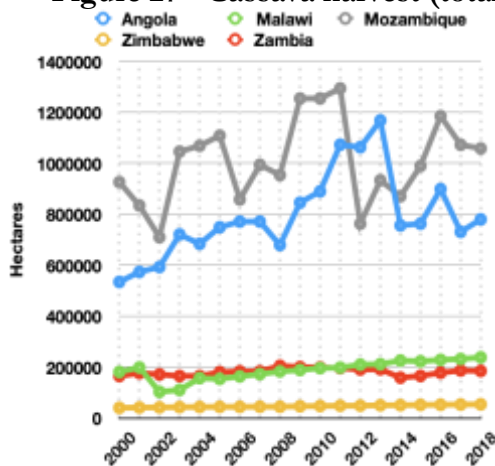
Figure 26 - Dry bean yield



Source: FAOSTAT.

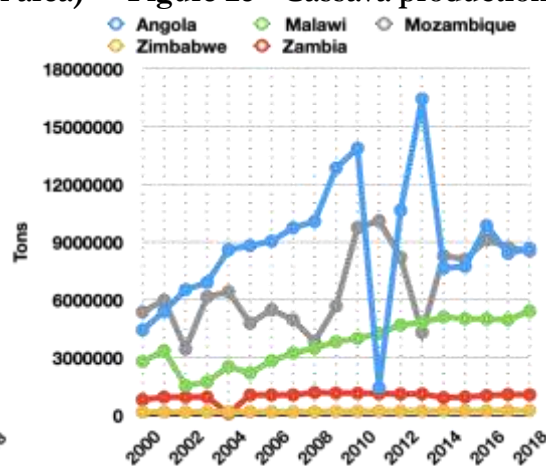
Cassava (manioc) is a common alimentary dish for Angolans, is relatively easy to grow and requires little maintenance. Both Angolan and Mozambique have invested considerable effort in increasing cassava production compared to their regional peers, though the total area harvested and overall production have varied significantly year by year.

Figure 27 - Cassava harvest (total area)



Source: FAOSTAT.

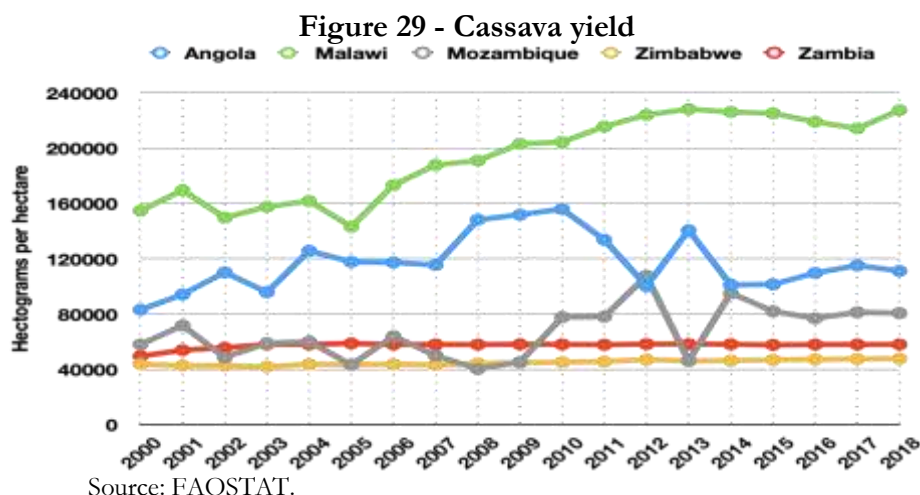
Figure 28 - Cassava production



Source: FAOSTAT.

As shown above, both Zambia and Malawi registered around 2 million hectares dedicated to cassava production. Zimbabwe's production is minimal, while South Africa did not even register in the FAOSTAT database. While Zambia dedicated significantly more land to cassava production, its actual crop production is only marginally better than Zimbabwe's minimal effort. However, Malawi's production has consistently increased at a faster rate than

its expansion in production, revealing a more efficient crop production system producing higher yields.

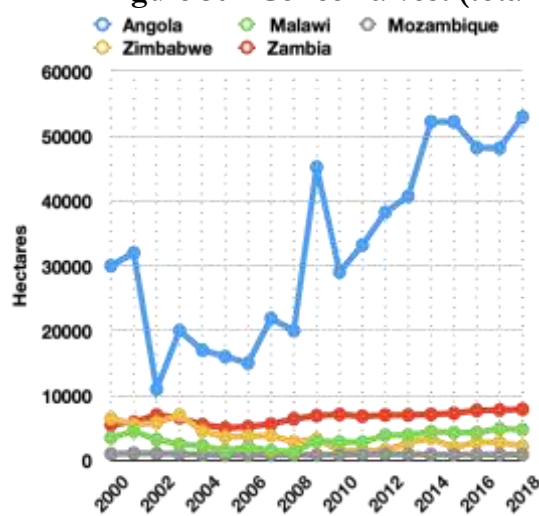


Of the regional peers, Malawi has the most efficient cassava production, far beyond that of Angola and Mozambique. The consistent increase in time is a marker of an efficient and reliable system that produces on a regular basis. While Angola has the second most efficient cassava production in the region, its wild swings year per year are an indicator that efficiency has yet to be achieved. That the cassava yield remains only slightly improved since the situation emerging from the civil war in 2000 further reveals that durability in achieving improvements is still far from established.

Back in the colonial days, Angola’s coffee production was world class, producing around 240,000 tons of coffee beans per year, while in 2017 it only produced 2,100.¹⁶⁴⁵ The production has been decimated while the international coffee market has expanded in competitors. Nevertheless, the sector holds great potential given the huge market of consumers and the colonial era lays out a potential template to follow.

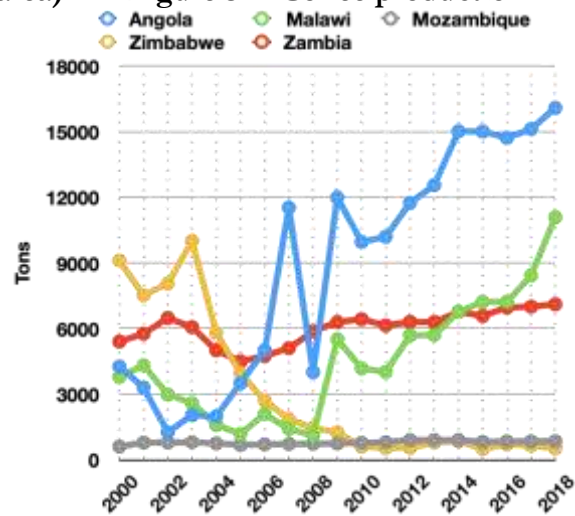
¹⁶⁴⁵ European Union, “Action Document for ‘Private Sector Development Programme in Angola’”, Annex 1 of the Commission Decision on the financing of the Annual Action Programme 2019 in favour of the Republic of Angola, Brussels, 2019, 3. <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2019/EN/C-2019-7734-F1-EN-ANNEX-1-PART-1.PDF>.

Figure 30 - Coffee harvest (total area)



Source: FAOSTAT.

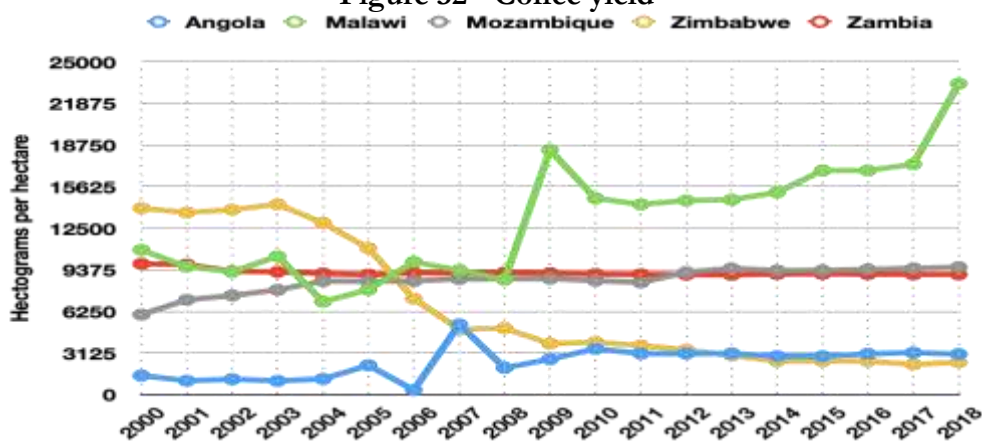
Figure 31 - Coffee production



Source: FAOSTAT.

Coffee beans have more than quintupled in total area since the end of the war in 2002, though it remains under researched as to which rural economic actors are contributing to this massive expansion. If total area under production was a dominant indicator for understanding agricultural production, then Angola would be the regional leader by far. No other peer countries have over 10,000 hectares under coffee production. However, looking at total crop production, we can how little importance the area under cultivation actually holds. The graph on the left shows us that while Angola indeed produces more annually than its neighborhood, particularly after 2009, both Zambia and Malawi have significant total production figures despite their relatively small areas under cultivation.

Figure 32 - Coffee yield



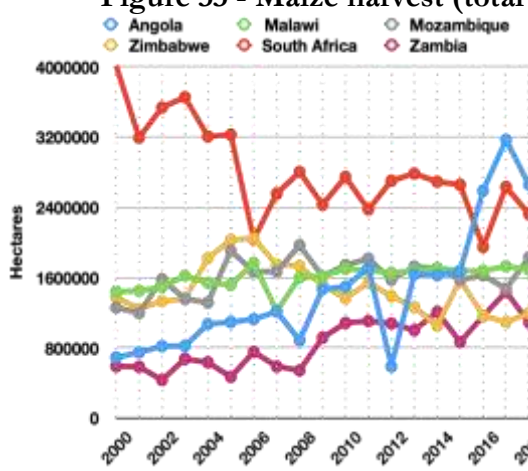
Source: FAOSTAT.

Once again crop yield, the key indicator of efficiency, demonstrates how inefficient Angola's coffee production is compared to its regional neighbors. Measured by hectograms per

hectare, yield has barely improved over the last twenty years, despite an enormous increase in area under production. If efficiency measured through yield could have followed the exponential increase in cultivation, the dreams of reviving the colonial-era coffee commerce could be realizable. Given the current trajectory, however, Angolans will continue to drink Nescafé powered coffee imported from the West.¹⁶⁴⁶

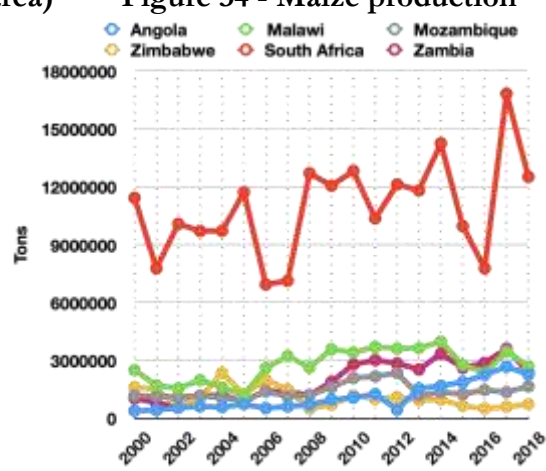
Maize is another daily alimentation for the average Angolan, especially in the famous *funje* recipe, also known as *pirão*, made with grounded corn or manioc flour. Improving maize production has been a goal of the government, but the production of grains and cereals, including maize, is particularly susceptible to climate change.

Figure 33 - Maize harvest (total area)



Source: FAOSTAT.

Figure 34 - Maize production



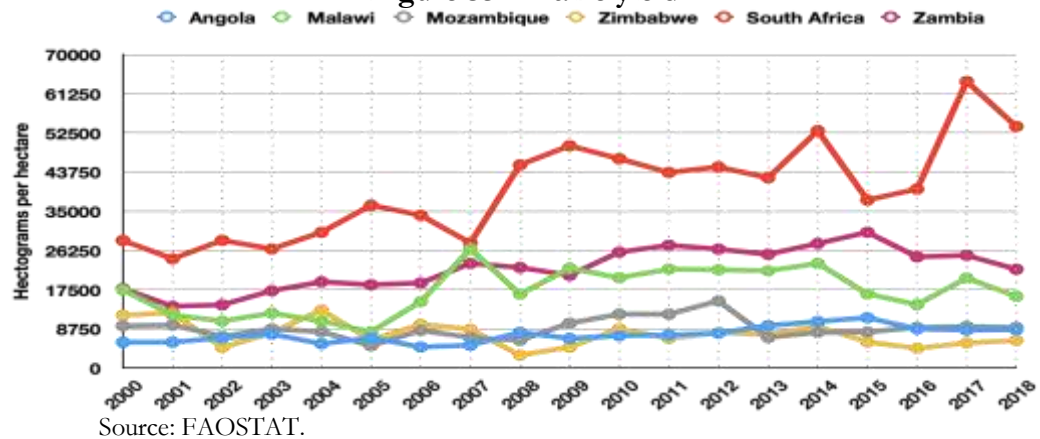
Source: FAOSTAT.

Maize cultivation is common through the region, as each country examined has over 800,000 hectares under production post-2008. Angola has seen the largest expansion in area cultivated, despite significant downturns in 2008 and 2011. South Africa is once again the leader in the region, though interestingly it has reduced its overall land under cultivation while slightly increasing its overall production, demonstrating a clear improvement in efficiency. Angola's significant geographic expansion has not translated to a significant growth as it consistently ranks among the worst regional performers. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, 81% of cereals production (maize making up 97.1% of all cereals) is done through communal production.¹⁶⁴⁷

¹⁶⁴⁶ Based on personal experience as an avid coffee drinker in Luanda, Benguela and Huíla provinces.

¹⁶⁴⁷ MINAGRIF, Gabinete de Estudos, Planeamento e Estatísticas, *Relatório de resultados da campanha agrícola 2018/2019*, Luanda, July 2019, 14. https://assets.website-files.com/5a8e71e3c7881c000130ff13/5ef9a5fa04117d2577e30184_RELATORIO_DA_CAMPANHA%20AGRICOLA%202018-2019.pdf.

Figure 35 - Maize yield



Given the high prevalence of peasant production, it is unsurprising to determine that maize yield is among the lowest in the region once again, alongside the Mozambique and Zimbabwe. South Africa's corn production, destined for ethanol conversion as well as human and animal consumption, is the only one that has demonstrated a consistent improvement in production efficiency, with Zambia and Malawi both showing improvement before returning to their approximate yields of 2000.

Alongside maize, rice has been another main crop that the government has been trying to promote, with limited success. Given that 1% of total rice production is done mechanically, only 30.9% of the official target of 32,707 tons was reached in the latest 2018/2019 season.¹⁶⁴⁸ The area of rice production has been slowly expanding, with a significant uptick in 2015. Mozambique boasts the largest area of rice production in the region, though it is heavily cyclical and erratic. The numbers of Mozambique appear quite contradictory as they demonstrate an enormous progress in rice production, booming in 2010/2011, right after a significant decrease in overall planting area.

¹⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 14, 20.

Figure 36 - Rice harvest (total area)

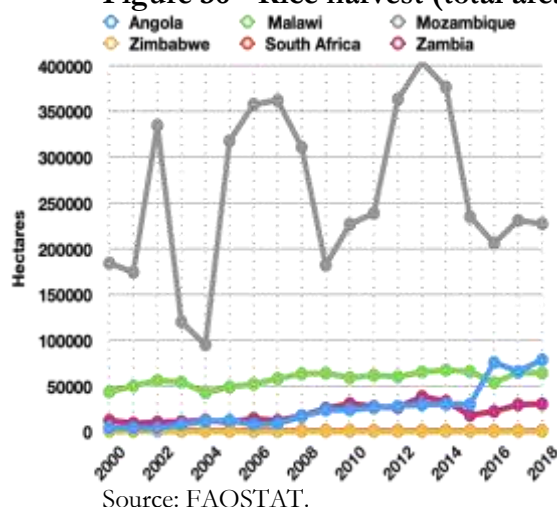
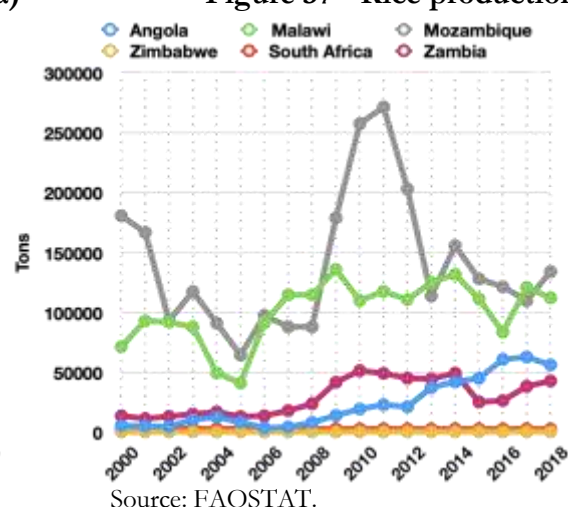
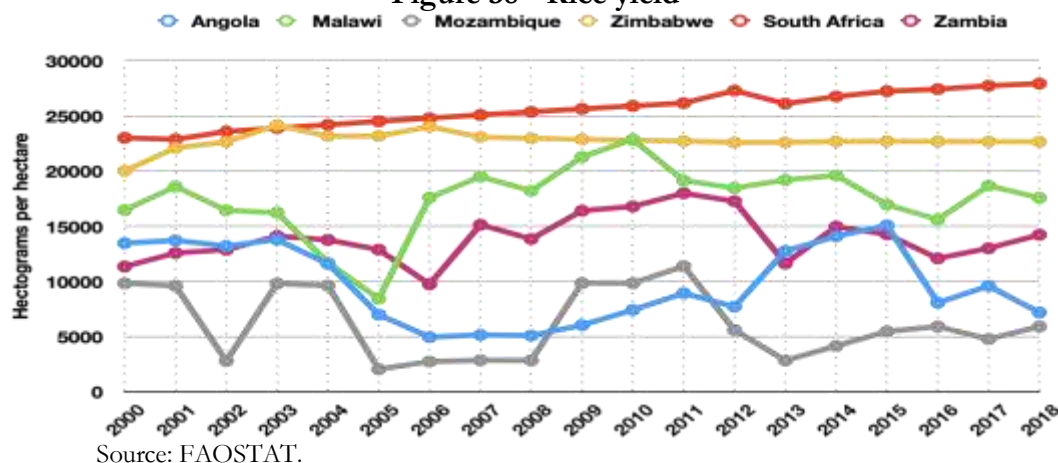


Figure 37 - Rice production



Looking at rice yield, Mozambique's significant uptick in production also corresponds to its highest increase in yield, though it has the lowest yield per hectare of the entire region. South Africa and Zimbabwe both present the greatest efficiency in the sector, while their numbers in total area and production hardly register. Both countries produce small amounts of rice, but do so effectively.

Figure 38 - Rice yield

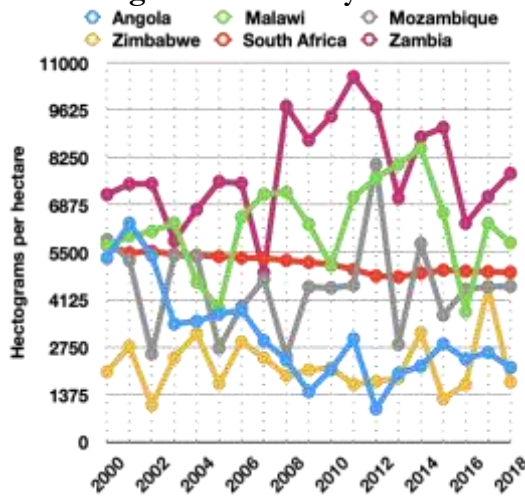


Malawi and Zambia both have significantly higher yields than Angola, though all three countries struggle to maintain consistency in the production cycle. Angola's efficiency increased significantly between 2012-2015, which corresponds to the time the Chinese built agro-industrial farms were coming on line, notably that of Manquete in Cunene province which specialized in rice production but suffered from severe mismanagement. The severe drop in efficiency after 2015 corresponds to the period when the series of state-owned and

state-run industrial farms all entered into severe managerial and financial turbulence through the inept management of the government and the FSDEA under Quantum Global's stewardship.¹⁶⁴⁹

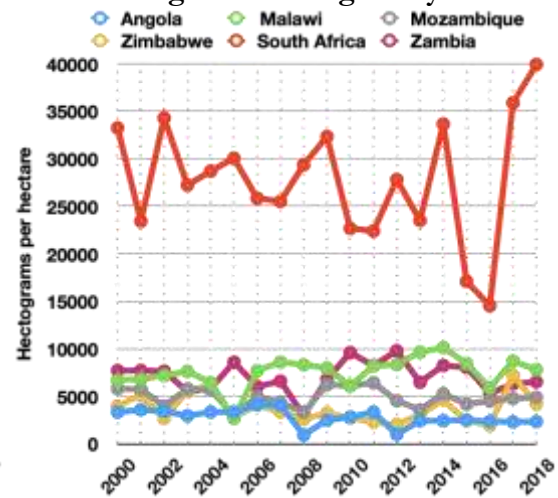
Referring to a number of other crops cultivated in the region, focusing solely on the question of production yield is revealing to what extent any semblance of 'modernization' has been brought to Angola's agricultural sector.

Figure 39 - Millet yield



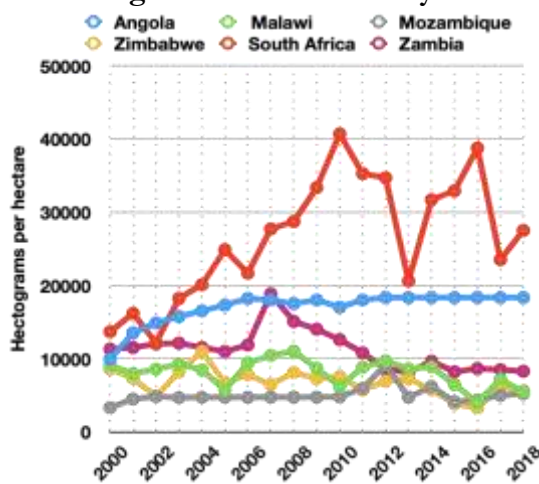
Source: FAOSTAT.

Figure 40 - Sorghum yield



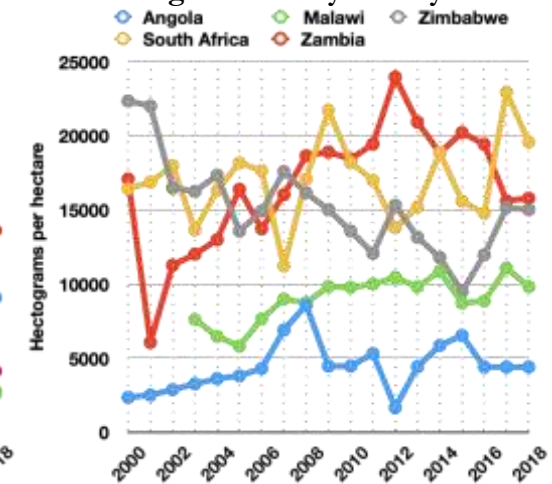
Source: FAOSTAT.

Figure 41 - Seed cotton yield



Source: FAOSTAT.

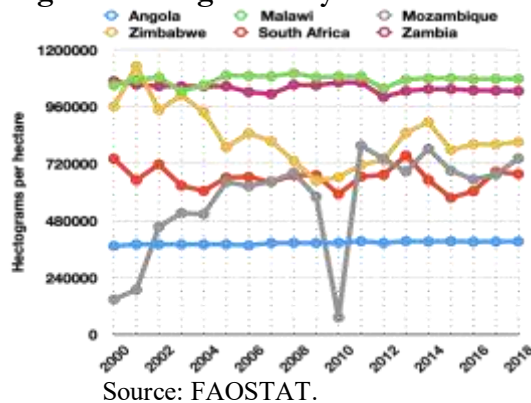
Figure 42 - Soybeans yield



Source: FAOSTAT.

¹⁶⁴⁹ Refer back to §6.3.3 for a review of this chaotic episode.

Figure 43 - Sugar cane yield



Apart from a modest improvement in cotton seed yield, the last two decades of growth in Angola's agricultural sector has been largely characterized by a considerable increase in overall production fueled by a significant expansion in overall land under cultivation for nearly each crop analyzed here, though the key indicator of crop yield remains either largely stagnant or worse. Agricultural workers became 2.2 times as productive from 2008 to 2015.¹⁶⁵⁰ Between 2012 and 2016, "the production of cereals increased by 47 percent, beans and oilseeds by 42 percent, and tubers by 14 percent" while fruits and vegetables grew at a slower pace, 12% and 4% respectively.¹⁶⁵¹ While improved production is a positive indicator, it appears the source of this increase is from expanded harvest areas and not improved yields. This situation has left Angola dependent on costly food imports that national production should substitute for but cannot.

To provide some examples, in 2018 it imported 100% of its wheat consumption, 86% of its rice, 27% of its beans and 23% of potatoes consumed.¹⁶⁵² Given that Angola "has substantially lower yields, and has been cut off from technological advances in new varieties or other areas for decades", the key concern facing the agricultural sector "is whether productivity gains can be large enough to offset the disadvantages posed by the strong currency and high transportation costs".¹⁶⁵³ Based on these charts, the answer to the question posed fifteen years ago is resolutely 'no'. Overall, these statistics from the FAO clearly demonstrate that 'modernization' has not arrived to Angola's agricultural sector overall. The

¹⁶⁵⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 8.

¹⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁶⁵² IFAD, *Republic of Angola Country Strategic Opportunities Program 2019-2024*. Rome, Dec. 2018a, 28. <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/125/docs/EB-2018-125-R-26-Rev-1.pdf>.

¹⁶⁵³ World Bank, *Angola Country Economic Memorandum: Oil, Broad-Based Growth, and Equity*, Report No. 35362-AO, Washington D.C., 2 Oct. 2006, xiv. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/591191468002432699/pdf/35362.pdf>.

significant increase in production that has occurred is sourced to smallholder and family farms, the same peasantry that the government has systematically neglected to seriously invest in, in large part out of fear of producing an independent rural economic class that could accumulate enough resource to potentially gain power and prestige outside of the patrimonial network of the MPLA elites.

President José Eduardo dos Santos made a big bet on a rural economy dominated by state-owned enterprises and opening the path to PPP elite dominance of the agricultural sector, though the process has stalled. As Fernando Pacheco points out, the development of the rural economy and the agricultural sector specifically will require foreign funds to develop sustainably¹⁶⁵⁴, especially considering that the government has never shown itself capable. If the major state farms infrastructure end up melding significant private capital with continued public financial support, it would represent the first major PPP collaboration model within Angola's "infrastructure investment landscape" as oil revenue and credit lines were considered sufficient and significant private investment in the agricultural sector simply could not be procured.¹⁶⁵⁵

Furthermore, it remains unlikely that the country will see another significant wave of donor attention fueling NGO activity as it becomes clear how many resources from the economic boomtime years were squandered, misused or misallocated. While the major international institutions such as the World Bank, the IBRD or the FAO will remain engaged given the dire need for continued assistance, a return to the time where international donors were heavily invested in agricultural development is unlikely. Facing this reality, President João Lourenço has chosen the path of privatization with continued PPP arrangements a likely condition to entice investors. It remains to be seen how that last bet will pay off.

7.3.1 CEMENTING RESOURCE DEPRIVATION

The two main documents laying out the new vision for rural development between 2018-2022 are the National Development Plan (NDP) and the sector specific Mid-term Development Plan for the Agriculture Sector. As outlined in the former, the current

¹⁶⁵⁴ Personal interview with Fernando Pacheco, Luanda, 5 July 2017.

¹⁶⁵⁵ Jensen, *Angola's Infrastructure*, 21.

development program laid out by the government points to a continued push for agro-industrial modernization trying to attract national and foreign investment “to develop medium and large-scale projects in agriculture and livestock”.¹⁶⁵⁶ The plan calls for the deconcentration and decentralization of development and the integration of the remotest areas through the reorganization of the territory.¹⁶⁵⁷ The goals are to be met through a heavy focus on the benefits of the pole development theory of François Perroux as it looks to build development poles and “balancing poles” in strategic areas across the national territory.¹⁶⁵⁸ However, the financing to back up this plan is meager.

A look into the Ministry’s finances finds that in 2019, the entire Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was allocated 48.18 billion kwanzas in 2019, yet the “promotion of agriculture production” for that year within the NDP of 2018-2022 provides 65.179 billion kwanzas, larger than the entire budget of MINAGRIF.¹⁶⁵⁹ This could be explained by the dual role of rural development held also within MASFAMU, which was only allocated 18.115 billion kwanzas in 2019’s budget, though it does not directly address agricultural support anywhere in the breakdown of its programs. Instead, the budget specifies 456 million kwanzas within the budget of the Ministry of Industry for assisting the *Programa de Apoio à Produção Nacional, Diversificação das Exportações e Substituição de Importações* (PRODESI, Program to Support Production, Diversification of Exports, and Import Substitution) supporting production, important substitution, export diversification, as well as the promotion small rural industry.¹⁶⁶⁰ Promoting ‘small rural industry’ would be necessary given that it does not exist in any significant form at the moment. The term itself appears almost as an oxymoron given the realities of the sector. Nevertheless, PRODESI is shaping up to be a central economic program adopted by the administration of João Lourenço.

PRODESI was approved through presidential decree n° 169 of 20 June 2018 with its genesis being the acceleration of the economy’s diversification, coordinated through the Ministry of Economy and Planning.¹⁶⁶¹ It is integrated into the new 2018-2022 National Development Plan’s second main pillar of “sustainable, diversified and inclusive economic

¹⁶⁵⁶ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 104.

¹⁶⁵⁷ Angola, Ministério da Económica e Planeamento, *Plano de Desenvolvimento Nacional 2018-2022*, I, Luanda, April 2018b, 61. <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/ang179971Plan.pdf>.

¹⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁶⁵⁹ UNDP, Brief analysis on Angola state budget 2019, Aug. 2019a, 9, 12. <https://www.ao.undp.org/content/angola/pt/home/imprensa/Angolastatebudget2019.html>.

¹⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 9, 12, 17-18, 20.

¹⁶⁶¹ According to the program’s official website. See: <https://prodesi.ao/sobre#> (accessed 4 August 2020).

growth” supported in part by the European Union with a €12 million contribution.¹⁶⁶² It is characterized as the “anchor for the medium term management of the efforts of the Executive oriented to the increase and improved capacity to manage the goods and services produced autonomously by the national economy”,¹⁶⁶³ though it is structured towards the five sectors of: (1) agriculture, (2) fisheries, (3) mineral resources, (4) textiles, (5) tourism.¹⁶⁶⁴

PRODESI is nominally designed to support agriculture, though the sectors already weakened structure automatically reduces its weight within the five major sectors focused on. Given the historical importance of the coffee sector to the country’s economy, reinvesting in coffee production is seen to have particular potential for diversifying exports.¹⁶⁶⁵ The program’s recent creation means it is too early to analyze any concrete results, though its considerable budget means that it is an important program to follow, if actually implemented at the planned scale, as it evolves in its transformative capacity being a main driver for economic diversification.

The second document, the Mid-term Development Plan for the Agriculture Sector (2018-2022) provides for a “more diversified and inclusive growth model” whose proper implementation will be necessary to correct the historic lack of investment in the country’s rural human capital.¹⁶⁶⁶ As has been previously demonstrated, a major impediment to the peasantry’s capacity to increase their family or communal productions or even accede to commercial farming is their lack of investment capital. Different programs have attempted to address this issue over the years with little success.

In 2017 the World Bank ranked Angola 182 out of 189 in creating an enabling environment for business, noting in particular its poor rural infrastructure and the low availability of access to credit with only one commercial bank, the Angolan Development Bank, offering micro-credit services, though largely benefitting farmers already involved in commercial operations.¹⁶⁶⁷ Without private capital or access to credit, the peasantry is kept

¹⁶⁶² European Union, “Action Document for ‘Private Sector Development Programme in Angola’”, Annex 1 of the Commission Decision on the financing of the Annual Action Programme 2019 in favour of the Republic of Angola, Brussels, 2019, 3. <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2019/EN/C-2019-7734-F1-EN-ANNEX-1-PART-1.PDF>.

¹⁶⁶³ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 192, Luanda, 28 Dec. 2018: 5673.

¹⁶⁶⁴ According to the program’s official website. See: <https://prodesi.ao/sobre#> (accessed 4 Aug. 2020).

¹⁶⁶⁵ European Union, “Action Document”, 3-4.

¹⁶⁶⁶ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 29.

¹⁶⁶⁷ IFAD, *Republic of Angola Country Strategic Opportunities Program 2019-2024*. Rome, Dec. 2018a, 16-17. <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/125/docs/EB-2018-125-R-26-Rev-1.pdf>.

dependent on outside assistance of development actors or the government itself. These remedies alone have proven wholly insufficient to sustainably develop smallholder production. Given that supporting the agricultural sector remains a stated goal for economic diversification continued from the former administration, new measures have been put in place to rectify this structural absence of financial resources.

Acknowledging this reality, the government has embarked on a concerted strategy of conceiving policies designed to redirect financial resources building up the agricultural commercial sector which bypasses the peasantry. In 2016 the government relaunched the *Fundo de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Agrário* (FADA, Agriculture Development Fund) as a financial institution with a capital of 25 billion kwanzas to develop a framework to finance agricultural development specifically for smallholders.¹⁶⁶⁸ The fund is a relic from the ‘socialist’ past, originally created under the executive decree n° 2 of 20 January 1986, later restructured under the transition to a liberalized economy in 2013 until again transforming into its current form.¹⁶⁶⁹ In 2017, MINAGRIF called for the need to capitalize the fund, giving the impression the declared resources had yet to arrive or had already been distributed.¹⁶⁷⁰ An internal review confirmed that in the first year of operations (2016-2017), the fund was unable to fulfill its main mission of providing credit to farmers as it was still founding its operational structure, instead only investing in the contracting services to build the fund itself.¹⁶⁷¹ FADA was thus reformed as a “non-bank supervised financial institution” tasked with providing funding to the rural economic agents that the private commercial sector hesitates to engage with.¹⁶⁷² However, the fund’s restructuring led to power struggles among the Board of Directors of FADA who reportedly refused to adapt to certain restructuration policies, eventually being resolved by their dismissal by the Ministry of Agriculture.¹⁶⁷³ Once operational, the fund would provide a much-needed source of credit to the country’s peasantry, given that the extremely low repayment rate (2.2%) of such loans have made commercial banks averse to lending to the agricultural sector in general. The first line of credit attributed to family agriculture appears to have been for the 2020/2021

¹⁶⁶⁸ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 66.

¹⁶⁶⁹ Angola, República de Angola, *Resumo dos Relatórios de Gestão dos Órgãos do Sistema Contabilístico do Estado: Exercício 2016*, Luanda, 2016a, 90.

¹⁶⁷⁰ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 57.

¹⁶⁷¹ Angola, República de Angola, *Resumo dos Relatórios*, 91.

¹⁶⁷² IFC, *Creating Markets*, 66.

¹⁶⁷³ Valor Económico, “Fundo Agrário arranca reestruturado em Julho”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 28 May 2018. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/fundo-agrario-arranca-reestruturado-em-julho>.

agricultural season with 15 billion kwanzas,¹⁶⁷⁴ though the mechanism for distributing these funds lacks transparency.

While some sector specific programs led by outside actors are making serious contributions, the government itself still appears incapable or unwilling to manage on its own. The Mid-term Development Plan for the Agriculture Sector previously mentioned lays out evidence with a surprisingly candid assessment of the state of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), its organization and its ability to fulfill its missions. Given that it represents the first principal report produced by the administration of Lourenço specifically dedicated to the government's actions as pertaining to the agricultural sector, the candidness likely derives from two sources. By documenting the erratic and disorganized nature of the Ministry of Agriculture and its various programs and policies, the analysis not only provides cover for the new administration as a means to deflect blame for present and future criticisms levied at it, but it also lays bare the incompetence and unpreparedness of the previous administration. Distancing itself from latter criticism is obviously made more difficult as the political party in charge has not changed.

A full institutional and personnel makeover would be necessary to legitimize the narrative that the new administration truly plans to bring new life into the agricultural sector. As already mentioned in §6.2.1, MINAGRI found in 2017 that the cooperative and associative sectors were essentially “nonexistent” in the capacity to provide mutual assistance and collective bargaining power.¹⁶⁷⁵ Beyond that finding, it also heavily criticized the management of water resources, irrigation systems, general infrastructure construction and maintenance.¹⁶⁷⁶ Its sharpest critiques are aimed however at the overall strategies and policies of the Ministry of Agriculture as an institution itself, where it found the “absence of an agrarian policy”, “a weak articulation between a strategy of agrarian development and the forces to reduce hunger, achieve food security and rural development”, “a weak preponderance of MINAGRI” as well as a “lack of articulation between agrarian policies and other sectors”.¹⁶⁷⁷ This document therefore has the administration of João Lourenço on the record claiming that before his arrival to power, the previous administration had been

¹⁶⁷⁴ Angop, “Fundo Agrário apoia famílias com AKz 15 mil milhões”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 11 July 2020. http://www.angop.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2020/6/28/Fundo-Agrario-apoia-familias-com-AKz-mil-milhoes,36892eec-e09c-422f-b00c-b916bd99a6cf.html.

¹⁶⁷⁵ MINAGRI, *Plano de Desenvolvimento*, 60-62.

¹⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 62-64.

¹⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 70.

running an agricultural sector void of clear policy, unable to connect food production to food security or rural development, and a disjointed network of programs and policies that lacked a coherent approach to one of the supposed principal policy goals of the government since taking the reins from Agostinho Neto. Either its 38 years in power was not enough time to formulate a cohesive and measured approach, the decades of international assistance was unable to steer policy into a cohesive program, or the government of José Eduardo dos Santos was engaged in a policy of structural resource deprivation in an attempt to extend its political domination over the peripheral spaces where its authority was otherwise weak or absent. Such results as summarized by MINAGRI go beyond mere incompetence.

These intra-government analyses provided cover to the incoming administration to deflect responsibility for the systematic underperformance during the transition to power, in the time it took to put into place its own vision for the agricultural sector and the development of the peasantry. Now that João Lourenço's authority over the party has been settled, the continuation of the structural resource deprivation is firmly attributed to his own administration. Rather than changing course, the new policy further cements the turn away from the peasantry and towards a commercialized agro-business model.

Tableau 37 - 2017-2018 budgeting for principal agricultural programs

Program	Amount in 2017 national budget (in kwanzas)	Amount in 2018 national budget (in kwanzas)	Change (in %)	% of total national budget
<i>Programa de Fomento da Actividade Productiva Agrícola</i> /Support program for Agricultural Production	8,062 million	5,603 million	-30.49	0.06
<i>Programa de Desenvolvimento da Agricultura Familiar</i> /Program of Family Agricultural Development	6,155 million	4,663 million	-24.25	0.05
<i>Programa de Promoção da Mulher Rural</i> /Support program for rural women	325 million	133 million	-58.99	0.00
<i>Programa de Apoio à Actividade Económica da Mulher Rural</i> / Program supporting rural women's economic activity	317 million	59 million	-81.32	0.00
<i>Programa de Apoio e Fomento da Produção Animal</i> /Support program for animal production	1,819 million	1,694 million	-6.9	0.02
<i>Programa da Construção e Reabilitação de Perímetros Irrigados</i> /Construction and Rehabilitation program on irrigated perimeters	1,584 million	791 million	-50.05	0.01
<i>Programa de Fomento da Actividade Productiva Agrícola</i> /Program for increasing agricultural production	8,062 million	5,603 million	-30.49	0.06
<i>Programa de Desenvolvimento da Agricultura Comercial</i> /Program for commercial agricultural development	11,316 million	17,120 million	51.29	0.18
<i>Programa de Estruturação Económica e Productiva das Comunidades Rurais</i> /Program on economic and productive structuring of communities	N/A	17,120 million	N/A	0.00
Total	37,644,470,661	35,736,444,783	-5.07	0.37

Source: UNICEF & ADRA, *Orçamento Geral do Estado 2018: Nutrição, segurança alimentar e agricultura*, Luanda, 2018a, 15. <https://www.unicef.org/angola/relatorios/nutricao-seguranca-alimentar-e-agricultura-no-orcamento-geral-do-estado-2018>.

These drastic, across-the-board cuts to the agricultural programs, except for supporting agro-business, are in direct conflict with the government's own denouncements in the aforementioned 2017 MINAGRI report. Importantly, these cuts have not significantly reduced the budget of MINAGRI, as it has only been reduced by five percent overall. Instead, nearly every program destined for developing agricultural production was significantly reduced, with the money 'saved' later funneled into the program for commercial agricultural development. The only program that was not reduced is a new program on economic and productive structuring of communities with a meager budget of 17 million

kwanzas, approximately US\$27,480.¹⁶⁷⁸ This resource transfer directed from the peasantry to the commercial sector, which represents a minority of rural economic agents, is the clearest indicator that João Lourenço's administration represents a continuation of the MPLA's marginalization of rural populations, disinterest in building up a resilient rural economic productive model, and further abandonment of the rural populations to their own devices.

7.3.2 INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCERS MAKE INROADS: WORLD BANK

Continuing on the argument built in chapter five on the influence of international actors in developing the peripheries, this section will document some of the latest influences. With an acknowledged need for deep-seated institutional reform while taking office amid a period of economic difficulties, the administration of João Lourenço looked for influential power players for advice and consultation. The IMF, the World Bank, and China have all been involved in the direction of the future agricultural sector. Here we will examine the outsized role played by the World Bank. Afterwards, we examine the IMF and China.

After the election of President João Lourenço to the presidency in 2017, the winds of change began to blow and the potential for serious systemic reform became the strongest it had been in decades. The major international development institutions engaged the new administration with in-depth studies and policy recommendations to strengthen the country's economy, engage in its responsibilities to the social sectors, stamp out systemic corruption, and alleviate endemic poverty. One of the most influential institutions consulting the government in the socio-economic domain has been the World Bank. The decision standing before João Lourenço's administration is how to find a balance between the growing push for modernization of the sector and how to provide the necessary support to move the country's vast peasantry from principally subsistence farming to a stronger production and commercialization capacity.

If history is a harbinger, the heavy emphasis on economic modernization risks further weakening the traditional farming sector and smallholder producers. By not including

¹⁶⁷⁸ According to the latest currency conversion, XE currency convertor. See: <https://www.xe.com/fr/currencyconverter/> (accessed 24 Sept. 2020).

traditional production in the new vision of the rural economy, the new policies would invest resources around these workers, rather than in them. Given their weak resource bases, socially organizing these actors into peasant associations and cooperatives directed through the *Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas Agro-Pecuárias de Angola* (UNACA, The Confederation of Associations of Peasants and Agro-livestock Cooperatives of Angola) has traditionally been the government's approach to providing means for their development. The World Bank however has other plans.

Since Lourenço's election, in two of the latest major World Bank reports published on private sector development and pro-poor policies, UNACA does not garner even a mention in the sections dedicated to the agricultural sector. This can be seen as a damning portrait of the lack of relevance of UNACA today or the inability of the World Bank to see peasant associations and cooperatives as playing a key role in poverty alleviation and economic diversification. The 2018 study intitled "Angola: Systematic Country Diagnostic Creating Assets for the Poor" was produced by the World Bank Group. The study references 'rural' issues in twenty-one areas within a seventy-five page report, demonstrating the focus on the periphery in alleviating poverty where it is most prevalent. As poverty is more predominant in rural areas, the focus on rural issues is necessary. However, the entire report neglects the potential of the peasant cooperative and associative sectors in providing socio-economic development except for one single mention on page forty nine when critiquing gender gaps in access to farming resources "as these tend to be delivered through associations and cooperatives in which only husbands are members".¹⁶⁷⁹ Furthermore, the sole mention comes in the context referring to Sub Saharan African as a whole and does not address Angola directly.

Instead, the recipe for success offered by the World Bank for Angola's peasants focuses on a neoliberal agenda centered on agrobusiness: "Market access can be improved by exploiting opportunities for rural-urban links and synergies connecting smallholder agriculture with larger agricultural businesses and developing their associated value chains".¹⁶⁸⁰ The proposed policies for ultimately improving food security through expanding the agricultural sector again relies on significant private capital "through privatization to encourage agribusiness investments in large-scale production, agro-processing, storage and

¹⁶⁷⁹ World Bank, *Angola: Systematic Country*, 49.

¹⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

warehouse facilities, development of logistics cold chains, and irrigated perimeters”.¹⁶⁸¹ These recommendations double down on the development pole theory of François Perroux and the radiating potential these investments offer. Beyond the numerous obstacles faced by resource-poor peasants to set up any type of sustainable “agribusiness”, this ‘remedy’ neglects the fundamental difficulty of achieving title of one’s land, a fundamental step in the process of privatization. In a report supposedly on creating assets for the poor, associations and cooperatives are nearly non-existent, replaced instead with an emphasis on major private investments in commercial farms.

Not only are the country’s farmers unable in the most part to set up a private business, the report likewise does not make explicit recommendations of integrating the local farmers into the larger agricultural market dynamics beyond the agribusiness investments the World Bank recommends. This could be because of the institution’s narrow market-focused approach to work, as the report also notes that the rural populations “widespread reliance on agriculture means that rural unemployment is virtually nonexistent. Urban unemployment stood at 14.8 percent in 2014, in contrast to the rural unemployment rate of only 2.5 percent”.¹⁶⁸² In this view of neoliberal economics, if someone does any work at all (even for merely subsistence purposes), they should be classified as self-employed entrepreneurs! Furthermore, the neoliberal economic vision of the report *assumes* that the country’s farmers would want to set up commercial endeavors in the pursuit of considerable capitalistic gains, whereas the majority of peasants practice subsistence farming and sell excess goods to local markets or vendors. For those wishing to preserve a traditional lifestyle, converting into businessmen or businesswomen is unlikely and would require considerable resources, education, and training.

The 2019 report prepared by the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank, intitled “Country Private Sector Diagnostic: Creating Markets in Angola” does make more references to the cooperative sector (five in total), but again lacks any mention of UNACA. When referencing agricultural cooperatives, the report mentions that “[o]f the many cooperatives and producer groups, few are registered and/or active in practice, and market-oriented, collective decision-making is uncommon. However, the foundation for

¹⁶⁸¹ *Idibem*.

¹⁶⁸² *Ibid.* 39.

more organized approaches does exist”.¹⁶⁸³ For reference, UNACA currently claims 993,501 nationwide members through 8,662 associations and 2,115 cooperatives.¹⁶⁸⁴ This last World Bank reference appears to summarize and confirm what has been understood through press reports, personal interviews, and related research: UNACA is seriously underperforming in its role managing the rural associative and cooperative sectors. To such an extent, in fact, that it is considered by the World Bank as a non-entity in rebuilding the rural economy. Instead, the report only identifies the Agriculture Development Institute (IDA) under the Ministry of Agriculture as the preeminent institution dedicated to supporting smallholders, for example distributing subsidized fertilizer.¹⁶⁸⁵

This reveals a very significant finding in the present and future inclusion of peasant associations and cooperatives into the developmental agenda, given that the World Bank and its associate institutions and technocratic advisors appear to be playing an extremely influential role in driving the policy agenda within the administration of João Lourenço. As has been demonstrated here, the government has enacted important policy recommendations of the World Bank, notably through the privatization of numerous public companies. The complete absence of UNACA in these latest World Bank documents suggests the peasant associative and cooperative organizations will maintain its marginalized position and remain far from becoming a priority policy recommendation by the likes of the World Bank.

Finally, beyond the critique laid out against the World Bank and the FAO in §i.ii.i regarding the lack of initiative to push for a comprehensive data collection program for the rural economy, it could also be argued that their continued emphasis on promoting agricultural development through the idea of developing ‘unused land’ is itself contributing to undermining smallholder agriculture through its intense focus on modernization of the sector creating the conditions for furthering rural unrest through land conflicts. By attracting investors and encouraging economic expansion into these seemingly empty spaces they could in fact be contributing to the problem of land grabbing as it has already been discussed that unused, productive land in Angola is a myth. Local communities, whether sedentary or

¹⁶⁸³ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 104.

¹⁶⁸⁴ According the website of the *Organização Cooperativista dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (OCPLP, Organization of Cooperatives of Portuguese-speaking Countries). See: <https://www.portalocplp.org/organizacoes/unaca> (accessed 24 Sept. 2020).

¹⁶⁸⁵ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 63, 67.

nomadic, are almost inevitably already exploiting these types of land, though more than likely for purposes of subsistence agriculture.

If institutions such as the World Bank and the FAO are not absolutely clear about the realities of local land use, especially in strategic areas most likely to attract investors, then not only will they be indirectly promoting potential land conflicts, but then they will likely be called upon afterwards to mediate a response and quell the unrest provoked by the neo-liberal modernization agendas they themselves are promoting. Through this modernization agenda, when “[d]riven by the state itself, the exercise of food sovereignty thus lies in the confiscation and exclusion of the native peasantry”.¹⁶⁸⁶ Not only does this method potentially push the peasants off of their productive land, but in the case of Angola it could even lead to a weakening of food security through the gross mismanagement of industrial assets such as the wasted production in the Manquete farm (Cunene) and others described in §6.3.4.

7.3.3 INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCERS MAKE INROADS: IMF AND CHINA

China has attempted to remain a strong partner despite Angola’s economic difficulties, trying to continue its privileged relationship held with the previous administration by reaching out to João Lourenço as well. In 2018, João Lourenço went to Beijing to cement their bilateral relationship and took advantage of the opportunity to continue asking for Chinese loans, eventually coming to an agreement of US\$2 billion in a bid to finance new projects destined to generate resources, increase domestic production, and spur the exportation of more goods and services.¹⁶⁸⁷ As the economy continued to stagnate, however, the relationship began to show signs of stress.

The economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic is putting additional pressure on the Sino-Angolan partnership. The low oil prices due to the global recession have had serious effects on Angola’s ability to finance domestic operations and pay off its creditors at the same time. As a member of OPEC, it has come under pressure to follow the group’s

¹⁶⁸⁶ François Purseigle & Bertrand Hervieu, “For a Sociology of Agricultural Worlds Within Globalization”, *Études Rurales*, 1, no. 183, (2009): 191. <https://www.cairn.info/journal-etudes-rurales-2009-1-page-177.htm>.

¹⁶⁸⁷ Angop, “Angola presents new financing request to China”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 9 Oct. 2018. http://www.angop.ao/angola/en_us/noticias/politica/2018/9/41/Angola-presents-new-financing-request-China,84af992b-a935-4292-b7f0-539214b91b0b.html.

decision to lower production and ease exports in order to better balance the supply and demand equilibrium in a world sudden awash with oil. In bilateral relations, China is by far Angola's biggest creditor, having loaned the large majority of the more than US\$20 billion in bilateral aid to be paid back.¹⁶⁸⁸ Angola has begun to reduce the amount of oil shipped to China as part of paying off its debts in an attempt to send a signal to Beijing that it hopes to renegotiate the terms of the loan repayments.

According to Alex Vines, the director of the African Program at Chatham House, Angola is "lucky" however because it does not have any debt repayments to make in 2020, with most loans coming due in 2025.¹⁶⁸⁹ However, the oil payments with China are structured differently and were indexed to a higher price for barrel at the time of negotiating the loans, meaning that Angola must send oil in much higher volumes in order compensate for the lower market prices. Noting this debt structure as the "Angolan Mode" of loan financing, Vines mentions that these oil-for-loans partnerships were ultimately counterproductive for Angola, leaving it with significant debt and new infrastructure that has not brought the desired added value to the economy initially planned for while pointing out that this bilateral oil-for-loans program will most likely be retired from the policy toolbox under João Lourenço's leadership.¹⁶⁹⁰ As will be demonstrated with the final result of the agro-industrial farms, they created massive debt for the government, never achieved their full potential, and will be sold off to private investors with significant depreciation of the assets as shown below.

Shortly after reaching a new loan deal with Beijing, the continued search for financing led the new administration into negotiations with the IMF. These talks would have major repercussions on the bilateral Sino-Angolan partnership, representing a major change in the realm of international relations. João Lourenço established an agreement with the IMF for a loan valued at US\$3.7 billion, "the biggest ever such arrangement made by an African country", but in exchange Angola had to open up the government's accounting books to outside regulators as well as promising to end the indebting practice of oil-for-infrastructure

¹⁶⁸⁸ Julia Payne & Dmitry Zhdannikov, "Exclusive: Angola cuts oil shipments to China as it seeks debt relief", Reuters, 5 June 2020. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-angola-china-debt-oil-exclusive/exclusive-angola-cuts-oil-shipments-to-china-as-it-seeks-debt-relief-idUSKBN23C1LY>.

¹⁶⁸⁹ Lusa/VerAngola, "Chatham House: Angola "is lucky" for not having debt repayments this year", *Ver Angola*, Luanda, 4 May 2020. <https://www.verangola.net/va/en/052020/Economy/19785/Chatham-House-Angola-%20is-lucky-for-not-having-debt-repayments-this-year.htm>.

¹⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

loans practiced extensively with China.¹⁶⁹¹ The deal has yet to be concluded as Angola has returned to its discussions with China in a bid to achieve a bilateral deal on debt relief and a moratorium on payments before concluding the deal with the IMF, though the Chinese are reported to be asking for alternative compensation “in form of infrastructure assets or concessions” ranging from railways, ports, and petroleum assets.¹⁶⁹² The fact that upon coming to power Lourenço first went to Beijing to ask for a loan, only to come back shortly thereafter with these new IMF conditions being worked out on the side demonstrates how continuing the tested methods established under Dos Santos is experiencing significant pushback from major institutional players. João Lourenço will have to create his own pathway to find ways to finance his projects.

The results of these negotiations will have profound repercussions on the Sino-Angolan relationship as China’s principal interest in maintaining a flexible relationship with Angola was both its privileged access to oil as well as the signing of major infrastructure contracts favoring Chinese firms. If those demands are not met or significantly altered, Beijing could take a harder line given that it has now established deep relationship with various other African countries. Angola served as Beijing’s major entrance point into Africa in its loan diplomacy, but the special relationship still holds because Chinese companies need cheap oil and public contracts. Acceding to IMF recommendations and cutting off the oil-for-infrastructure pipeline would drastically alter the Sino-Angolan bilateral relationship.

Regarding the indebtedness of the Angolan government due to these loans, one window into this issue is looking at the depreciation of the series of agro-industrial farms created through this oil-for-infrastructure mechanism.

¹⁶⁹¹ David Pilling, “Africa: Can João Lourenço cure Angola of its crony capitalism”, *The Financial Times*, London, 9 July 2019. <https://angolaforex.com/2019/07/09/africa-can-joao-lourenco-cure-angola-of-its-crony-capitalism-by-david-pilling-in-financial-time/>.

¹⁶⁹² CLBrief, *IMF Awaiting China-Angola Debt Deal*, China-Lusophone Brief, 30 June 2020. <https://www.clbrief.com/imf-awaiting-china-angola-debt-deal/>.

Tableau 38 - Privatizing the agro-industrial farms built on Chinese loans

Farm (location)	Initial credit value (US\$ millions)	Proposed selling price (US\$ millions)	Change in value
Cuimba (Zaire)	68.0	35	-48.5%
Longa (Cuando Cubango)	76.6	29	-62.0%
Sanza Pombo (Uíge)	87.5	22	-75.0%
Camaiangala (Moxico)	79.0	24	-70.0%
Total	311.1	110	-64.6%

Source: Angop, “Fazendas em privatização avaliadas em USD 110 milhões”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 11 Sept. 2019. http://m.portalangop.co.ao/angola/pt_pt/noticias/economia/2019/8/37/Fazendas-privatizacao-avaliadas-USD-110-milhoes,90a221bc-21f2-4488-9f85-3025b8a7d53e.html; Jinyan Zhou, “Neither ‘Friendship Farm’ Nor ‘Land Grab’: Chinese Agricultural Engagement in Angola”, China-Africa Research Initiative, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., CAIS-CARI, no. 7, 2015. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5652847de4b033f56d2bdc29/t/568c478fa2bab8d5752045b1/1452033935723/CARI_PolicyBrief_7_Mar2015.pdf, calculations are my own.

All of the farms represent extremely important strategic investments in the agricultural sector with the potential to contribute significantly to alleviating food scarcity, improving domestic production, contributing to the diversification of the economy, and potentially increasing exportations and thereby amassing much needed foreign exchange currency. However, the aforementioned gross mismanagement of the farms has led to a stark reality in the privatization process as each farm demonstrates an extreme depreciation in overall value.

According to the estimated value that the government is prepared to sell the farms for, nearly each farm has lost half of its initial value, reaching up to 75% in the Sanza Pombo farm in Uíge province. As a total, the four investments have lost an average of 65% of their initial value. The farms have never reached the initially planned potential, have likely never experienced a profitable growing season meaning they consistently run up deficits, and they are in need of considerable initial investment in order to revitalize the farms’ conditions to even begin earning a profit. As an “absolute prerequisite for investment for the private sector” requires both a reliable revenue stream and the presence of a commercial return¹⁶⁹³, the underperformance of these farms and their current state of depreciation do not present ideal conditions for private investors. Various countries have been approached in a search for private investors, including Argentina, Brazil, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa,

¹⁶⁹³ World Bank, *Options for Increased Private Sector Participation in Resilience Investment: Focus on Agriculture*, Washington D.C., Dec. 2017, 13. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/969921521805628254/pdf/Options-for-increased-private-sector-participation-in-resilience-investment-focus-on-agriculture.pdf>.

Spain and the United Arab Emirates.¹⁶⁹⁴ The privatization process remains underway as of writing.

Three other state farms were also built through this Chinese partnership, which are unaccounted for in this privatization process. Two of the Chinese-built farms, Manquete farm in Cunene province and Camacupa farm in Bié province, have been handed over to the *Forças Armadas Angolanas* (FAA, Angolan Armed Forces), purportedly for their “strategic potential” to feed the soldiers and security forces.¹⁶⁹⁵ The status of the Pedras Negras farm (Malanje) remains unclear. As mentioned in §6.3.3, a report from the Dutch Embassy in Luanda reported that the farm has direct links to then-Vice President Manuel Vicente.

A report by *Valor Económico* in July 2018 characterized three state farms (Pungo Andongo, Pedras Negras and Quizenga) operating within the Capanda Agro-Industrial Development Pole (Malanje) as being “insolvent” at the time.¹⁶⁹⁶ A few month later, after the government announced a broad push for the privatization of state assets, the *Diário da República* official dispatch n° 221 of 25 September 2018 “approves the total privatization” of the Pedras Negras farm to the commercial company Agro-Kapanda S.A.¹⁶⁹⁷ This company has no public profile to be found.¹⁶⁹⁸

Furthermore, multiples reports produced post-September 2018 lists Pedras Negras farm as property of the state, as if this 2018 decree does not exist. In a 2019 government report prepared by the Ministry of Finance and the *Instituto de Gestão de Activos do Estado* (IGAPE, Institute of Asset Management and State Holdings) detailing the different assets that the country possesses, it lists the Pedras Negras farm along with the other Chinese-built farms as part of the “infrastructure and resources” being supported by the public company

¹⁶⁹⁴ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 26.

¹⁶⁹⁵ [n.a.], “Fazendas entregues às Forças Armadas”, *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 29 June 2019. <http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/fazendas-entregues-as-forcas-armadas>. Made official through presidential decree n° 99 of 19 June 2019.

¹⁶⁹⁶ Valdimiro Dias, “Falta de investimentos trava pólo agro-industrial de Capanda”, *Valor Económico*, Luanda, 9 Oct. 2017. <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/uploads/files/2019/10/angola-sob-ameaca-do-xisto-americano-edicao-80.pdf>.

¹⁶⁹⁷ The official *Diário da República* document could not be accessed, though the official dispatch can be found at: <https://www.lexlink.eu/legislacao/geral/14793/ia-serie/por-tipo-de-documentolegal/2018/144> (accessed 2 Aug. 2020).

¹⁶⁹⁸ In the *Diário da República* III, Série n° 2 of 3 January 2020, it published a list of approved business partners where “Agro-Capanda, Limitada” appears. The different spelling of the company name is notable. Research on both “Agro-Capanda” and “Agro-Kapanda” did not reveal any further information about this supposed company. See: <https://angolaforex.com/2020/01/14/diario-da-republica-iii-a-serie-n-o-2-de-3-de-janeiro-de-2020-actos-societarios/> (accessed 12 Aug. 2020).

Gesterra.¹⁶⁹⁹ The comprehensive World Bank report detailing the state's assets and promoting policies of privatizations and the creation of PPPs also lists in 2019 Pedras Negras as a farm that was being prepared by Gesterra for privatization and still State-owned.¹⁷⁰⁰ The actual status (publicly or privately owned and operated) of the Pedras Negras farm appears unclear.

On recommendation of the IMF and the World Bank, the administration began preparations to unload the extensive portfolio of public companies and infrastructure assets that have been weighing heavily on public finances. As the World Bank points out, state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have been extremely costly to state finances. Between 2013 and 2016, the government spent nearly 1% of total GDP covering general operational costs and salaries of SOEs, spent 2.5% of GDP on state subsidies, as well losing “101 billion kwanza (\$848 million) in 2015 and 36 billion in 2016 (\$221 million)” in company underperformance if you subtract the lucrative state company Sonangol.¹⁷⁰¹ To rectify this situation, the government has acted on World Bank recommendations. The *Programa de Privatizações* (PROPRIV, Privatization program) was approved through the presidential decree n° 250 of 5 August 2019, conducted via the IGAPE, established by decree n° 141 of 7 June 2018, alongside the Ministry of Finance (MINFIN) with a recommended mandate of four years.¹⁷⁰² It was created with the specific mandate to reduce the influence of SOEs in the economy and increase the quality and variety of services available to the population.¹⁷⁰³ This process would therefore mark a fundamental change in the character of the state as it cedes influence of various sectors of the economy to private actors.

In all the government announced the intention to privatize in full or in part 195 public companies across the sectors of finance, agro-industry, fisheries, tourism, telecommunications, health, transportation, oil, construction, industry, and real estate.¹⁷⁰⁴

¹⁶⁹⁹ Angola, Ministry of Finance, *Relatório Agregado do Sector Empresarial Público*, IGAPE, Luanda, Sept. 2019b, 10.
<http://www.ucm.minfin.gov.ao/cs/groups/public/documents/document/zmlu/ota1/~edisp/minfin905230.pdf>.

¹⁷⁰⁰ IFC, *Creating Markets*, 26, 74.

¹⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁷⁰² Quingila Hebo, “IGAPE passa a gerir activos e participações do Estado”, *Expansão*, no. 477, Luanda, 18 June 2018. http://expansao.co.ao/artigo/97393/igape-passa-a-gerir-activos-e-participacoes-do-estado?seccao=exp_tec.

¹⁷⁰³ *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 101, Luanda, 5 Aug. 2019: 4975-5001.
<http://www.ucm.minfin.gov.ao/cs/groups/public/documents/document/zmlu/ode1/~edisp/minfin815554.pdf>.

¹⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 4984-4986.

The ambition of this privatization policy is enormous and fraught with risks, given that the current global economic outlook and Angola's itself are far from ideal and as the economic analyst and professor at the Catholic University of Angola Carlos Rosado de Carvalho pointed out in an interview, fulfilling this program would signify privatizing nearly fifty companies per year, which practically means one every week.¹⁷⁰⁵ The numerous privatizations linked directly to the agricultural sector reveals the government's extensive portfolio. Each asset is 100% owned by the state unless otherwise specified.

Tableau 39 - List of public companies linked to the agricultural sector set for privatization

Number	Company	Sector
1	Camabatela industrial abbatoir	Agro-industrial
2	Amboim industrial abbatoir	Agro-industrial
3	Luanda abbatoir	Agro-industrial
4	Malanje abbatoir	Agro-industrial
5	Caxito tomato and banana processing plant	Agro-industrial
6	Caxito refrigerated storagehouse	Agro-industrial
7	Dombe Grande can factory	Agro-industrial
8	Dombe Grande refrigerated storagehouse	Agro-industrial
9	Dombe Grande tomato processing plant	Agro-industrial
10	Namibe tomato processing plant	Agro-industrial
11	Caconda silo complex	Agro-industrial
12	Caála silo complex	Agro-industrial
13	Catabola silo complex	Agro-industrial
14	Catete complex	Agro-industrial
15	Ganda silo complex	Agro-industrial
16	Matala silo complex	Agro-industrial
17	Quizenga farm	Agro-industrial
18	Cubal farm	Agro-industrial
19	Pungo-Andongo farm	Agro-industrial
20	Longa farm	Agro-industrial
21	Camaiangala agricultural development project	Agro-industrial
22	Cuimba agro-industrial farm	Agro-industrial
23	Sanza Pombo agricultural development project	Agro-industrial
24	Aldeia Nova (59% held by Gesterra)	Agro-industrial
25	Biocom (20% held by Sonangol)	Industry

Source: *Diário da República*, Series I, no. 101, Luanda, 5 Aug. 2019, 4985, 4987, 4990-4991.

The decades of war left the rural economy with few possibilities for development, either endogenous or exogenous. The state was therefore tasked with assuming a central role,

¹⁷⁰⁵ Raquel Loureiro, "Governo angolano apresenta programa de privatizações "nunca" antes visto no país", Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 14 Aug. 2019. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/governo-angolano-apresenta-programa-de-privatizações-nunca-antes-visto-no-pa%C3%ADs/a-50013292>.

which it initially took up with an ideological fervor given the country's 'Marxist-Leninist' foundations. However, this asset list of privatization plans produced in 2019 also reveal the extent to which that public companies have continued to play an enormous role in the rural economy, far removed from its 'socialist' past, further revealing the limits of the 'liberalization' of the agricultural sector supposedly underway since the 1990s.

Based on this extensive list and the diversity in companies and holdings, it is evident that the state-centric 'socialist' model has remained deeply engrained throughout the periphery. Given the theoretical thread pursued in this study of a weak peripheral state aiming at political domination through the control of resources, this privatization list is a principal legacy of this political approach. The strategic presence of these companies has served a double purpose in this regard: domination in the distribution of resources and the impediment of private entrepreneurs to develop in their shadow. The desire for dominance through resource control will not be ceded easily.

Maintaining these ideological roots despite the push for privatizations in a bid to maintain control over its sovereignty in strategic sectors, the General Assembly has approved a proposal from the MINFIN to modify the legal structure governing the privatization process. This change would take the form of "golden shares" wherein the government could maintain certain special decision-making powers over companies even if the state were the minority stakeholders.¹⁷⁰⁶ This "golden shares" power could be applied to existing companies as well as those that are being privatized. In order to reassure potential investors, the government claims this tool would only be used for companies in "sectors of strategic public interest" in which "serious reasons of public interest" would justify the use of such remedies.¹⁷⁰⁷ The power proffered by the "golden shares" would include veto power in hiring and nominations of the boards of directors, altering company strategy or other policy included in the company's social pact.

¹⁷⁰⁶ Lusa, "Angola quer 'golden shares' para garantir interesses estratégicos em empresas", *Jornal de Negócios*, Lisbon, Mediafin-Sociedade Editora, 24 July 2020. <https://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/economia/mundo/africa/angola/detalhe/angola-quer-golden-shares-para-garantir-interesses-estrategicos-em-empresas>.

¹⁷⁰⁷ António Dias dos Santos, "Angola quer 'golden shares' garantir interesses estratégicos em empresas", *Portal de Angola*, Luanda, 25 July 2020. <https://www.portaldeangola.com/2020/07/25/angola-quer-golden-shares-para-garantir-interesses-estrategicos-em-empresas/>.

This proposal is currently being formulated in the government so it is too early to know the exact details of which companies and which sectors would qualify for this “golden share” state intervention. Furthermore, it is unclear how active the government would become in advocating and pushing for change within privatized companies, whether connected to personnel or policy. MINFIN has attempted to downplay this tool as simply a safeguard to ensure that companies are acting in the “national interest”, but the vague descriptions and the lack of precedent for independent private company activity, outside of the MPLA’s direct influence, could impede the willingness of private investors to enter specific sectors if they would not have full powers of the growth strategy of their own majority-owned company. As the agricultural and livestock sectors are inherently linked with questions of food security, i.e. a national security interest, it could easily be assumed that they would be candidates for this type of “golden share” government strong-arming.

The “golden share” proposal is a clear demonstration of the reluctance of the current inner circle of the MPLA to give up its historical position of control and domination throughout the country, though it is proposed in a language of national sovereignty and strategic public interest. While the latter surely represents a legitimate motivation, the former epitomizes the MPLA’s instinctive reticence to power sharing and ceding control. Along these same lines arises the question of telecommunications and controlling the narrative. While the administration of Lourenço has been busy preparing measured privatizations, it has simultaneously sought the nationalization of strategic companies that have been created or developed with illicit public funds for private profit through its anti-corruption campaign.

In July 2020 the justice system requisitioned the private media group *Média Nova* through the National Asset Recovery Service because it was deemed to have been “constituted with the support and institutional strengthening of the state”.¹⁷⁰⁸ The nationalizing process placed the media group under the administration of the Ministry of Telecommunications, Information Technologies and Social Communication. The *Média Nova* group comprised the television channel *Zimbo*, the radio channel *Mais* and the newspaper *O País*, owned by the same trio of Angolan elites connected through the Biocom venture: General Leopoldino “Dino” Fragoso do Nascimento, General Helder “Kopelipa”

¹⁷⁰⁸ Lusa, “PGR delivers private media group ‘Media Nova’ to the Government”, *Ver Angola*, Luanda, 31 July 2020. <https://www.verangola.net/va/en/072020/Society/21210/PGR-delivers-private-media-group-‘Media-Nova’-to-the-Government.htm>.

Dias and the former Vice President Manuel Vicente.¹⁷⁰⁹ The takeover of the different media assets serves a clear propaganda purpose in order to better maintain the government's control on the national narrative and undercut potential critics. The Asset Recovery program has cast a much wider net, however. For example, recently the government announced the confiscation of 24 finished and 1,108 unfinished buildings built with public funds and constructed in partnership with the private Hong Kong-based China International Fund.¹⁷¹⁰ These anti-corruption measures therefore present multi-faceted risks to the administration of João Lourenço, not only ensnaring many of the former president's allies, but creating potential diplomatic difficulties as well with Chinese companies being directly connected to alleged corruption schemes.

7.4.4 A ROADMAP FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As the agenda of João Lourenço is still currently in the implementation stage, this chapter does not propose to be a definitive account of the broad array of changes underway. Rather, it attempted to provide some different paths of reflection for continued research on this subject by highlighting a number of potentially important changes both socially and institutionally regarding the government's relationship with the general and rural populations, as well as the structure of the government crafting peripheral spaces. On one hand, the pronouncements of João Lourenço declaring his desire for economic diversification through the development of the agricultural sector is the continuation of a decades-long discourse by the MPLA. On the other, the economic turmoil the country has slowly descended into since 2014 and sharpened since then, coupled with the global contraction in trade due to the outbreak of COVID-19, represents a significant rupture in past economic crises.

During the reign of José Eduardo dos Santos, the consistent growing global demand for oil and its relative abundance throughout its deep-sea oil fields meant the government could effectively wait out global turbulence and attempt to revert to the status quo once the

¹⁷⁰⁹ Dulce Neto, "PGR de Angola oficialize entrega dos media dos homens fortes de José Eduardo dos Santos", *Observador*, Lisbon, 31 July 2020. <https://observador.pt/2020/07/31/pgr-de-angola-oficializa-entrega-dos-media-dos-homens-fortes-de-jose-eduardos-dos-santos/>.

¹⁷¹⁰ Paulo Sérgio, "PGR apreende mais de mil edificios em Luanda", *O País*, Talatona, 2020. <https://opais.co.ao/index.php/2020/02/11/pgr-apreende-mais-de-mil-edificios-em-luanda/>.

economic environment improved. That no longer seems to be the case. The exponential increases in technology in the different forms of renewable energy is challenging the predominance of oil like never before, while Angola's easily accessible oil is itself becoming a rarified resource.

According to the Ministry of Finance, oil production is predicted to decrease by 36% by 2023 as oil fields become less performant. The decrease is already evident as by mid-2017 only eight offshore oil rigs were active, compared to 25 in 2014.¹⁷¹¹ Economic diversification will absolutely be necessary if the government wants to truly bring socio-economic development to the peripheries where it has until now failed to take advantage of. Failure to do so would further widen the already wide inequality gaps between the elites and everyday Angolans, sharpened even further by the urban/rural divide.

Some actions have been taken towards this goal of diversification towards the agricultural sector. Programs have been enacted, action has been taken, progress has been made. Yet this progress made must be tempered due to the extremely low starting bloc the sector has emerged from. In reality, the stated desires for replicating the nostalgic colonial agricultural exportation regime have never truly been formulated into a coherent vision in how to attain a vision compatible for the 21st century. The meager budget allocation to such a vast and complex sector means continued underperformance is inevitable, especially within an inefficient administrative state characterized by institutional instability and a lack of qualified technical workers.

The weak track record of policy and program implementation and even coordination will continue without serious training initiatives, which would be a costly endeavor in and of itself. Furthermore, the institutional reforms could produce a more streamlined vision for rural development in the future, but such major shakeups inevitably take time to implement and cement, further running out the clock on João Lourenço's first term. Finally, the privatization process creates serious disruption in managerial and finance streams as has been

¹⁷¹¹ Alex Vines, *La politique de transition en Angola : Lourenço boucle sa première année à la tête du pouvoir*. Washington D.C., Centre d'études stratégiques de l'Afrique, 3 Oct. 2018. <https://africacenter.org/fr/spotlight/la-politique-de-transition-en-angola-lourenco-boucle-sa-premiere-annee-a-la-tete-du-pouvoir/>.

shown in the previous chapter's description of the institutional instability undermining the expensive agro-industrial state-farm built by Chinese companies through Chinese loans.

While that process was uniquely chaotic, changing managerial hands a multitude of times, the privatization process of public assets will likewise create inevitable costly inefficiencies to the agricultural sector, which will have to be priced in to the privatization process. The possibility of continued public investment in PPP setups is also likely for some of these public assets, creating further pressure on strained financial resources. The combination of these realities adds up to a scenario where João Lourenço's first mandate will represent a continuity in structural resource deficits throughout the periphery and an agricultural sector focused on modernization with few policy innovations to bring smallholder agriculture into a slowly strengthening rural-urban marketplace network.

Conclusion

The present study has sought to better understand how the MPLA-led government has extended its power and authority across its peripheral spaces where its physical presence is the weakest and how the rural populations have been able to respond to its imposing presence. The agricultural sector was identified as the most concrete link between the government and the peasantry, given that its administrative apparatus is otherwise mostly absent at the *comuna* level beyond the makeshift *musseques* at the limits of the provincial capitals¹⁷¹² and local elections have still never been held.¹⁷¹³ The vast oil resources of the country allowed the government to proceed in an illiberal State building vision as the traditional pressure of the international community was neutered by the emergence of alternative sources of financing.¹⁷¹⁴ This lack of exogenous pressure allows for a unique perspective into the true impulses of the Angolan government in its reconstruction agenda, while the complete disarticulation of a once robust agricultural sector served as an ideal object to analyze in its socio-economic approach to reconstruction.

Following the policies and programs designed to rebuild the agricultural sector after its post-colonial collapse therefore provides important insight into the mindset and strategies of controlling these marginalized spaces. The ‘top-down’ perspective was combined with a ‘bottom-up’ analysis of the multiple Non-State Actors assisting local organizing initiatives in response to the government’s programs. By analyzing three different case studies (the formation of *Rede Terra*, the series of agro-industrial farms built by the Chinese, the water conflict in the Gambos), this dissertation has shown how the government has imposed its authoritarian economic modernization agenda on the peasantry who were largely omitted from the benefits bestowed by this model, while also demonstrating how these same actors

¹⁷¹² Ricardo Soares de Oliveira & Susan Taponier, “‘O governo está aqui’: Post-war state-making in the Angolan periphery,” *Politique africaine*, no. 103, (2013): 176; UNICEF, *Situation Analysis: Children and Women in Angola*, Luanda, 2015, 42.

¹⁷¹³ Lusa, “Angola: Caminho até eleições autárquicas mostra-se sinuoso”, Deutsche Welle, Luanda, 23 July 2020. <https://www.dw.com/pt-002/angola-caminho-até-eleições-autárquicas-mostra-se-sinuoso/a-54297000>.

¹⁷¹⁴ Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, “Illiberal peacebuilding in Angola”, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 49, no. 2, (2011): 288.

have been able to develop pockets of accumulated agency and exercise it to different degrees in response infringements on their communal land and resources.

The MPLA has sought to build its reputation as an all-powerful party that has not only secured the country's independence and ensured the 'socialist revolution', but it has also positioned itself as the indispensable entity competent to provide for the country's future. While important social and economic development gains have been recorded in the country's urban areas since the devastating years of war, its rural spaces have seen little benefit to the economic boom years and remain dependent on a government that does little to provide for them. Though improved, the endemic urban poverty is an obvious testament to the comparatively worse rural realities. This study sought to dig deeper into these geographic disparities, demonstrating how the government has systematically blocked, cowed, and undercut the peasantry from improving their socio-economic development.

This strategy was mainly designed around the agricultural sector, thereby leaving those practicing subsistence agriculture without support, and those with the means to commercialize with limited options in disjointed markets. Diverting resources from the peasantry has also left the well-connected with a stagnant rural economy, where economic diversification remains left in the lurch. The president has admitted as much himself.¹⁷¹⁵ Despite this rare candor coming from the top, in order to maintain its origin story and its self-identified source of legitimacy, critics and criticism of the party have been systematically silenced. However, with the passing of time, the widespread endemic poverty is undeniable and excuses for malgovernance have begun to materialize, especially after the transition of power to João Lourenço offered strategic opportunities to criticize past decisions. Are the government's failures to rebuild the agricultural sector and achieve its long-sought goals of food security and economic diversification a cause of a lack of resources, incompetence, a prolonged legacy of war or its engrained predatory rent-seeking behavior? This study has recorded concrete examples of each, but the latter two have proven to be the dominant forces.

¹⁷¹⁵ CEIC, *Relatório económico de Angola 2015*, 193.

Dominating resource flows through strategic diversion

The MPLA's predatory strategy of dominating the peripheries has been shown to be vast in its approach, including but going far beyond traditional rent-seeking behavior. In order to reveal its broad spectrum of activities, one needs to look beyond the task of 'following the money'. While personal fortunes animate many of the strategies, it only tells part of the story. It is for this reason that we have endeavored to demonstrate the fuller spectrum of their resource deprivation strategy to reveal its multi-faceted approach. Following in the steps of colonial authoritarianism, the government practiced self-restraint in its allocation of resources. When attempting to introduce modernization into the agrarian sector, it imposed structural limits on the resources that were allowed to reach the majority of the rural economic agents (the peasantry) for fear of producing future political backlash borne from its accumulation.¹⁷¹⁶ A review of these different strategies will summarize the breadth and depth of this policy of strategic abandon of the peasantry.

Missed opportunities, misspent funds

Arguments can certainly be made that the costly and destructive war years disallowed the proper investment in the agricultural sector and this line of reasoning holds some truth. However, this study has dispelled the lack of funds being a principal cause of the weak investment in the agricultural sector.¹⁷¹⁷ Rather than the lack of funds being the central issue, it was in reality the machinations behind the political decisions taken as to what to invest in that has been the true determinant. A review of the timeline of financing the Ministry of Agriculture clearly shows no significant increase occurred once social stability was imposed. The national budget supporting its development has not bypassed 2% since 2000, and barely topped 1% from 2000 until today. These abysmal numbers provide the basis for the disdain the elites view the overall sector. Yet we have clearly shown how this 'lack of funds' is a false narrative. The revelatory case of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) gives an important insight into this continued underinvestment.¹⁷¹⁸

¹⁷¹⁶ Bruce J. Berman, "Ethnicity, patronage and the African state: the politics of uncivil nationalism", *African affairs*, no. 97, (1998): 315.

¹⁷¹⁷ Refer to §3.3.2 for a review of public financing of the agricultural sector.

¹⁷¹⁸ Refer to §3.3.1 for a review of the NEPAD program.

NEPAD's assessment provided a clear and comprehensive timeline and framework to rehabilitate the country's debilitated agricultural infrastructure, enabled by a shared financial mechanism that would have cost the government an estimated US\$100 million while partner institutions would finance the second half of the five-year program.¹⁷¹⁹ Instead of signing on, the government instead chose to go it alone. It spent over US\$20 million on tractors from China in 2004, US\$110 million in 2005 over five years on poorly attempting to rehabilitate its irrigation networks through the newly created State-Owned Enterprise *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento dos Perímetros Irrigados* (SOPIR, Development of Irrigated Perimeters in Angola) and US\$600 million through the Ministry of Commerce on the *Programa de Reestruturação do Sistema de Logística e de Distribuição de Produtos Essenciais à População* (PRESILD, Program of Restructuring of the System of Logistics and Distribution of Essential Products to the Population) designed to rebuild the commercial network, but which collapsed after five years.¹⁷²⁰ These three activities alone cost an estimated US\$730 million during the same five years that NEPAD would have been in operation, though each investment systematically underperformed.

We understand the government's decision to shelve and forego the NEPAD partnership being that it would have opened up Angolan officials to international oversight and accountability at a time it was uninterested in acquiescing to outside observers. Leading up to this same period, billions of dollars 'disappeared' from the treasury while Angolan officials were coming under heavy scrutiny from international institutions and NGOs to adopt better transparency practices.¹⁷²¹ Instead of signing on to an initiative that would have

¹⁷¹⁹ NEPAD, *Support to NEPAD-CAADP Implementation, Volume III of VI. Bankable Investment Project Profile: Rehabilitation of Rural Marketing and Agro-processing Infrastructures*, TCP/ANG/2908 no. 1, December 2005c, i. <http://www.fao.org/3/af320e/af320e00.pdf>.

¹⁷²⁰ CEIC, *Relatório Económico de Angola 2010*, Luanda, Catholic University of Angola, 2010, 105 João Dias, "Presild concretiza metade dos projectos em plena crise", *Jornal de Angola*, Luanda, 31 Dec. 2009. http://jornaldeangola.sapo.ao/economia/presild_concretiza_metade_dos_projectos_em_plena_crise; Axel Dreher, et al., *Aid, China, and Growth: Evidence from a New Global Development Finance Dataset*. AidData Working Paper #46, Williamsburg, Virginia, AidData, 2017. <https://china.aiddata.org/projects/34786>; Estefanía Jover, Anthony Lopes Pinto & Alexandra Marchand, *Angola Private Sector: Country Profile*, African Development Bank, September 2012, 81. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Evaluation-Reports-_Shared-With-OPEV_/Angola%20%20-%20Private%20Sector%20Country%20Profile.pdf; Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 70.

¹⁷²¹ Various sources previously cited have documented this matter. See for example: Paulo Conceição João Faria, "The Dawning of Angola's Citizenship Revolution: A Quest for Inclusionary Politics", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, no. 2, (2013): 309; Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land*, 39; David Pilling, "Africa: Can João Lourenço cure Angola of its crony capitalism", *The Financial Times*, London, 9 July 2019. <https://angolaforex.com/2019/07/09/africa-can-joao-lourenco-cure-angola-of-its-crony-capitalism-by-david-pilling-in-financial-time/>; Khadija Sharife & Mark Anderson, "How Angolan Elites Built a Private Banking Network to Move their Riches into the European Union", OCCRP, 13 April 2020.

brought precious resources and technical know-how into its deprived peripheries, the MPLA-led government chose to take its own approach despite not having the technical training and experience necessary to put in place such complex and consequential investments. To avoid similar scrutiny on transparency, international assistance was foregone, effectively positioning the Angolan government as the sole authority over the development of the rural economy.

Further evidence of systemic underinvestment in key areas of the society is found following the public financing of the health and education sectors during the latter years of the civil and throughout the reconstruction period. It has been clearly demonstrated that the government has never seriously attempted to fully develop either of these pivotal sectors according to the country's capacities. Instead, it became complacent with the role of Non-State Actors filling its institutional void. Since 1996, the health sector never comprised 7% of the annual budget, and education never reached 9%.¹⁷²² This calls into serious question not only of the willingness but more importantly the capacity itself of the Angolan government to perform its own core responsibilities.

This underinvestment has clearly had graver negative effects on rural areas given their comparatively lower population density and increased difficulties imposed through geography¹⁷²³. If the MPLA were capable of building an inclusive agricultural sector able to improve the livelihoods of the rural population as a whole, it would have made the political calculus to adopt a comprehensive 'rural incorporation' strategy to bring these actors into their fold. Such a program presents serious political risks, however, given that it creates the conditions for a mobilized rural population able to turn its accumulated resources against the regime.¹⁷²⁴ Given the massive task and the risks involved, the government instead chose to

<https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/how-angolan-elites-built-a-private-banking-network-to-move-their-riches-into-the-european-union>; Nicholas Shaxson, *Poisoned Wells: The Dirty Politics of African Oil* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan), 2007, 178; Inge Tvedten, *Angola 2000/2001 Key Development Issues and the Role of NGOs*, Bergen, Chr. Michelsen Institute, no. 1, 2001, 10-11. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/file/955-angola-2000-2001.pdf>; United States Senate, *Keeping Foreign Corruption Out of the United States: Four Case Histories*. Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Washington D.C., 4 Feb. 2010, 246.

¹⁷²² See §3.2 for the health and education sector spending levels (1996-2020).

¹⁷²³ See §2.3.5 for an overview of the differences in urban/rural living standards.

¹⁷²⁴ David Waldner, Brenton Peterson & Jon Shoup, "Against the Grain of Urban Bias: Elite Conflict and the Logic of Coalition Formation in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa", *Studies in Comparative International Development*, no. 52, (2017): 334.

dominate these populations through withholding and diverting resources away from the peasantry.

Filling voids, creating voids

The trajectory of the agricultural sector is a direct heritage of the colonial past. Rather than reimagining a new model, the incoming administration attempted to replicate the same economic extraversion¹⁷²⁵ which had served the colonial project. As the overall structure of this study has shown, the keys to understanding Angola's complex rural relations are found in the formative transitional period from its deep colonial heritage. The MPLA's strategy of predatory rent capture of the agricultural sector consisted in a combination of a "politics of penury"¹⁷²⁶ imposed on the peasantry alongside the establishment of several State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The State took over the colonial companies via a vast policy of nationalizations enacted in 1977 and set up a number of its own in order to control and direct the rural economy.¹⁷²⁷ Through these companies, the administration of Agostinho Neto deployed the State throughout the agrarian economy. In doing so, these companies took on new roles and deep responsibilities. Outside of their respective economic missions, they played a double role as representatives of a new modern State that otherwise lacked an administrative presence due to both technical and structural barriers. These companies would be tasked with providing the essential services to make the rudimentary structure of the rural economy continue to function, as well as serving as a physical presence of the State in the periphery.

Another key inflection point came and went that would prove decisive for the sector's retarded development. The 'socialist' past of a centrally planned economy endured through the liberalization process with the SOEs left in place. In practice, their mere presence disincentivized private entrepreneurship developing their own networks even though private investment and ownership was technically legal,¹⁷²⁸ while the SOEs themselves undercut the sector's growth through systematic underperformance. Even during peacetime, the

¹⁷²⁵ Jean-Francois Bayart, "Africa in the world: a history of extraversion", *African Affairs*, 99, no. 395, (2000): 217-267; Emmanuel Moreira Carneiro, *Le blocage historique des économies africaines : Spécialisation rentière et extraversion* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).

¹⁷²⁶ René Lemarchand, "The Politics of Penury in Rural Zaire: The View from Bandundu," in *Zaire: The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, (ed), Guy Gran, (New York: Praeger, 1980), 237-259.

¹⁷²⁷ See §3.1.4 for a review of the principle public companies.

¹⁷²⁸ See §6.2.3 on the disincentivization of rural markets.

companies struggled to provide their services or, in some cases, pay their own employees.¹⁷²⁹ In the 2000s, the government decided to expand its presence further through the construction of a series of seven agro-industrial farms. Their construction represented, at least symbolically, its vision of a modernized agricultural sector. Concretely, it firmly anchored the State within the mass production phase of the agricultural sector, one of the last steps in the value chain that it had not yet attempted to fill directly. Through its constant and comprehensive presence in the agrarian economy, the government was thus able to control the sector's development by blocking the growth of independent, private companies while assuming the responsibility as the arbitrator of resources. The sector of the peasantry, itself, was completely marginalized from this economic development model despite token programs or occasional initiatives, receiving a bare minimum of the public resources dedicated to the sector.

Obstacles for the cooperative movement

The associative and cooperative sectors have long been heralded for their productive potential, yet in reality they have been structurally undermined as well. The difficulties in receiving land titles set up foundational barriers for cooperatives to join UNACA and take advantage of their limited services. Likewise, until 2016 cooperatives were legally constituted as 'non-profits', which severely limited their negotiating power and ability to secure even minimal credit lines. Both José Eduardo dos Santos and João Lourenço have claimed that cooperatives should form an integral part of the peasantry's role in contributing to the economic diversification plans supposedly underway. Yet the sector is so weak and disjointed that the major institutional players, now seemingly advising on policy-making decisions, principally the World Bank and the IMF, hardly reference UNACA in their reports if it is not to lament the weakened state of the structures themselves.

Despite their structural weaknesses, incentivizing peasant associations and cooperatives has served a double purpose. Firstly, they have promoted increased agricultural production among the rural populations, mostly destined for subsistence agriculture or minor material accumulation selling excess goods in local markets. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, these groups have been in effect a tool of control and surveillance of the

¹⁷²⁹ See §6.2.4 on the multiple cases of public companies not able to pay their employees.

country's vast rural economic agents, allowing the means to track their development where doing so otherwise would require the mobilization of a much larger network of party loyalists. UNACA, though officially a 'mass organization', also plays a key role in the government's efforts to socially organize rural labor.

Blocking Non-State Actors

The aforementioned practices of engineered-resource deprivation were internal attempts at controlling resource flows throughout the peripheries. A second group of external actors bringing in a similar and complimentary set of resources into the peripheries were the national and international NGOs that engaged with the population *en masse* between the 1990s and 2000s, alongside a wider support network accompanied by the European Commission, the World Bank, and the IMF. The emphasis on the internationalization of the countryside was intended to show the breadth and depth of the activities promoted by exogenous actors throughout the country. Their vast repertoire of projects and programs were active in various areas including basic service delivery, entrepreneurship, promoting democratic practices, human rights support, work training programs, and network creation, among others.

The accumulated exogenous involvement in the countryside is considered particularly important in rural spaces where the government holds minimal physical presence as we postulate that this combination of exogenous presence and government absence has had deleterious effects on these assistance programs as the government sought to solidify its domination strategy during peacetime. Due to a general mistrust of many within the NGO and CSO sectors, the government moved to strengthen its regulatory authorities in order to weaken the reach of these Non-State Actors (NSAs).¹⁷³⁰ *Unidade Técnica de Coordenação das Ajudas Humanitárias* (UTCAH, 'Technical Unit for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance') was structured to become the controlling apparatus, targeting specific programs considered off-limits by authorities as well as focusing its regulatory powers on their financial flows in particular. The zeal to impose regulatory burdens increased in time, demonstrating

¹⁷³⁰ See §6.1.1 for a review of the evolution of laws governing the NGO sector.

the mounting unease the government has felt as NSA activities accumulated in the countryside.

The situation reached its apex through a presidential decree in 2015 activating the invasive power of bureaucratic authoritarianism¹⁷³¹ aimed at weakening the sector, notably policing the financial flows, thereby shutting down or weakening many interactions with local populations. However, while much focus has been paid to the role of the presidents and their inner circles in policy decision-making because of the “hyper-presidentialism”¹⁷³² that the political system has morphed into, we have also seen that even this authoritarianism has limits. The attempt of the administration of José Eduardo dos Santos to overburden the NGO sector was found in 2016 to be unconstitutional for its executive overreach. Importantly, it was in large part the accumulated capacity building of the NGO sector that brought the case and won in court, including the participation of *Rede Terra*, *SOS Habitat*, the *Ordem dos Advogados de Angola* (OAA, Angolan Bar Association) and the *Centro Nacional de Aconselhamento* (CAN, National Counseling Center).¹⁷³³ By overturning this vital court case, the Supreme Court not only established limits on the executive’s attempts to unilaterally impose undue burdens on these actors, but in doing so also ensured the availability of a key extra-governmental resource flow operating outside of the government’s direct authority. Given that the judiciary has little independence and is commonly subjected to political interference,¹⁷³⁴ this win on the part of NGOs and lawyers of the Angolan Bar Association represents another important marker in the strengthening of Angola’s engaged civil society as well as a potential shift within the division of powers between the branches of government. That some of the major groups having won the case formed strong roots in rural Angola activism points to the increasing importance of studying the social dynamics playing out across the countryside, as well as a clear indicator of the contribution of rural influence on urban and even national matters.

¹⁷³¹ Berman, “Ethnicity, patronage”, 305.

¹⁷³² Paula Cristina Roques, *Angola’s new president. Reforming to survive*, Pretoria, Institute for Security Studies, Southern Africa Report, no. 38, April 2020. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/sar38.pdf>.

¹⁷³³ USAID, *Índice de Sustentabilidade da Organização da Sociedade Civil para Angola em 2017*, Washington D.C., 2017, 2. <https://adpp-angola.org/images/Civil-Society-Organization-Sustainability-Index-CSOSI-report.pdf>.

¹⁷³⁴ BTI, *BTI 2018 Country Report: Angola*, Gütersloh, Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018, 13. https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1427448/488345_en.pdf.

Heading off opportunity perspectives

Another major question that has arisen throughout the study is an explication as to why there has not been an organized rural social movement or general rebellion pushing back against this combination of general abandonment amid invasive modernization policies that spurred the propagation of land usurpations occurring with increasing frequency in the waning years of the civil war. In this regard, the principal dynamic the government works actively to head off is the coming together of two key factors: (1) the fusion of different groups with strong collective identities and similar motivations capable of uniting resources to challenge State authority, and (2) the visible weakening of the security apparatus or the public fear of it. Both of these factors combining create the “opportunity perspective” that could lead to serious, sustained civil unrest amid increasing demands for reform or, even more radically, resignation and replacement.

The reasons for the absence of a generalized pushback is three-fold. Firstly, the weak horizontal solidarity networks between distant rural communities erode the ability to establish ‘groupness’ between rural communities. This in turn weakens the ‘opportunity perspective’ as perceiving benefits from openly pushing back against this encroachment is difficult to envision given the weak social networks between rural communities and their already limited resource base. Finally, the years of war and their generally humble nature have made rural Angolans generally risk adverse when faced with potential conflict, while their traditional social structure is also equipped with important conflict resolution mechanisms. More than likely these unique factors combining could only truly emerge from an urban environment given the vast resources necessary for such mobilization. Nevertheless, with the increasing media presence and omnipresent social media access, that does not mean the spark could not come once again from the countryside in a similar way that the Cassanje rebellion helped ignite the fight for independence. The conditions are clearly different today, notably lacking an organized mass of forced labor disrupting traditional social structures, yet Angolan officials undoubtedly have this historic episode in their own minds as they look to avoid being perceived as neo-colonialists usurping land in areas they rarely interact with otherwise.

Emerging local, grassroots engagement

The combination of resource control and rent-seeking behavior has followed in the steps of the colonizers as they have practiced a sort of ‘measured pressure’ to expand the interests of its allies while attempting to avoid increasing tensions to the point of open rebellion. In this measured approach, the government has been clearly successful given the lack of organized resistance among the peasantry. This strategy of measured pressure has left the peasantry mostly incapable of responding to the government’s imposed will on their livelihoods, with few outlets available to express concerns. When they have been able to make their voices heard, it has come either through the development of complex networks of endogenous and exogenous actors working in tandem, or through the local government organs created to establish dialogue to diffuse tensions, the *Concelhos de Auscultação e Concertação Social* (CACSeS, Councils for Civic Engagement). Set up for both urban and rural environments, the rural organs serve a specific role.

With the CACSeS designed as modern participatory spaces for to exercise local representation, the government has sought to calm growing frustrations among the peasantry facing land dispossession or general abandonment through gradual plans of decentralization, bringing modern tools for representation into local spaces at the *município* level to complement traditional authorities. While these provide important spaces for civic engagement and dialogue, CACSeS lack any capacity to make policy decisions or enact any real change for the populations they service.¹⁷³⁵ This again falls in line with the government’s authoritarian mindset, unwilling to decentralize its decision-making powers. Further evidence of this is the inability to go through with organizing local elections (*autárquicas*), despite the administration of João Lourenço having promised to set them up. Along its strategy of gradually opening up new spaces (*gradualismo*), the MPLA had declared its desire to set up certain local elections in limited numbers of *municípios*, gradually expanding geographically, while the opposition wants local elections nationwide.¹⁷³⁶ The latter option would seriously jeopardize the MPLA’s party-State domination at the local level, a power it has gone to great

¹⁷³⁵ UNICEF, *Situation Analysis: Children and Women in Angola*, Luanda, 2015, 41.

¹⁷³⁶ David Filipe & Ricardo Bordalo, “Eleições autárquicas não terão lugar em 2020 – Oposição contesta ‘adiamento’ em bloco e exige data concreta”, *O Novo Jornal*, Luanda, 9 Sept. 2020. <http://www.novojornal.co.ao/politica/interior/eleicoes-autarquicas-nao-terao-lugar-em-2020-93575.html>.

lengths to preserve, even to the detriment of improving the agricultural sector and setting up a functioning, independent rural marketplace. While a positive measure bringing the government closer to the people, oftentimes social grievances play out beyond these weak local government structures, again shining a light on the NGO and CSO sectors.

The local example of rural agency emerging from the Gambos demonstrates the strong connection forged between both internal and external actors, capable of standing up to an authoritarian government ready and willing to deploy its security forces to quell unrest or perceived challenges to their authority. The acquiescence of the government to the persistent communities in the Gambos is a rare example of the government choosing to deescalate a situation where its actions were producing clear social grievances. It also effectively laid out a roadmap for overcoming invasive government practices, given the conditions are right. In that particular scenario, the risks/rewards calculation of the government clearly did not see further escalation necessary over a relatively small water project that provoked a geographically isolated incident, which was in turn gathering international attention through the communication networks of religious actors.

Our emphasis on the emergence of a new category of social actor within Angola, the ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs, represents the clear strengthening of a segment of civil society actors armed with the necessary support networks needed to flip the dynamics and apply measured pressure on a government still anchored in its authoritarian tendencies. While mostly consolidated in urban areas, we have identified two (ADRA and ACC) that are clearly focused on assisting rural populations in different domains. They each act in much different ways with ADRA opting for a more conciliatory, working relationship with the government and the ACC involved in more direct dialogue and even litigation. Despite these contrasting approaches, their experience, consolidated status, and local and international recognition have positioned them as forebearers for nurturing and exercising rural agency. The ‘grassroots elite’ groups will be important actors to follow in order to see what transformative role they can play in the future, whether this exclusive form will expand in time and influence as further international links are forged.

However, despite their consolidating status as ‘grassroots elite’ NGOs, they remain heavily dependent on their networks for mobilizing resources and the role of the peasantry itself within these organizations remains extremely limited. That said, the NGOs and their

institutional backers remain the main impetus in rural social organizing. Going back to the initial study done by ADRA having sparked this research project, there is very little evidence of the peasantry itself being either capable or willing to form an “organized revolt” against the “external agents” that are the sources of these social conflicts.¹⁷³⁷ Early on in this study, it was hypothesized that the imposed modernization policies in the agrarian economy could spark the emergence of a semi-coordinated peasant social movement pushing back, in the vein what occurred in Brazil with the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST, Landless Workers’ Movement). In Angola this is clearly not the case, even with the assistance of support networks.

Coming to a crossroads: domination or diversification

The weak governmental presence in the periphery has led to the local elites taking advantage of opportunities for economic expansion, regardless of laws and regulations that could apply to communal lands. Even with a growing network of advocates and activists ready to sound the alarm in the name of protecting the peasantry from such abuses, the overall ambiance of impunity and a general lack of respect for legal matters reveals the limitations rural populations face, even when they confront such abuses from an improved position of accrued agency. The balance of power in rural Angola remains heavily in the favor of monied interests and the politically-connected, though acts of impunity are increasingly called out more often. The huge gap in the balance of power that has existed between the government, party loyalists, and the peasantry has shown clear signs of reducing in the specific pockets that have received extensive, outsider assistance.

Ultimately, the post-war period has triggered a double phenomenon in the countryside. The increase of encroachments on communal lands began in earnest as the new bourgeoisie began searching for opportunities to establish themselves in peacetime. However, the lingering presence of the government in key areas of the agricultural sector not only controlled the agricultural sector, but also undercut private entrepreneurship of the allied new bourgeoisie. Without allowing for an independent market economy to begin to take hold in the countryside, even the new bourgeoisie found themselves confronted by

¹⁷³⁷ Guilherme Santos & Inácio Zacarias, *Pesquisa sobre os Diferendos e Conflitos de Terras e as Formas da sua Resolução*, Luanda, ADRA, March 2010, 13.

decaying public services under the provenance of State-owned enterprises. Alongside this expansion, rural social networks were slowly strengthening through the growing network of endogenous and exogenous actors working with the specific aims of providing stronger foundations for more independent socio-economic development that would require less dependence on a government that has proven to be incapable of delivering.

As the need for economic diversification continues to grow alongside the prolonged downturn of the oil sector, the government faces the choice of finally investing in its principal source of agricultural production, the peasantry. Its practice of strategic abandon of the peasantry has severely hindered plans for unleashing the country's agricultural potential given that it is precisely these rural economic actors that are responsible for a large majority of the country's production, despite the disadvantageous structural limitations placed on their economic development. João Lourenço's announced plans for privatizing the government's vast assets throughout the sector have signaled a major shift in its approach to governing the rural economy, though the continued concerns for control remain clear with the imposition of the 'golden share' majority stakeholder rule.

This new approach opens the door for private capital accumulation for entrepreneurs and investor, but changes little to nothing for the peasantry. A similar approach to the peasantry would lead to a gradual empowerment throughout the over nine million rural Angolans living in the countryside, producing an outcome the party has worked relentlessly to avoid until now. More likely, following in the trends of continuity proposed by Christopher Cramer, this privatization scheme is yet another example of Angolan officials looking to the past for its future when the Portuguese depended on foreign capital, companies, and experience to build its export economy, with the peasantry providing the vital source of labor powering the machine of their own dispossession. Similar to its colonial rulers, today's officials remain ideologically convinced that an authoritarian modernization model based on fixed capital investments in major industrial assets remains the best option to both increase agricultural production and ensure direct control over the sector's resource flows. The call upon exogenous actors to guide this model again harkens back to the social nature of the elite class and its stunted transformations from colonial times. While the emerging elite class transformed from *assimilados* under the colonial regime to the new rulers over independent Angola, they were unable to effectively convert into a productive bourgeoisie class and instead remained stuck in their rentier logic.

In the evolution of Angola's agricultural sector, the colonial past is therefore not only present, but currently guides its future. The summation of this ideology places the peasantry as an indispensable source of labor that otherwise requires strict mechanisms of control over its means of production and resource accumulation. The peasantry will therefore be expected to contribute their resources (manpower) to realize the state's vision of the agrarian economy, though the benefits of their labor are not structurally designed to improve their social class. Whether this measured pressured campaign abandoning the peasantry to a second-class social status will provoke organized resistance against their exploitation or instead lead to a continued flow of rural flight into peri-urban *musseques* remains to be seen. What is clear, however, is that Angolan elites are currently facing an historical crossroads in developing the countryside. They must decide whether they break with past habits and support the peasantry or maintain their domination on resource flows by maintaining their position of strategic abandon.

In the final days writing this dissertation, on 15 October 2020 João Lourenço gave his discourse on the State of the Nation after nearly three years in power. Once again he confirmed that the principal priorities of his agenda remain the “diversification of the economy, increasing the national production of goods and basic services, diversifying the range of exportable products and job creation”, which would all be realized through the strengthening of “a dynamic and efficient market economy”.¹⁷³⁸ Improving the overall business environment was emphasized in order to attract more private investment and continue with the slow implementation of the privatization program. The agrarian economy is to be reinforced through investing in irrigation services, expanding Public-Private Partnerships, strengthening the cooperative sector and the introduction of mechanized farming tools into a still rudimentary sector. The president hailed the role of private investors inaugurating a factory building tractors and other machinery, which would allow the agricultural sector to become the “green oil” powering “the new motor of the Angolan economy”.¹⁷³⁹ Directly comparing the future of agricultural production to the vertically controlled, foreign-driven oil sector is a timely metaphor to conclude this dissertation, further

¹⁷³⁸ Angop, “Mensagem do PR sobre o Estado da Nação”, *Agência Angola Press*, Luanda, 30 Oct. 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.angop.ao/noticias/discursos-do-presidente/mensagem-do-pr-sobre-o-estado-da-nacao/> (accessed 23 Oct. 2020).

¹⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*

confirming elite intentions to focus growth in the sector on the new rural bourgeoisie, a privileged minority tasked with capturing production and commercialization based on a familiar rentier logic.

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Appendix table

<i>Outline.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Appendix 1 Letter destined for UTCAH/IPOCRAC data collection.....</i>	<i>688</i>
<i>Appendix 2 First letter destined for UNACA data collection</i>	<i>689</i>
<i>Appendix 3 Second letter destined for UNACA data collection</i>	<i>690</i>
<i>Appendix 4 Letter destined for access to the National Archives in Luanda</i>	<i>691</i>
<i>Appendix 5 Data on regional agricultural production</i>	<i>692</i>
<i>Appendix 6 NGO and CSO data</i>	<i>716</i>
<i>Appendix 7 Agricultural sector spending and Ministry of Agriculture budget.....</i>	<i>719</i>
<i>Appendix 8 OMUNGA election propaganda (I)</i>	<i>721</i>
<i>Appendix 9 OMUNGA election propaganda (II)</i>	<i>724</i>
<i>Appendix 10 Reconciliation mission of Father Benedicto Sánchez</i>	<i>727</i>

Appendix 1 Letter destined for UTCAH/IPOCRAC data collection

Brad Safarik
Rua rainha gingha,
Mutamba, Angola
tél: 992 377 179
email: bradsafarik@gmail.com

Exmo. Diretor
IPOCRAC
Avenida Hoji ya Henda
Luanda, Angola

Luanda, 16 Julho, 2017

Exmo. Diretor,

Meu nome é Brad Safarik, doutorando em Ciências Políticas no Instituto de Estudos Políticos da Universidade de Bordéus (França), trabalhando em colaboração com o Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica da Universidade Católica de Angola (CEIC). De nacionalidade Americana e portador do passaporte Nr. 561141041, emitido aos 22 de Fevereiro de 2017, válido até 21 de Fevereiro de 2027, estou efectuando trabalhos de campo da minha pesquisa com o apoio financeiro do Instituto de França África do Sul (IFAS).

Minha pesquisa, actualmente no segundo ano, tem como ponto analítico fulcral as dinâmicas sócio-políticas confrontando a sociedade rural angolana e a evolução das diferentes organizações sociais criadas para responder aos desafios, sobretudo na província de Huila. O desenvolvimento económico e social dos camponheses rurais representa o interés principal do estudo. Durante minha estadia em Angola, estou entrevistando os atores ligados à pesquisa e visitando algumas ONGs, associações e cooperativos para recolher mais informação sobre a área.

Lhe estaria muito agradecido se pudesse ajudar-me na realização do meu estudo, na recolha de uns dados muito importantes sobre a evolução histórica das organizações sociais no mundo rural.

Os dados que procuro atualmente são os seguintes:

- Número de sindicatos camponheses e sua evolução entre 1960-2017, por cada ano disponível, ao nível nacional e por província.
- Número das associações, cooperativos entre 1960-2017, por cada ano disponível, ao nível nacional e por província.
- Número das ONGs (nacionais e internacionais) entre 1980-2017, por cada ano disponível, ao nível nacional e por província.

A ajuda do IPOCRAC e o MINARS me seria muito importante, entre outros, para o aprofundamento do meu objeto de estudo, por isso mesmo indispensável. Agradeço antecipadamente a compreensão e colaboração para a boa realização desta pesquisa.

Atenciosamente,


Brad Safarik

Appendix 2 First letter destined for UNACA data collection

Brad Safarik
Rua Rainha Gingha
Mutamba, Luanda, Angola
tél: 992 377 179
email: bradsafarik@gmail.com

Exmo. Diretor
UNACA
Rua Major Kanhangulo, 146
Luanda, Angola

Luanda, 16 Julho, 2017

Exmo. Diretor,

Meu nome é Brad Safarik, doutorando em Ciências Políticas no Instituto de Estudos Políticos da Universidade de Bordéus (França), trabalhando em colaboração com o Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica da Universidade Católica de Angola (CEIC). De nacionalidade Americana e portador do passaporte N° 561141041, emitido aos 22 de Fevereiro de 2017, válido até 21 de Fevereiro de 2027, estou efectuando trabalhos de campo da minha pesquisa com o apoio financeiro do Instituto de França África do Sul (IFAS).

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Estaria muito agradecido se pudesse ajudar-me na realização do meu estudo, na recolha de uns dados muito importantes sobre a evolução histórica das organizações sociais no mundo rural.

Os dados que procuro actualmente são os seguintes:

-Número de sindicatos camponeses e sua evolução entre 1960-2017, por cada ano disponível, ao nível nacional e por província.

-Número das associações, cooperativos entre 1960-2017, por cada ano disponível, ao nível nacional e por província.

A ajuda da UNACA me seria muito importante, entre outros, para o aprofundamento do meu objeto de estudo, por isso mesmo indispensável. Agradeço antecipadamente a compreensão e colaboração para a boa realização desta pesquisa.

Atensiosamente,

Brad Safarik

Appendix 3 *Second letter destined for UNACA data collection*



N.Ref. CEIC/ADM/156/17/LC/ek

A
Direcção Executiva da
Confederação das Associações de Camponeses e Cooperativas
Agropecuária de Angola (UNACA)

Luanda

Luanda, 21 de Julho de 2017

ASSUNTO: Solicitação de dados

Exmos. Senhores,

Nossos melhores cumprimentos.

O Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica da Universidade Católica de Angola (CEIC-UCAN) informa que o Senhor **Dr. Bradley Alan Safarik**, Investigador do Instituto de Estudos Políticos da Universidade de Bordeaux França, está a efectuar um trabalho de pesquisa sobre "A Gênese de um Movimento Social Rural em Angola".

Assim sendo, no âmbito da cooperação existente entre o CEIC-UCAN e a Universidade de Bordeaux em França, e para a conclusão do trabalho de pesquisa do Investigador acima referido, o CEIC-UCAN vem pela presente solicitar a V. Excia. que se digne autorizar o fornecimento dos seguintes dados:

- Número de sindicatos camponeses e sua evolução entre 1960-2017, por cada ano disponível a nível nacional e por província.
- Número das associações, cooperativas entre 1960-2017, por cada disponível a nível nacional e por província.

Na expectativa de que a presente solicitação terá o melhor acolhimento, queira aceitar os protestos da nossa elevada consideração.

De V. Excelência
Ateitadamente

Manuel José Alves da Rocha
O Director



Rua Pedro de Castro Van-Dúnem 24, Bairro Palanca, C.P. 2064 Luanda.
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Appendix 4 Letter destined for access to the National Archives in Luanda

FC.
Autenticada a pesquisa.
Ao Def. Arquivo
Def. Machado
para o
desenvolvimento
efetivo
29/07/17

Brad Safarik
Rua Rainha Gingha,
Mutamba, Angola
tél: 992 377 179
email: bradsafarik@gmail.com

Arquivo Nacional de Angola	
Correspondência	
Entrada 245	LIVRO N.º 024
06	Data 29/07/17
Ass. Madaleno Leite	

Exmo. Diretor
Arquivo Nacional Histórico de Angola
Rua Pedro Félix Machado
Luanda, Angola

Luanda, 16 Julho, 2017

Exmo. Diretor,

Meu nome é Brad Safarik, doutorando em Ciências Políticas no Instituto de Estudos Políticos da Universidade de Bordéus (França), trabalhando em colaboração com o Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica da Universidade Católica de Angola (CEIC). De nacionalidade Americana e portador do passaporte Nr. 561141041, emitido aos 22 de Fevereiro de 2017, válido até 21 de Fevereiro de 2027, estou efectuando trabalhos de campo da minha pesquisa com o apoio financeiro do Instituto de França África do Sul (IFAS).

Minha pesquisa, actualmente no segundo ano, tem como ponto analítico fulcral as dinâmicas sócio-políticas confrontando a sociedade rural angolana e a evolução histórica das diferentes organizações sociais criadas para responder aos desafios, sobretudo na província de Huila. O desenvolvimento económico e social dos camponeses rurais representa o interesse principal do estudo. Durante minha estadia em Angola, estou entrevistando os atores ligados à pesquisa e visitando algumas ONGs, associações e cooperativos para recolher mais informação sobre a área.

Lhe estaria muito agradecido se pudesse ajudar-me na realização do meu estudo com acesso ao Arquivo Nacional para recolher informação importante sobre a organização social das comunidades rurais e a evolução histórica das organizações sociais no mundo rural durante a época de colonização e depois.

A ajuda do Arquivo Nacional Histórico de Angola me seria muito importante, entre outros, para o aprofundamento do meu objeto de estudo, por isso mesmo indispensável.

Agradeço antecipadamente a compreensão e colaboração para a boa realização desta pesquisa.

Atenciosamente,

BSM

Brad Safarik

Appendix 5 Data on regional agricultural production

Fertilizer (nitrogen) use kg/ha

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2002	0,81	20,16	3,77	18,86	33,83	15,42
2003	0,5	19,49	0,39	20,67	30,06	14,72
2004	2	22,88	0,7	13,23	31,26	20,77
2005	1,03	19,87	1,22	12,1	25,62	18,7
2006	1,85	24,15	3,33	14,41	33,08	16,15
2007	1,51	26,9	2,1	14	33,91	18,68
2008	2,21	27,39	7,41	11,16	32,18	17,24
2009	2,44	19,82	2,62	15,75	34,75	17,89
2010	3,96	25,17	7,29	17,2	30,47	22,59
2011	3,28	22,74	5,48	13,85	33,67	32,04
2012	3,89	15,64	4	10	34,64	25,9
2013	3,94	15,68	4,48	9,07	33,55	37,67
2014	5,32	31,13	5,64	12,24	36,05	35,97
2015	4,91	18,74	2,03	10,39	32,45	43,15
2016	4	18,74	3,23	14,17	32,45	49,04
2017	5,12	18,74	3,8	14,17	32,45	54,92

Source: FAOSTAT

Pesticides (kilogram per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	0,01	0,07	0,01	0,8	1,89	0,51
2001	0,01	0,06	0,01	0,81	1,91	0,51
2002	0,01	0,04	0,01	0,81	1,9	0,52
2003	0,01	0,03	0,06	0,82	1,92	0,45
2004	0,01	0,02	0,12	0,79	1,96	0,43
2005	0,01	0,09	0,15	0,78	1,98	0,43
2006	0,01	0,06	0,17	0,75	2,07	0,37
2007	0,01	0,17	0,1	0,78	2,07	0,36
2008	0,01	0,17	0,16	0,74	2,04	0,33
2009	0,01	0,2	0,16	0,78	2,06	0,27
2010	0,01	0,15	0,2	0,81	2,07	0,24
2011	0,01	0,15	0,13	0,78	2,16	0,24
2012	0,01	0,21	0,13	0,82	2,16	0,21
2013	0,01	0,4	0,13	0,62	2,16	0,2
2014	0,01	0,62	0,13	0,53	2,16	0,18
2015	0,01	0,62	0,13	0,53	2,16	0,17
2016	0,01	0,62	0,13	0,53	2,16	0,16
2017	0,01	0,62	0,13	0,53	2,16	0,14

Source: FAOSTAT

Banana yield (hectograms (100 grams)/hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	96774	193750	64286	48571	215041	31818
2001	122807	200000	60645	48333	195453	32000
2002	150000	200000	64286	48194	329355	31940
2003	191176	207101	57303	47368	371200	31812
2004	177778	200000	71724	48020	349709	31921
2005	184615	194872	88750	47500	505045	32146
2006	189655	194872	87500	49529	496475	31818
2007	214822	195000	83400	53241	493927	33120
2008	179816	195050	76563	55815	494517	33902
2009	186627	195122	70000	58180	494407	34500
2010	188335	220109	71253	60602	509321	34286
2011	252608	241103	75705	62963	513031	38235
2012	258443	271429	75806	66667	508789	42500
2013	244507	287605	76000	66667	552058	42500
2014	274359	305837	76370	68036	571190	42105
2015	283019	294750	75856	71862	573180	41825
2016	287118	301938	74994	74281	586007	42798
2017	281499	308913	74866	76618	585867	43480
2018	283879	315026	74738	78955	594626	44161

Source: FAOSTAT

Banana production (tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	300000	310000	90000	85000	377967	700
2001	350000	300000	94000	87000	371361	800
2002	480000	330000	108000	87989	362290	850
2003	650000	350000	102000	90000	334080	806
2004	800000	360000	104000	90763	279767	900
2005	960000	370000	142000	95000	351612	766
2006	1100000	380000	175000	93463	342568	700
2007	1397652	390000	208500	94539	345749	693
2008	1722507	394000	245000	95603	393141	650
2009	1985263	400000	280000	96684	370805	690
2010	2047955	394056	320640	97699	399898	720
2011	2646073	391060	340674	98651	384773	650
2012	2991454	380000	470000	100000	386680	680
2013	3095013	386988	570000	100000	419564	680
2014	3483432	397319	575000	101639	456952	687
2015	3595306	426629	670000	103218	435252	676
2016	3851668	429048	517500	104095	310070	662
2017	4093281	435165	547811	105118	335208	656
2018	3492184	441282	578437	106058	444879	652

Source: FAOSTAT

Banana (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	31000	16000	14000	17500	17577	220
2001	28500	15000	15500	18000	19000	250
2002	32000	16500	16800	18257	11000	266
2003	34000	16900	17800	19000	9000	253
2004	45000	18000	14500	18901	8000	282
2005	52000	19000	16000	20000	6962	238
2006	58000	19500	20000	18870	6900	220
2007	65061	20000	25000	17757	7000	209
2008	95793	20200	32000	17128	7950	192
2009	106376	20500	40000	16618	7500	200
2010	108740	17903	45000	16121	7852	210
2011	104750	16220	45000	15668	7500	170
2012	115749	14000	62000	15000	7600	160
2013	126582	13456	75000	15000	7600	160
2014	126966	12991	75291	14939	8000	163
2015	127034	14474	88325	14363	7594	162
2016	134149	14210	69006	14014	5291	155
2017	145410	14087	73172	13720	5722	151
2018	123017	14008	77395	13433	7482	148

Source: FAOSTAT

Beans (yield, dry)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa
2000	3855	4044		4933	10028
2001	4004	5075		4769	11755
2002	3793	4318	4017	4642	13145
2003	4010	4719	3397	6909	11820
2004	2286	3647	3333	8278	14235
2005	3109	3667	2071	4527	14162
2006	2653	4835	2742	4595	12254
2007	2467	4942	2795	6216	7796
2008	3319	4791	2745	5000	13465
2009	3598	6022	2600	4784	15304
2010	3616	5302	3239	3946	11849
2011	3857	6322	3464	2980	10019
2012	1747	5965	3571	4016	11999
2013	3980	6167	3643	4396	13823
2014	5103	6159	5345	4563	14713
2015	5132	5720	5533	4145	11467
2016	4329	4805	5556	3574	10304
2017	3906	5979	5500	5316	15211
2018	3961	5413	3591	4773	12999

Source: FAOSTAT

Bean production (dry, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa
2000	75110	58227		7443	72004
2001	89030	108928		7262	91630
2002	90884	94037	89900	7059	59020
2003	93184	109832	101900	10760	60295
2004	75966	76964	110000	56776	80000
2005	109284	85759	95700	21482	69820
2006	85081	117274	124300	30332	67250
2007	103701	128632	146300	46067	39545
2008	124464	124702	129200	32641	58975
2009	247314	164712	130000	30018	67030
2010	250117	153815	226190	31248	52255
2011	303521	176760	228358	16028	41980
2012	96217	185578	282000	20935	47695
2013	311988	189417	283000	29083	60200
2014	401500	195048	51583	14702	82130
2015	397842	188745	47725	14700	73390
2016	324699	157769	50000	9542	35445
2017	300791	198486	55000	14012	68525
2018	314932	188158	50908	12751	69360

Source: FAOSTAT

Beans (dry) area harvested, hectares

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa
2000	194861	143980		15088	71800
2001	222370	214643		15229	77950
2002	239600	217802	223800	15207	44900
2003	232408	232762	300000	15573	51010
2004	332332	211058	330000	68583	56200
2005	351560	242568	462200	47450	49300
2006	320690	242568	453300	66007	54880
2007	420286	260287	523500	74115	50725
2008	375007	260287	470700	65282	43800
2009	687446	273525	500000	62753	43800
2010	691602	290090	698336	79189	44100
2011	786906	279579	659218	53786	41900
2012	550738	311114	789798	52123	39750
2013	783828	307158	776777	66155	43550
2014	786835	316686	96500	32220	55820
2015	775144	329959	86255	35461	64000
2016	750000	328339	90000	26702	34400
2017	770000	331983	100000	26358	45050
2018	795077	347622	141785	26714	53360

Source: FAOSTAT

Cassava yield (hectograms per hectare))

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	82992	154605	57911	43750	49409
2001	94072	169416	71627	42667	53827
2002	110071	149635	48556	42679	55554
2003	95667	157453	58816	41860	58000
2004	125605	161644	60017	43678	58000
2005	117628	142995	43155	43535	58667
2006	117201	173116	63907	43699	57917
2007	115387	187722	49902	43146	57917
2008	148084	190760	40254	44223	57834
2009	151759	202912	45215	44679	58043
2010	155782	204311	77638	45132	57964
2011	133649	215408	78029	45577	57753
2012	100073	223883	107501	47010	58183
2013	140517	228041	46115	46000	58246
2014	101060	226002	95054	46266	58053
2015	101331	225040	81895	46818	57618
2016	109599	218888	76797	47117	57882
2017	115016	214134	81157	47420	57901
2018	111065	227242	80579	47705	57929

Source: FAOSTAT

Cassava production (tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	4433026	2794617	5361974	175000	815248
2001	5394322	3362401	5974590	176397	950000
2002	6522760	1540183	3446043	178773	950781
2003	6892162	1735065	6149900	180000	957000
2004	8586874	2532079	6412770	190000	95700
2005	8806209	2197640	4782431	191593	1056000
2006	9037023	2832141	5481340	192273	1059887
2007	9730261	3238943	4959277	192000	1059887
2008	10057375	3491183	3838669	196856	1185600
2009	12827580	3823236	5670000	206715	1160853
2010	13858681	4000986	9738066	213345	1151700
2011	1433509	4259301	10093619	220093	1132150
2012	10636400	4692202	8197994	228000	1107954
2013	16411674	4813699	4303000	230000	1114583
2014	7638880	5102692	8272530	233997	919497
2015	7727413	5012763	8103000	241236	952770
2016	9846860	4996843	9100000	246142	1028293
2017	8404385	4960556	8703086	251316	1081678
2018	8659552	5410506	8525451	256490	1070961

Source: FAOSTAT

Cassava production (tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	534150	180758	925902	40000	165000
2001	573427	198470	834128	41343	176492
2002	592598	102929	709700	41888	171145
2003	720430	110196	1045625	43000	165000
2004	683639	156645	1068500	43500	165000
2005	748647	153687	1108200	44009	180000
2006	771072	163598	857700	44000	183000
2007	771072	172539	993800	44500	183000
2008	679167	183014	953600	44514	205000
2009	845259	188418	1254000	46267	200000
2010	889619	195828	1254294	47271	198692
2011	1072478	197732	1293568	48291	196032
2012	1062865	209583	762600	48500	190427
2013	1167948	211089	933100	50000	191359
2014	755874	225781	870300	50576	158390
2015	762593	222750	989434	51526	165359
2016	898445	228283	1184943	52240	177655
2017	730712	231657	1072371	52998	186814
2018	779682	238094	1058023	53766	184876

Source: FAOSTAT

Coffee beans (green, yield)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	1420	10865	6000	14000	9818
2001	1031	9600	7110	13669	9763
2002	1145	9215	7438	13879	9257
2003	1020	10382	7858	14286	9209
2004	1165	6974	8523	12889	9091
2005	2188	7873	8500	11000	9000
2006	333	9957	8537	7200	9140
2007	5263	9353	8675	4895	9107
2008	2000	8631	8690	4976	9161
2009	2652	18367	8706	3818	9116
2010	3425	14735	8556	3928	9045
2011	3071	14280	8421	3681	9025
2012	3070	14575	9184	3352	9005
2013	3083	14631	9474	2929	8985
2014	2875	15181	9307	2500	9051
2015	2874	16827	9324	2500	9062
2016	3051	16827	9396	2500	9035
2017	3140	17297	9476	2257	9027
2018	3037	23346	9557	2419	9019

Source: FAOSTAT

Coffee bean (green) production (tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	4260	3780	600	9100	5400
2001	3300	4320	782	7518	5760
2002	1260	2980	787	8050	6480
2003	2040	2584	802	10000	6060
2004	1980	1590	750	5800	5000
2005	3500	1181	680	3960	4500
2006	5000	2091	700	2700	4744
2007	11523	1403	720	1860	5100
2008	4000	1122	730	1440	5863
2009	11982	5510	740	1260	6290
2010	9951	4176	770	600	6422
2011	10192	4015	800	540	6137
2012	11740	5684	900	540	6303
2013	12550	5699	900	783	6289
2014	15009	6757	900	850	6757
2015	15000	7217	816	500	6574
2016	14709	7217	835	700	6955
2017	15114	8420	840	638	6996
2018	16079	11082	846	525	7104

Source: FAOSTAT

Coffee beans (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	Zambia
2000	30000	3479	1000	6500	5500
2001	32000	4500	1101	5500	5900
2002	11000	3234	1058	5800	7000
2003	20000	2489	1020	7000	6581
2004	17000	2280	880	4500	5500
2005	16000	1500	800	3600	5000
2006	15000	2100	820	3750	5190
2007	21894	1500	830	3800	5600
2008	20000	1300	840	2894	6400
2009	45189	3000	850	3300	6900
2010	29052	2834	900	1527	7100
2011	33190	2812	950	1467	6800
2012	38245	3900	980	1611	7000
2013	40707	3895	950	2673	7000
2014	52200	4451	886	3400	7100
2015	52200	4289	875	2000	7254
2016	48212	4289	889	2800	7698
2017	48136	4868	887	2826	7749
2018	52938	4747	885	2170	7876

Source: FAOSTAT

Maize (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	5745	17428	9399	11795	28492	17720
2001	5754	11845	9580	12309	24371	13780
2002	6706	10460	7065	4554	28516	14097
2003	7559	12259	8711	7829	26582	17256
2004	5404	10460	8085	12965	30305	19239
2005	6736	8093	4950	6195	36351	18594
2006	4687	14814	8387	9772	34122	18992
2007	5091	26547	6813	8651	27921	23342
2008	7946	16498	6177	2867	45373	22442
2009	6614	22265	10000	4642	49640	20692
2010	7200	20158	12024	8751	46736	25871
2011	7376	22079	12020	6568	43671	27414
2012	7770	21932	14980	7912	44905	26545
2013	9467	21708	6814	7449	42466	25382
2014	10386	23339	7967	9301	53009	27802
2015	11234	16563	8036	5803	37526	30310
2016	8717	14154	9057	4405	39956	24816
2017	8467	20078	9272	5589	63988	25151
2018	8555	16008	9056	6131	53949	22052

Source: FAOSTAT

Maize (production, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	394607	2501311	1180432	1619651	11431183	1040000
2001	428769	1713064	1143263	1526328	7772000	802000
2002	546860	1556975	1114774	604758	10076000	606172
2003	618684	1983440	1181279	1058786	9705000	1157860
2004	577000	1608349	1060396	2357152	9710070	1214000
2005	734372	1225234	941517	1255822	11715948	866187
2006	526084	2611486	1395476	1997403	6935056	1424400
2007	615894	3226418	1133910	1509210	7125000	1366158
2008	702387	2634701	1213569	496000	12700000	1211566
2009	970231	3582502	1612000	700000	12050000	1887010
2010	1072737	3419409	2089890	1192399	12815000	2795483
2011	1262222	3699147	2178842	1010473	10360000	3020380
2012	454343	3618699	2354778	1095954	12120656	2852687
2013	1548750	3639866	1173709	939282	11810600	2532800
2014	1686869	3978123	1357220	974956	14250000	3350671
2015	1878305	2776277	1262038	642793	9955000	2618221
2016	2255000	2369493	1469213	511816	7778500	2873052
2017	2680000	3464139	1362823	608954	16820000	3606549
2018	2271102	2697959	1654143	730437	12510000	2394907

Source: FAOSTAT

Maize (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	686853	1435220	1255866	1373117	4012000	586907
2001	745169	1446260	1193380	1239988	3189000	582000
2002	815428	1488449	1577800	1327854	3533459	430000
2003	818445	1617917	1356000	1352368	3650904	671000
2004	1067772	1537650	1311600	1818038	3204110	631000
2005	1090250	1513929	1902200	2027268	3223000	465832
2006	1122456	1762839	1663900	2043941	2032446	750000
2007	1209857	1215356	1664300	1744615	2551800	585291
2008	883943	1596955	1964522	1730000	2799000	539877
2009	1466891	1608996	1612000	1508000	2427500	911942
2010	1489815	1696270	1738042	1362563	2742000	1080556
2011	1711142	1675377	1812717	1538577	2372300	1101785
2012	584732	1650000	1572000	1385161	2699200	1074658
2013	1635880	1676758	1722500	1260893	2781200	997880
2014	1624186	1704528	1703500	1048268	2688200	1205202
2015	1671922	1676213	1570526	1570526	2652850	863818
2016	2586827	1674076	1622273	1161997	1946759	1157754
2017	3165084	1725367	1469874	1089603	2628600	1433944
2018	2654698	1685347	1826664	1191425	2318850	1086006

Source: FAOSTAT

Millet (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	5336	5695	5863	2034	5714	7172
2001	6343	5974	5263	2765	5481	7478
2002	5400	6105	2554	1070	5525	7489
2003	3421	6351	5402	2442	5441	5833
2004	3499	4643	5384	3140	5411	6743
2005	3707	3877	2720	1691	5375	7545
2006	3821	6516	3910	2899	5337	7501
2007	2937	7186	4709	2437	5329	4901
2008	2372	7245	2490	1917	5262	9732
2009	1455	6316	4495	2085	5205	8752
2010	2095	5115	4469	2145	5148	9447
2011	2988	7100	4541	1668	5000	10591
2012	958	7649	8038	1750	4815	9710
2013	1979	8053	2826	1857	4786	7076
2014	2197	8509	5751	3167	4894	8846
2015	2837	6648	3677	1244	4979	9119
2016	2405	3775	4420	1671	4951	6337
2017	2593	6340	4503	4488	4933	7117
2018	2154	5774	4512	1733	4916	7785

Source: FAOSTAT

Millet (production, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	105252	19508	31698	30993	12000	46875
2001	148016	20414	20000	43194	10783	46875
2002	161069	20900	12183	14163	10523	41192
2003	83090	24615	21609	41562	10269	3500
2004	123400	17349	18305	71740	10137	39800
2005	137864	15970	15285	30714	9452	29583
2006	144390	27037	22363	72312	9113	48159
2007	77089	32251	24815	49936	8706	21707
2008	27153	31869	14643	37000	8322	33934
2009	27974	26866	49000	40000	7981	48967
2010	40723	24495	48699	51123	7646	47997
2011	61226	32911	51602	35543	7000	41602
2012	18379	34543	43888	36478	6500	28445
2013	38603	39262	19722	37082	6700	23942
2014	43056	42202	29332	54515	6371	30504
2015	43746	33512	10916	17672	6012	31967
2016	42000	19510	19990	27461	5629	29972
2017	70000	35121	20079	62092	5328	32566
2018	51915	31315	16995	38473	5027	32278

Source: FAOSTAT

Millet (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	197231	34257	54064	152390	21000	65354
2001	233349	34169	38000	156189	19675	50298
2002	298293	34234	47700	132356	19046	55000
2003	242860	38758	40000	170167	18874	60000
2004	352710	37368	34000	228435	18736	59028
2005	371903	41192	56200	181659	17585	39210
2006	377892	41491	57200	249458	17075	64200
2007	262468	44878	52700	204884	16339	44294
2008	114470	43988	58800	193000	15815	34870
2009	192206	42538	109000	191873	15332	55951
2010	194381	47892	108980	238282	14851	50806
2011	204887	46351	113642	213046	14000	39282
2012	191876	45158	54600	208460	13500	29295
2013	195080	48756	69800	199719	14000	33834
2014	195934	49598	51000	172146	13020	34484
2015	154200	50407	29684	142054	12076	35054
2016	174605	51677	45225	164355	11371	47297
2017	270000	55392	44595	138363	10800	45761
2018	241059	54230	37665	222032	10225	41463

Source: FAOSTAT

Rice yield (unhusked, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	13454	16451	9816	20000	22988	11333
2001	13701	18576	9582	22077	22857	12562
2002	13198	16425	2789	22621	23563	12857
2003	13768	16212	9791	24138	23873	14091
2004	11584	11681	9604	23144	24180	13751
2005	6977	8424	2034	23160	24486	12864
2006	4947	17576	2729	24000	24781	9726
2007	5143	19481	2845	23055	25067	15126
2008	5084	18200	2836	22948	25346	13833
2009	6028	21259	9835	22855	25617	16390
2010	7403	22855	9835	22773	25882	16778
2011	8914	19125	11366	22702	26141	17974
2012	7703	18453	5589	22581	27273	17255
2013	12744	19174	2824	22581	26087	11617
2014	14064	19585	4137	22663	26734	14949
2015	15068	16946	5458	22689	27217	14248
2016	8062	15604	5902	22671	27399	12077
2017	9572	18662	4764	22656	27712	12992
2018	7175	17557	5902	22641	27905	14214

Source: FAOSTAT

Rice (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	4293	43523	184196	250	1305	12297
2001	3894	50146	174233	272	1400	9270
2002	3705	56029	334700	265	1273	10500
2003	7867	54393	120000	290	1340	11000
2004	11222	42568	95000	273	1292	12500
2005	12397	48993	317800	270	1274	10368
2006	7744	52031	357700	250	1258	14358
2007	9012	58091	362100	271	1316	12110
2008	16551	63124	310900	278	1184	17367
2009	23707	63967	182000	285	1197	25582
2010	23905	59098	226593	292	1184	30788
2011	26038	61559	238778	299	1173	27490
2012	27902	60132	363400	310	1100	26265
2013	29510	65275	403700	310	1150	38520
2014	30068	67400	376500	308	1133	33207
2015	30079	65761	234884	321	1120	17907
2016	75663	53676	205925	324	1108	22087
2017	65818	64881	230882	329	1094	29575
2018	78661	63971	227234	334	1084	30297

Source: FAOSTAT

Rice (production, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	5776	71601	180806	500	3000	13936
2001	5335	93150	166945	600	3200	11645
2002	4890	92027	93362	598	3000	13500
2003	10831	88184	117491	700	3200	15500
2004	13000	49722	91242	632	3123	17189
2005	8650	41270	64634	625	3119	13337
2006	3831	91450	97610	600	3118	13964
2007	4635	114885	88177	625	3300	18317
2008	8414	114885	88177	637	3000	24023
2009	14291	135988	179000	650	3067	41929
2010	19697	110106	257527	664	3064	51656
2011	23209	117733	271402	678	3067	49410
2012	21492	110964	203102	700	3000	45321
2013	37608	125156	114012	700	3000	44747
2014	42288	132002	155741	699	3030	49640
2015	45322	111437	128197	729	3048	25514
2016	61000	83757	121530	735	3036	26675
2017	63000	121079	110000	745	3031	38523
2018	56441	112313	134105	755	3026	43063

Source: FAOSTAT

Sorghum (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	3333	6687	5798	3983	33246	7700
2001	3571	6804	5738	5117	23429	7713
2002	3400	7197	3954	2652	34286	7637
2003	2941	7620	5781	5544	27226	5486
2004	3333	6446	5663	6193	28692	5797
2005	3333	2656	2980	2726	30058	8588
2006	4091	7688	4961	4091	25841	6013
2007	4031	8593	4314	3332	25507	6589
2008	929	8314	3291	2577	29378	2976
2009	2480	7968	6224	3246	32339	6777
2010	2814	6094	6089	2702	22671	9593
2011	3320	8184	6412	2267	22399	8223
2012	998	8335	4532	2046	27806	9787
2013	2415	9647	3572	3066	23507	6478
2014	2421	10119	5254	4589	33651	8234
2015	2503	8452	4178	2412	17092	8043
2016	2349	5887	4500	1907	14536	5288
2017	2293	8696	4762	7205	35891	6311
2018	2329	7798	4885	4154	39931	6513

Source: FAOSTAT

Seed cotton (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	9900	9048	3294	8566	13650	11286
2001	13500	7949	4475	7287	16158	11500
2002	14859	8550	4812	4832	12144	12000
2003	15738	9254	4657	8176	18219	12099
2004	16516	8445	4712	10981	20074	11500
2005	17291	5688	4720	6677	24863	10963
2006	18200	9411	4706	7814	21662	11843
2007	18000	10431	4722	6424	27710	18831
2008	17500	10993	4725	8094	28713	15061
2009	18000	8657	4725	7262	33337	14000
2010	17000	6178	4769	7540	40687	12577
2011	18000	8798	5926	5689	35260	10775
2012	18333	9684	9153	6913	34697	8569
2013	18333	8608	4717	7253	20608	8108
2014	18333	8866	6178	5715	31691	9634
2015	18333	6445	4098	3821	32907	8193
2016	18333	4006	4323	3235	38747	8634
2017	18333	7189	4983	6148	23510	8476
2018	18333	5434	5169	5625	27498	8254

Source: FAOSTAT

Seed cotton (area, hectares)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	10000	40372	105655	282469	51000	54937
2001	2000	47327	240000	384574	56692	60000
2002	2000	46773	266000	401897	38688	66000
2003	2000	43706	175000	195077	22574	81000
2004	2000	63447	295000	331716	35719	100000
2005	2000	88535	348500	294000	21763	129667
2006	2000	62233	348500	266084	18114	100000
2007	2000	60673	360000	348696	10563	74347
2008	2000	69826	400000	425000	9221	83658
2009	2000	83830	400000	325000	6814	97144
2010	2000	47209	130000	198824	5111	85073
2011	3000	59616	189000	246559	13145	121857
2012	3000	252130	189000	358410	9397	314490
2013	3000	184513	142857	195072	6827	172160
2014	3000	149259	157000	130690	7458	124888
2015	3000	123019	120000	112066	15428	126803
2016	3000	78474	101000	101660	7039	129599
2017	3000	41097	104363	66492	17841	105352
2018	3000	44183	93400	69088	37000	106881

Source: FAOSTAT

Seed cotton (production quantity, tons)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	9900	36527	34800	241964	69614	62000
2001	2700	37622	107400	280254	91603	69000
2002	2972	39992	128000	194189	46984	79200
2003	3148	40446	81500	159497	41127	98000
2004	3303	53581	139000	364266	71701	115000
2005	3458	50363	118000	196300	54110	142160
2006	3640	58569	164000	207912	39239	118426
2007	3600	63290	170000	223996	29270	140000
2008	3500	76761	189000	344000	26476	126000
2009	3600	72572	189000	236000	22716	136000
2010	3400	29165	62000	149907	20795	107000
2011	5400	52448	112000	140267	46349	131298
2012	5500	244154	173000	247752	32605	269501
2013	5500	158826	67392	141478	14069	139583
2014	5500	132337	97000	74693	23635	120314
2015	5500	79289	49174	42823	50769	103889
2016	5500	31439	43661	32888	27274	111902
2017	5500	29545	52000	40882	41945	89293
2018	5500	24010	48278	38864	101741	88219

Source: FAOSTAT

Soybeans (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	2333		22328	16412	17067
2001	2500		21996	16862	6043
2002	2857		16466	17962	11250
2003	3250	7593	16226	13634	12000
2004	3600	6447	17314	16296	12973
2005	3793	5797	13549	18167	16371
2006	4286	7639	14908	17625	13708
2007	6883	8972	17566	11202	16013
2008	8575	8722	16129	17050	18642
2009	4449	9804	15000	21703	18893
2010	4446	9757	13557	18173	18409
2011	5294	9977	12054	16986	19427
2012	1641	10433	15300	13771	23941
2013	4405	9791	13142	15189	20909
2014	5840	10843	11767	18851	18827
2015	6513	8701	9459	15568	20196
2016	4387	8846	11958	14757	19409
2017	4380	11051	15139	22929	15594
2018	4385	9813	15000	19563	15772

Source: FAOSTAT

Sugar cane (yield, hectograms per hectare)

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zimbabwe	South Africa	Zambia
2000	372340	1050000	147139	960795	739525	1066667
2001	378947	1073171	187673	1130426	649563	1052632
2002	378947	1083333	453217	945442	716380	1045455
2003	378947	1024390	510737	1007333	626432	1045455
2004	379121	1050000	506287	936591	604245	1044444
2005	379121	1090909	641996	788204	660244	1045455
2006	375000	1088889	624338	846776	663567	1020833
2007	384615	1086957	643958	814263	641679	1012500
2008	385185	1100000	680881	731087	670033	1051282
2009	384615	1083333	580789	646403	670725	1049180
2010	385615	1086957	70946	662027	590809	1060606
2011	392308	1086957	795357	714019	664557	1060606
2012	385185	1037037	739139	734595	672050	1000000
2013	392308	1074074	686039	849694	753292	1025641
2014	390832	1078925	781785	894228	650553	1033212
2015	392506	1079706	689517	776906	574931	1033269
2016	390276	1075529	652668	800690	603177	1028169
2017	390548	1076336	673271	800368	684811	1026757
2018	391776	1077142	740952	810336	675451	1025352

Source: FAOSTAT

Share of total credit to agriculture, forestry and fishing

	Angola	Malawi	Mozambique	Zambia
2000			19,07	
2001			17,87	
2002			15,57	22,23
2003		9,97	12,36	24,66
2004		12,11	10,69	30,25
2005		9,89	8,66	27,15
2006		15,25	6,39	27,16
2007		16,27	9,4	21,02
2008		19,9	8,05	16,22
2009	1,79	10,48	6,99	19,32
2010	2	11,05	6,67	17,6
2011	1,7	21,59	5,3	17,6
2012	2,92	14,89	5,15	22,57
2013	2,97	21	3,75	19,7
2014	4,33	20,25	2,11	16,55
2015	5	26,94	3,6	17,27
2016	6,35	19,8	3,97	17,15
2017	6,08	23,62	3,64	20,33
2018	5,35	12,69	3,55	16,93

Source: FAOSTAT

Appendix 6 NGO and CSO data

Registered NGOs and CSOs (1996-2018)

Year	National	International	Religious	Foundation	TOTAL
1994	42	44	—		
1996					22
1997					
1998					
1999					
2000	340	100			
2001	365	95			
2002					
2003					
2004					
2005	78	97	15		
2006	78	97	15		190
2007	124	88	15	8	235
2008	448	115			
2009					
2010	192	88	27	13	
2011					
2012	202	63	26	11	
2013					
2014	228	73			
2015	343				
2016	252	60			
2017	309	55	29		
2018	400	37	33	7	

Source: Cunha (2019), Dow (1994), UNDP (2018), UTCAN (2006, 2011, 2013), Tallio (2017), Tvedten (1993: 30, 2001: 31), USAID (2017), Vines, Shaxson & Rimil (2005b: 7).

NNGOs and INGOs registered per province, per year

	2006		Total	2007		Total	2010		Total	2012		Total	2015
	NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGOs & INGOs combined
Bengo	5	9	14	7	4	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Benguela	3	20	23	7	17	24	12	3	15	14	2	16	37
Bié	7	6	13	3	6	9	3	1	4	3	1	4	18
Cabinda	2	5	7	4	3	7	3	0	3	3	0	3	6
Cunene	1	6	7	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Cuando Cubango	1	7	8	3	4	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Cuanza Norte	2	7	9	4	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Cuanza Sul	4	12	16	3	4	7	0	1	1	1	0	1	3
Huambo	6	13	19	7	12	19	1	5	6	1	4	5	9
Huíla	4	24	28	2	8	10	2	3	5	0	1	1	34
Lunda Norte	0	3	3	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
Lunda Sul	3	8	11	6	6	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Luanda	55	56	111	88	63	151	153	65	218	156	50	206	159
Malanje	2	12	14	5	9	14	2	2	4	2	0	2	5
Moxico	4	12	16	3	8	11	1	1	2	1	0	1	11
Namibe	1	5	6	2	2	4	1	1	2	6	1	7	15
Uíge	4	10	14	3	8	11	1	0	1	1	0	1	15
Zaire	2	11	13	5	7	12	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
TOTAL	106	226	332	155	166	321	180	82	262	188	59	247	373

Source: UTCAH (2006, 2007, 2011, 2013), PAANE (2015)

NNGOs and INGOs registered per principal activity, per year

	2006		Total	2007		Total	2010		Total	2012		Total	2015
	NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGO	INGO		NGOs (combined)
Health	48	54	102	76	55	131	72	30	102	118	37	155	114
Education	53	33	86	87	35	122	81	22	103	135	22	157	95
Culture	2	1	3	20	4	24	11	1	12	20	1	21	8
Demining	7	11	18	11	13	24	9	8	17	11	8	19	6
Human Rights	25	18	43	46	15	61	35	15	50	63	11	74	54
Emergency	8	11	19	11	17	28	10	7	17	12	6	18	1
Agriculture	42	24	66	63	26	89	57	19	76	83	19	102	33
Social Services	25	24	49	44	23	67	36	20	56	72	16	88	22
Community Development	17	14	31	34	15	49	16	9	25	29	13	42	19
Institutional Reinforcement	2	8	10	8	10	18	5	6	11	7	7	14	4
Revenue Generator	10	6	16	7	7	14	11	3	14	0	0	0	5
Environmental Protection	1	1	2	5	1	6	2	1	3	8	1	9	7
Sport	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Source: UTCAH (2006, 2007, 2011, 2013), PAANE (2015)

Appendix 7 Agricultural sector spending and Ministry of Agriculture budget

Allocation and execution of the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture (2005-2014)

Year	Allocated	Executed	Unused
2005	1,51	0,85	43,3
2006	0,65	0,57	12,3
2007	1,49	1,15	22,8
2008	1,26	0,14	88,8
2009	1,92	0,36	81,2
2010	1,25	0,83	33,6
2011	0,95	0,93	2,1
2012	1,45	0,79	45,5
2013	1,06	0,98	7,75
2014	0,59	0,27	54,2

Source: FAO, as cited by Jelembi (2016: 9). Unused budget calculations are mine.

Budget for Ministry of Agriculture (2000-2020) (in US\$ millions)

Year	Value (in US dollars)	Value (in kwanzas)
2000	34.49	760.88
2001	24.01	1045.19
2002	36.16	2697.86
2003	70.83	5916.86
2004	143.37	12495.72
2005	269.87	21688.79
2006	389.6	29884.4
2007	572.71	42972.16
2008	184.11	14605.34
2009	334.41	30734.48
2010	421.96	39636.6
2011	377.99	36085.68
2012	608.04	58687.24
2013	387.31	38073.35
2014	205.12	24627.19
2015	159.83	26157.59
2016	118.82	19714.93
2017	106.55	26942.07
2018	334.41	760.88
2019	34.49	1045.19
2020	24.01	2697.86

Source: FAOSTAT, World Bank database.

Agricultural sector in total GDP & budget allocation

Year	AG budget (%)	GDP (%)	AG, forestry & fisheries as % of GDP
2000	0,8	3	5,6
2001	2	4,2	8,1
2002	0,65	13,6	5,8
2003	0,53	2,99	6,2
2004	0,73	10,95	6,25
2005	1,51	15	5
2006	0,65	11,5	5,2
2007	2	14	5,24
2008	1,7	11,16	4,8
2009	1,5	0,86	6,6
2010	0,9	4,8	6,18
2011	0,9	3,4	5,8
2012	0,8	8,5	6
2013	1,1	4,9	6,5
2014	0,6	4,8	7,5
2015	0,6	0,94	9,12
2016	0,5	-2,5	9,8
2017	0,4	-0,14	10
2018	0,3	-2,1	8,6
2019	0,3	-0,87	
2020	3,1		

Source: Alves (2019), Jelembi (2016: 9), NEPAD (2005: 26), Paulo (2018: 1), Sousa (2019), UNDP (2005: 44), World Bank database.

Appendix 8 OMUNGA election propaganda (I)







Source: OMUNGA (2017)

Appendix 9 OMUNGA election propaganda (II)







Source: OMUNGA (2017).

Appendix 10 *Reconciliation mission of Father Benedicto Sánchez*

OS SETE CAMINHOS DA RECONCILIAÇÃO

PREÂMBULO: A vida missionária nas aldeias.

O anúncio de Deus:

Como o Senhor levou-me a saborear
a riqueza do Evangelho na vida missionária.

PRIMEIRO CAMINHO: OS ANA A ITUNGU

- **A ternura de Deus:** como o Senhor mostrou-me as primeiras sementes da reconciliação, por meio de vós, quando ainda éreis crianças.

SEGUNDO CAMINHO: O DIÁLOGO NO CAMINHO

- **Conhecimento de Deus:** como o Senhor levou-me ao vosso encontro por meio dos nossos diálogos pelos caminhos.

TERCEIRO CAMINHO: AS VISTAS NA MISSÃO

- **A amizade com Deus:** como o Senhor foi iluminando os vossos corações fazendo-vos crescer na vossa vida natural para conduzir-vos na busca espiritual.

QUARTO CAMINHO: O CONVÍVIO NAS UNIDADES

- **A proximidade de Deus:** como o Senhor fortaleceu o meu espírito, levando-me a penetrar pelas portas das vossas unidades com o desejo de ir ao vosso encontro.

QUINTO CAMINHO: AS VISITAS ÀS CASAS (a casa do soldado)

- **A humanidade de Deus:** como o Senhor levou-me a entrar nos vossos lares como o lugar mais sagrado das vossas vidas: o encontro com os vossos filhos e esposas.

SEXTO CAMINHO: AS PALESTRAS (encontros, conferências e convívios)

- **A festa de Deus:** como o Senhor guiou os meus passos levando-me aos lugares mais longínquos, ao encontro de todos vós para celebrar a alegria de Deus.

SÉTIMO CAMINHO: A RECONCILIAÇÃO

- **A intimidade com Deus:** como o Senhor, ao final do *Caminho*, estava a esperar por nós para oferecer-nos as suas divinas promessas: seu perdão, seu amor e a sua Reconciliação.



**KUTULULUKA
KU ANA A ITUNGU**

O CAMINHO ESPIRITUAL DA RECONCILIAÇÃO

Preâmbulo: A VIDA MISSIONÁRIA NAS ALDEIAS

Quando chegava à porta da capela, os cristãos, recebiam-me cantando e dançando manifestando a sua alegria pela chega do Missionário. Crianças, jovens e mais velhos entoavam um hino de louvor: A visita às aldeias era o dia da santidade.

Primeiro Caminho: OS ANA AITUNGU

O maior bem que recebiam as crianças de "Ana a Itungu" nos encontros que costumávamos celebrar, era de pertencer a uma nova família; desta maneira saíam da solidão e do abandono, sentindo-se acolhidos pela Missão como filhos de Deus e da Santa Mãe Igreja

Segundo Caminho: DIÁLOGO NO CAMINHO

Os caminhos, foram os lugares onde iniciamos os primeiros diálogos. Num princípio não foi nada fácil mas, com o passar do tempo as nossas animadas conversas romperam os muros da desconfiança para iniciar a nossa primeira amizade.

Terceiro caminho: AS VISITAS NA MISSÃO

Familiarizados com as primeiras visitas, a Missão converteu-se num lugar de peregrinação onde chegáveis individualmente ou na companhia do vosso melhor amigo para dialogar e para desafogar as inquietações da vossa vida.

Quarto Caminho: CONVÍVIO NAS UNIDADES

Foi dialogando e caminhando na vossa companhia como Deus conseguiu romper a "moldura" de separação que existia entre nós: Ele, sempre esteve muito perto de nós.

Quinto Caminho: AS VISITAS NAS CASAS

Ser recebido nos vossos lares foi a maior glória no Caminho da Reconciliação. Na convivência familiar com os vossos filhos e as vossas esposas, era motivo de alegria para vós e uma grande felicidade para mim.

Sexto Caminho: AS PALESTRAS

O que mais apreciava na Palestra era o vosso silêncio; escutáveis com tanta atenção os benefícios da Reconciliação que, os meus desejos eram de continuar falando sem parar: A vossa radiante presença transmitia-me uma paz celestial.

Sétimo Caminho: A RECONCILIAÇÃO

O maior benefício que recebleis no colóquio penitencial, era o alívio que sentíeis no vosso interior depois de ter "expulsado" os males que leváveis dentro de vós. A seguir, ficáveis em silêncio olhando para o chão, derramando lágrimas de felicidade.

(Padre Benedicto Sánchez – Missionário Espiritano)

Source: Father Benedicto Sánchez, Catholic priest, member of the *Espiritanos* community

Index

- abandon, 27, 28, 45,
171, 174, 222, 333,
432, 458, 461, 480,
481, 495
- ACC, 9, 10, 120, 155,
328, 354, 355, 356,
372, 374, 383, 386,
418, 429, 442, 489
- ACORD, 10, 50, 340,
368, 372, 375, 376,
377, 378, 379, 380,
385, 386, 388, 390,
393, 423, 424, 425,
428, 450, 496
- ADRA, 9, 10, 30, 31,
50, 56, 61, 72, 113,
117, 119, 120, 131,
137, 153, 165, 216,
217, 304, 319, 328,
337, 340, 341, 342,
346, 350, 354, 355,
356, 368, 372, 374,
375, 377, 378, 379,
383, 385, 386, 388,
389, 390, 392, 393,
394, 395, 416, 417,
419, 422, 423, 424,
425, 428, 429, 447,
496, 533
- Agostinho Neto, 69, 74,
111, 116, 124, 125,
144, 184, 185, 195,
196, 209, 216, 217,
220, 225, 273, 279,
306, 432, 501, 559
- agricultural goods, 97,
123, 191, 199, 201,
202, 247, 363
- agro-business, 168, 371,
521, 559, 560
- AJPD, 10, 355, 356,
445, 446
- Aldeia Nova, 271, 571
- ALSSA, 10, 372, 374,
379, 385, 386, 390,
418, 423, 424, 426,
427, 428, 489, 496
- Aslak Orre, 64, 130,
157, 300, 414, 415
- Benguela, 55, 57, 97,
101, 102, 107, 108,
113, 117, 133, 134,
154, 179, 204, 214,
229, 260, 265, 270,
284, 285, 302, 305,
308, 319, 323, 324,
325, 326, 327, 328,
335, 341, 348, 352,
357, 374, 389, 396,
415, 416, 435, 440,
442, 446, 480, 490,
513, 517, 520, 549,
704
- bourgeoisie, 29, 75, 81,
85, 99, 112, 115, 143,
162, 183, 186, 213,
216, 362, 365, 499,
512
- Brazil, 93, 108, 112,
180, 248, 259, 282,
286, 568
- Bulgaria, 22, 217, 282,
338
- CACS, 11, 298, 299,
300, 341, 429
- Calabeto, 240, 256, 257,
462, 472, 527, 528,
529
- Campanha Terra*, 22,
401, 403, 404, 405,
406
- CASA-CE, 513, 514,
515, 516
- Catholic Church, 19, 31,
117, 290, 301, 303,
309, 341, 348, 352,
355, 361, 372, 380,
384, 393, 402, 429,
490, 537
- CBO, 11
- CEAST, 11, 288, 290,
340, 344, 357
- CEIC, 12, 46, 68, 240,
243, 244, 251, 253,
438, 506
- Cesaltina Abreu, 116,
118, 276, 333
- China, 11, 12, 71, 77,
125, 193, 239, 240,
241, 278, 282, 286,
459, 465, 466, 467,
469, 482, 561, 565,
566, 567, 574
- CIA, 12, 126, 209, 266,
278, 279, 281, 307,
510, 537, 538
- civil society, 22, 23, 26,
32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 43,
66, 67, 75, 76, 77,
112, 116, 117, 118,
121, 122, 123, 139,
140, 160, 161, 162,
163, 164, 165, 166,
167, 177, 179, 182,

197, 274, 275, 276,
 277, 286, 287, 290,
 296, 297, 299, 300,
 301, 302, 305, 306,
 312, 317, 319, 332,
 333, 336, 337, 338,
 339, 341, 342, 344,
 345, 346, 347, 348,
 349, 350, 351, 352,
 353, 358, 359, 360,
 363, 364, 365, 374,
 375, 379, 380, 383,
 388, 390, 391, 393,
 394, 401, 402, 403,
 405, 406, 408, 410,
 411, 412, 413, 414,
 417, 421, 422, 428,
 430, 435, 445, 446,
 453, 486, 496, 521,
 536, 537, 538, 539
 civil war, 27, 36, 37, 41,
 44, 58, 60, 67, 68, 74,
 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81,
 99, 104, 106, 110,
 111, 113, 114, 116,
 117, 120, 121, 123,
 124, 126, 127, 135,
 136, 142, 145, 146,
 147, 148, 152, 153,
 154, 156, 158, 164,
 172, 179, 180, 182,
 183, 184, 185, 197,
 200, 209, 219, 220,
 221, 223, 225, 227,
 232, 233, 234, 235,
 252, 262, 263, 264,
 267, 268, 269, 270,
 273, 274, 275, 276,
 277, 278, 279, 284,
 285, 286, 287, 289,
 291, 297, 307, 308,
 312, 313, 330, 338,
 339, 343, 344, 345,
 346, 358, 367, 382,
 401, 404, 413, 425,
 433, 465, 503, 515,
 519, 543, 547
 CLUSA, 12, 373, 440,
 441
 coffee, 26, 82, 86, 93,
 95, 97, 99, 102, 103,
 104, 138, 180, 197,
 204, 223, 224, 228,
 376, 470, 547, 548,
 549, 556
 Cold War, 233, 264,
 278, 281, 287
 collaboration, 23, 35,
 117, 121, 122, 290,
 303, 315, 338, 339,
 340, 343, 344, 346,
 353, 357, 376, 383,
 387, 404, 411, 412,
 422, 440, 441, 534,
 539, 554
 cooperative, 22, 23, 68,
 70, 114, 183, 208,
 209, 210, 212, 214,
 215, 216, 217, 218,
 274, 364, 441, 449,
 450, 451, 453, 454,
 455, 531, 558, 562,
 563, 564
 cotton, 24, 26, 81, 85,
 90, 95, 97, 98, 99,
 100, 101, 102, 180,
 197, 204, 224, 463,
 526, 552, 553, 697,
 698, 699
 countryside, 26, 27, 29,
 31, 32, 33, 37, 39, 40,
 42, 49, 60, 63, 69, 71,
 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78,
 79, 81, 85, 107, 109,
 112, 113, 123, 128,
 129, 139, 141, 143,
 148, 154, 160, 165,
 168, 172, 174, 175,
 176, 177, 180, 183,
 185, 186, 188, 191,
 193, 200, 205, 209,
 219, 233, 234, 240,
 263, 265, 272, 273,
 274, 275, 276, 277,
 284, 286, 298, 299,
 310, 336, 379, 430,
 432, 436, 447, 465,
 480, 482, 485, 503,
 504, 541
 CSO, 12, 22, 34, 35, 75,
 118, 197, 275, 284,
 307, 335, 336, 339,
 352, 386, 432, 434,
 436, 446, 494, 496,
 703
 Cuanza Sul, 11, 20, 55,
 57, 82, 86, 97, 101,
 102, 107, 109, 113,
 114, 132, 134, 204,
 210, 248, 270, 271,
 325, 328, 341, 348,
 357, 369, 410, 416,
 418, 463, 704
 Cuba, 256, 278, 279,
 280, 282, 338
 Cunene, 9, 52, 55, 56,
 61, 87, 107, 133, 155,
 167, 206, 214, 246,
 260, 280, 319, 325,
 328, 367, 372, 374,
 377, 379, 383, 395,
 416, 470, 471, 474,
 476, 479, 480, 481,
 482, 490, 541, 551,
 565, 569, 704
 DDR, 13, 270, 271,
 366, 367
 Development Workshop
 DW, 9, 13, 54, 61,
 119, 165, 211, 301,
 302, 303, 308, 340,
 341, 343, 344, 382,
 388, 393, 394, 396,
 409
 Didier Péclard, 117, 123

economic diversification, 30, 42, 50, 132, 185, 251, 252, 263, 364, 498, 499, 541, 556, 557, 562, 574
 EDA, 13, 131, 210, 258, 260, 376
 elite, 27, 29, 38, 41, 42, 62, 63, 72, 78, 81, 85, 110, 113, 119, 120, 121, 127, 151, 155, 157, 158, 159, 160, 163, 164, 183, 188, 234, 253, 269, 274, 278, 280, 282, 292, 302, 338, 354, 356, 357, 362, 363, 365, 371, 393, 408, 413, 425, 431, 445, 464, 466, 467, 483, 487, 488, 489, 496, 497, 499, 500, 501, 517, 526, 529, 534, 536, 554
Espiritanos, 117, 270, 348, 372, 429, 513
 FAO, 14, 40, 44, 46, 47, 59, 75, 121, 131, 132, 137, 138, 165, 230, 237, 242, 243, 244, 248, 270, 338, 340, 341, 342, 352, 372, 374, 376, 380, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 390, 391, 397, 402, 403, 406, 422, 425, 427, 440, 485, 553, 554, 564, 565, 706
 FAS, 14, 297, 298, 300, 346, 380
 Fernando Pacheco, 44, 83, 113, 119, 124, 133, 137, 162, 241, 285, 302, 304, 316, 335, 336, 337, 356, 362, 375, 378, 384, 393, 410, 415, 419, 554
 FESA, 14, 484, 485
 FNLA, 14, 36, 62, 85, 113, 196, 197, 263, 264, 265, 278, 279, 281, 301, 397, 516, 520
 FONGA, 14, 303, 304, 305, 312, 332, 340, 341, 346, 352, 388, 417
 FRESCANGOL, 14, 462
 FSDEA, 14, 245, 312, 470, 472, 473, 474, 475, 477, 478, 481, 485, 511, 552
 Gambos, 12, 22, 47, 50, 51, 53, 56, 59, 60, 61, 70, 76, 154, 155, 160, 364, 366, 368, 371, 372, 377, 378, 379, 380, 384, 385, 386, 387, 390, 400, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 442, 464, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 521, 535
 Gesterra, 23, 173, 174, 256, 257, 456, 462, 469, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 480, 481, 527, 570, 571
 grassroots elite, 23, 36, 119, 158, 276, 354, 355, 371, 378, 392, 393, 397, 414, 428, 488
 groupness, 32, 74, 169
 Huambo, 53, 55, 57, 83, 97, 107, 108, 113, 131, 133, 134, 200, 214, 246, 248, 260, 264, 265, 267, 268, 270, 284, 285, 298, 308, 319, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 335, 340, 341, 348, 357, 375, 387, 396, 399, 704
 Huíla, 9, 10, 11, 20, 22, 23, 47, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 69, 70, 76, 87, 107, 114, 117, 119, 132, 133, 155, 160, 167, 168, 175, 210, 214, 246, 260, 270, 284, 285, 305, 319, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 335, 340, 342, 344, 352, 353, 357, 364, 367, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 386, 387, 390, 395, 396, 400, 401, 402, 406, 410, 414, 415, 416, 418, 419, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 429, 430, 447, 457, 459, 460, 462, 480, 490, 491, 495, 535, 541, 549, 704
 Huíla Land Network, 50, 373, 375, 379, 383, 384, 401, 406, 410, 414, 419, 421, 422, 423, 425, 427
 Human Rights, 11, 15, 83, 120, 352, 355, 356, 357, 358, 429, 446, 705

- IDA, 15, 45, 131, 133,
226, 239, 258, 259,
260, 261, 376, 526,
564
- IFAD, 15, 75, 130, 131,
213, 241, 342, 441
- IMF, 47, 75, 77, 285,
291, 293, 338, 540,
561, 565, 566, 567,
570
- Inge Amundsen, 116,
117, 118, 276
- Inge Ruigrok, 119, 276,
354
- Inge Tvedten, 124, 285,
287, 302, 306, 311,
335
- INGO, 16, 24, 45, 54,
293, 303, 316, 322,
324, 327, 329, 330,
332, 335, 340, 343,
373, 375, 382, 436,
704, 705
- IPROCAC, 16, 300,
315, 316, 317, 438,
444
- João Lourenço, 42, 50,
77, 132, 133, 138,
139, 240, 248, 255,
257, 262, 263, 358,
364, 397, 422, 452,
453, 455, 457, 461,
472, 478, 479, 481,
486, 487, 488, 494,
496, 497, 499, 500,
501, 502, 503, 509,
513, 515, 516, 520,
521, 522, 523, 524,
525, 526, 527, 529,
531, 534, 537, 539,
540, 541, 554, 555,
558, 559, 561, 564,
565, 566, 574, 575,
576
- Jonas Savimbi, 36, 106,
113, 145, 146, 196,
266, 273, 277, 280,
301, 465
- José Eduardo dos
Santos, 27, 50, 66, 69,
74, 76, 77, 111, 128,
163, 176, 183, 215,
220, 227, 235, 251,
252, 257, 263, 271,
273, 286, 288, 313,
319, 350, 366, 388,
397, 408, 412, 432,
436, 440, 449, 452,
455, 468, 472, 477,
484, 486, 487, 488,
500, 501, 503, 504,
509, 512, 523, 525,
539, 542, 554, 559,
574
- Kahl, 74, 168, 169
- Land Law, 31, 49, 76,
121, 164, 194, 340,
345, 371, 379, 382,
388, 391, 392, 394,
395, 396, 397, 399,
401, 404, 405, 407,
408, 410, 412, 413,
417, 427, 430, 453
- Manquete, 470, 471,
474, 476, 477, 480,
481, 482, 483, 551,
565, 569
- Marxist-Leninist, 25, 38,
74, 111, 115, 118,
121, 126, 144, 184,
193, 195, 197, 218,
233, 235, 279, 572
- Mecanagro, 16, 239,
240, 263, 456, 461,
462, 527
- Messiant, 82, 90, 92,
103, 104, 115, 148,
279, 281, 350, 432
- MINAGRIF, 17, 240,
254, 258, 259, 512,
527, 528, 529, 530,
531, 533, 534, 555,
557
- MINARS, 17, 67, 230,
311, 314, 315, 340,
352, 438, 532
- MINFAMU, 17, 226,
254, 255, 258, 261,
530, 532, 533
- Ministry of Agriculture,
16, 17, 23, 37, 45, 72,
130, 131, 138, 170,
173, 186, 201, 210,
212, 214, 215, 226,
227, 228, 231, 234,
237, 240, 243, 244,
245, 252, 253, 254,
255, 256, 257, 258,
259, 261, 271, 343,
352, 356, 361, 376,
378, 397, 441, 452,
453, 462, 469, 470,
471, 474, 477, 478,
479, 480, 502, 526,
527, 529, 530, 531,
533, 549, 555, 557,
558, 564, 706
- Mosaiko, 341, 346, 354,
355, 357, 389, 393,
417
- MOSAP, 17, 130, 132
- Movimento Popular de
Libertação de Angola*
(MPLA)
Popular Movement for
the Liberation of
Angola, 28
- Mozambique, 76, 80, 83,
100, 138, 156, 195,
201, 341, 378, 384,
397, 401, 402, 404,
405, 413, 443, 542,
544, 545, 546, 547,
550, 551, 679, 680,

681, 682, 683, 684,
 685, 686, 687, 688,
 689, 690, 691, 692,
 693, 694, 695, 696,
 697, 698, 699, 701,
 702
 MPLA, 17, 28, 29, 32,
 36, 37, 38, 40, 42, 44,
 48, 50, 61, 62, 63, 65,
 66, 74, 76, 78, 79, 82,
 93, 104, 106, 107,
 108, 110, 111, 112,
 113, 114, 115, 118,
 119, 121, 122, 123,
 125, 126, 128, 129,
 135, 136, 139, 140,
 141, 142, 143, 144,
 145, 146, 147, 148,
 149, 150, 151, 152,
 155, 156, 158, 163,
 164, 166, 168, 174,
 175, 176, 178, 179,
 183, 184, 185, 188,
 189, 191, 192, 193,
 195, 196, 197, 198,
 199, 206, 208, 210,
 211, 215, 218, 219,
 220, 222, 224, 225,
 231, 232, 233, 234,
 235, 237, 239, 241,
 251, 252, 256, 261,
 262, 263, 264, 265,
 266, 267, 268, 271,
 272, 273, 275, 276,
 277, 278, 279, 280,
 281, 282, 283, 284,
 285, 292, 293, 299,
 301, 302, 303, 305,
 306, 309, 310, 311,
 312, 315, 322, 332,
 333, 339, 345, 347,
 356, 358, 359, 362,
 364, 375, 378, 388,
 391, 393, 397, 408,
 412, 416, 422, 428,
 429, 432, 433, 434,
 435, 440, 442, 443,
 455, 465, 468, 472,
 482, 486, 487, 488,
 492, 501, 503, 507,
 509, 513, 514, 515,
 516, 518, 520, 523,
 524, 525, 526, 536,
 539, 554, 561, 573,
 574
 Nelson Pestana, 274
 NEPAD, 17, 213, 236,
 237, 238, 239, 244,
 246, 247, 251, 707
 NGO, 17, 22, 34, 37,
 61, 65, 67, 68, 72, 75,
 108, 113, 118, 120,
 136, 154, 155, 160,
 164, 167, 174, 197,
 215, 242, 275, 284,
 294, 296, 297, 302,
 303, 305, 307, 308,
 311, 312, 313, 315,
 316, 317, 320, 323,
 324, 328, 329, 332,
 333, 334, 335, 336,
 337, 340, 345, 347,
 349, 352, 355, 356,
 357, 358, 368, 371,
 372, 374, 375, 378,
 380, 383, 385, 388,
 389, 390, 393, 402,
 404, 405, 414, 415,
 416, 419, 421, 423,
 424, 426, 428, 429,
 430, 432, 434, 435,
 436, 437, 439, 440,
 441, 442, 443, 444,
 445, 446, 447, 448,
 468, 491, 496, 513,
 517, 520, 536, 554,
 703, 704, 705
 Non-State Actors, 18,
 29, 35, 37, 50, 61, 74,
 141, 166, 231, 295,
 296, 313, 315, 340,
 345, 503
 Nuno Vidal, 122, 164,
 205, 287, 296, 306,
 441
 OMUNGA, 22, 356, 358,
 442, 513, 517, 519,
 708, 710, 711, 713
 opportunity perspective,
 32, 74, 154, 178
 Ovimbundu, 62, 113,
 231, 263, 269
 PAANE, 18, 296, 299,
 300, 316, 317, 319,
 320, 321, 353, 704,
 705
 Padre Pio, 70, 76, 118,
 120, 155, 175, 354,
 355, 366, 372, 374,
 385, 400, 428, 429,
 442, 488, 490, 491,
 492, 494, 498
 PAPAGRO, 18, 249,
 456
 peasant, 25, 33, 37, 38,
 57, 58, 68, 70, 76,
 101, 114, 131, 140,
 166, 170, 183, 186,
 188, 197, 199, 202,
 210, 212, 213, 214,
 215, 218, 225, 228,
 234, 241, 260, 261,
 269, 272, 306, 331,
 370, 371, 372, 375,
 376, 377, 378, 380,
 382, 415, 418, 421,
 425, 450, 451, 453,
 454, 456, 461, 463,
 465, 479, 482, 491,
 510, 532, 550, 562,
 564
 peasant association, 425,
 491
 peasantry, 25, 26, 28,
 38, 40, 53, 63, 70, 73,

- 77, 104, 110, 114,
127, 131, 140, 168,
174, 176, 184, 193,
207, 208, 213, 218,
223, 228, 232, 241,
242, 259, 260, 333,
362, 370, 371, 377,
414, 432, 434, 435,
447, 449, 452, 455,
464, 483, 485, 496,
498, 499, 503, 505,
510, 511, 521, 554,
556, 557, 559, 561,
565
- PEDR, 376
- peripheral spaces, 28,
73, 94, 185, 193, 209,
218, 219, 277, 336,
463, 503, 505, 532,
559, 574
- political economy, 29,
32, 39, 40, 41, 42, 57,
74, 77, 94, 109, 114,
115, 121, 123, 125,
127, 143, 167, 178,
180, 181, 182, 183,
184, 207, 256, 468
- Portugal, 49, 82, 83, 85,
87, 88, 91, 92, 93, 94,
95, 96, 98, 99, 100,
101, 102, 108, 109,
115, 193, 195, 196,
282, 340, 341, 344,
352, 393, 394, 460,
568
- PPP, 19, 183, 207, 225,
232, 233, 234, 250,
271, 484, 485, 487,
488, 500, 506, 554,
576
- PROFIR, 19, 22, 132,
133, 134
- PROPRIV, 570
- public-private
partnerships, 232
- Quantum Global, 22,
23, 312, 472, 473,
474, 475, 476, 477,
478, 481, 511, 552
- Rádio Ecclesia*, 290, 309,
429
- rancher, 426, 495
- Rede Terra, 22, 23, 31,
50, 54, 60, 61, 76,
121, 139, 160, 164,
165, 166, 167, 194,
340, 342, 352, 354,
361, 371, 373, 374,
379, 380, 388, 389,
390, 391, 392, 393,
394, 395, 396, 397,
398, 399, 400, 401,
404, 405, 406, 407,
409, 410, 411, 412,
413, 414, 416, 417,
418, 419, 421, 422,
423, 425, 427, 539
- Resource scarcity, 170,
174
- Ricardo Soares de
Oliveira, 42, 105, 111,
127, 130, 145, 158,
200, 215, 262, 362,
465
- rural infrastructure, 200,
236, 556
- smallholders, 45, 130,
187, 213, 231, 249,
259, 268, 362, 511,
541, 557, 564
- sobas, 28, 130, 144,
158, 159, 175, 369,
429, 518
- SODEMAT, 460, 461
- SOPIR, 20, 23, 246,
247, 263, 456, 457,
458, 459, 460, 461,
485
- South Africa, 19, 20, 72,
174, 193, 196, 223,
265, 266, 269, 278,
279, 280, 282, 310,
397, 413, 468, 522,
545, 546, 549, 550,
551, 568, 679, 680,
681, 682, 687, 688,
689, 690, 691, 692,
693, 694, 695, 696,
697, 698, 699, 700,
701
- Soviet Union, 83, 121,
125, 193, 216, 266,
278, 279, 280, 282,
338, 520
- state farms, 173, 217,
222, 231, 232, 260,
362
- state-building, 28, 37,
40, 48, 79, 105, 106,
127, 272, 276
- state-owned companies,
76, 450
- State-Owned
Enterprises, 192, 225,
260, 448
- subsistence agriculture,
40, 87, 90, 179, 186,
191, 199, 230, 239,
500, 565
- SWAPO, 20, 280
- Tony Hodges, 112, 232,
294, 334, 420, 484,
502
- Tunda dos Gambos,
425, 489, 491
- UCAH, 20, 314, 315,
340, 343, 344, 345
- UNACA, 21, 22, 25, 26,
27, 33, 37, 68, 69, 70,
71, 76, 114, 170, 209,
210, 211, 215, 221,
226, 231, 238, 306,
341, 342, 377, 425,
435, 448, 449, 450,
451, 452, 453, 454,

455, 456, 499, 562,
 563, 564, 676, 677
 UNDP, 20, 21, 206,
 222, 230, 242, 243,
 287, 315, 319, 342,
 505, 507, 703, 707
 UNITA, 21, 22, 36, 62,
 65, 74, 78, 105, 106,
 107, 108, 111, 113,
 117, 129, 145, 147,
 148, 156, 193, 196,
 197, 219, 223, 263,
 264, 265, 266, 267,
 268, 269, 270, 271,
 272, 273, 276, 277,
 278, 279, 280, 281,
 282, 283, 301, 302,
 307, 340, 343, 344,
 345, 377, 378, 396,
 397, 465, 513, 514,
 515, 516, 520
 United Nations, 17, 19,
 20, 21, 35, 36, 75, 83,
 119, 120, 134, 230,
 281, 285, 287, 289,
 314, 334, 338, 343,
 355, 357, 446, 499,
 505, 507
 United States, 12, 21,
 65, 72, 83, 92, 99,
 100, 126, 180, 223,
 266, 281, 287, 352,
 359, 373, 394, 440,
 465
 USAID, 21, 46, 230,
 237, 341, 353, 363,
 369, 373, 390, 401,
 440, 454, 703
 UTCAN, 21, 37, 61, 67,
 68, 69, 71, 296, 303,
 314, 315, 317, 318,
 319, 320, 321, 329,
 352, 438, 439, 440,
 444, 675, 703, 704,
 705
 World Bank, 21, 34, 40,
 44, 45, 46, 47, 75, 77,
 130, 132, 137, 153,
 172, 181, 192, 201,
 205, 206, 222, 241,
 242, 258, 270, 271,
 285, 289, 296, 297,
 299, 300, 338, 342,
 346, 362, 380, 404,
 452, 454, 458, 485,
 505, 507, 537, 538,
 554, 556, 561, 562,
 563, 564, 565, 570,
 706, 707