

**DOSSIER**

*Internationalization of educational policies within the framework of human rights*

**Education policy in Angola and the guarantee of the right to education:  
articulation between the context of influence and text production*****A política educativa em Angola e a garantia do direito à educação:  
articulação entre o contexto de influência e a produção de textos*****António António<sup>a</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

The present study set out to analyze the education policies that regulate initiatives that are located in the context of practice, as it also focuses on the education policies resulting from the main guidelines coming from international organizations and how these are compatible with the real local demands. Based on a qualitative approach, methodologically, the research is based on the Policy Cycle Approach, a proposition initially formulated by Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) and reformulated by Ball (1994), which allowed analyzing documents and interventions in the context of influence and the context of text production. From the analysis carried out, the results indicate that guaranteeing the right to education continues to be, despite the progress made, a challenge for the Education and Teaching System in Angola. On the other hand, the context of influence highlights the leading role that international organizations play within Angolan education policy which, during its course, demonstrated resentment of the impacts resulting from the colonial education model.

**Keywords:** Educational policy. Right to education. Context of influence. Angola.

**RESUMO**

O presente estudo se propôs a analisar as políticas de educação que regulam as iniciativas que se localizam no contexto da prática, na medida em que também se debruça sobre as políticas de educação, resultantes das principais orientações advindas das organizações internacionais e como essas se compatibilizam com as reais demandas locais. Baseada numa abordagem qualitativa, metodologicamente, a pesquisa fundamenta-se na Abordagem do Ciclo de Políticas, uma proposição, inicialmente formulada por Bowe, Ball e Gold (1992) e reformulada por Ball (1994), que permitiu analisar documentos e intervenções do contexto de influência e do contexto da produção de texto. Da análise feita, os resultados indicam que a garantia do direito à educação continua sendo, apesar dos avanços registados, um desafio para o Sistema de Educação e Ensino em Angola. Por outro lado, o contexto de influência evidencia o protagonismo que as organizações internacionais exercem

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dentro da política angolana da educação que, durante o seu percurso, demonstrou ressentir dos impactos resultantes do modelo de educação colonial.

*Palavras-chave:* Política educativa. Direito a Educação. Contexto de influência. Angola.

## Introduction

The State regulates Angola's education system through two ministries: the Ministry of Education (MED) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESCTI). The system rests on Law No. 17/16, enacted on October 6. This foundational legislation underwent revision via Law No. 32/20 on August 12, aligning with global educational philosophies.

According to António, Mendes, and Lukombo (2023, p. 15), "as a fundamental right inherent to every human being, as globally enshrined by the United Nations (UN), access to education in less developed countries remains a current challenge that still requires firm, localized policies and actions." The Constitution of the Republic of Angola and the Basic Law of the National Education and Teaching System support this right. Still, the educational policy's action to ensure it does not fully resolve the issue. "Any initiatives regarding public education policies [...] in Angola must first and foremost address the pending issue of universalization, as it is understood to be the first barrier to overcome" (António; Mendes; González, 2021, p. 15).

Thus, this study aims to analyze education policies that regulate initiatives in practice. It also checks if major international organizations' policies meet local needs. The first approach relates to the colonial education policy. The second concerns the post-independence period, marked by two educational reforms.

The second phase will analyze the impact of multilateral organizations on educational models. It will focus on specialized UN agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank (WB). The third phase looks at the effects of the colonial education model and how multinationals shape Angola's education rules through their programs.

The study uses a qualitative methodological approach. The study follows a qualitative methodology, based on the Policy Cycle Approach by Bowe, Ball, and Gold (1992), later reformulated by Ball (1994). It only considered the context of influence and part of the production. It aimed to analyze documents and interventions by international organizations. In addition, it aimed to understand the impact of the global education agenda on Angolan educational policy, including how texts are produced and communicated through political discourse.

Despite international funding, Angola's education system has quality issues. It struggles to meet its primary goals. This study should encourage further research, concentrating on specific World Bank-funded projects, even with different approaches. These include training for teachers and managers and special and inclusive education. They also include implementing standardized tests. It is also important to note that, as with any research, there were difficulties, particularly in accessing the necessary documents, which required exhaustive search efforts.

## **Milestones and Features of an Educational Model Inherited from Colonialism**

This section provides a brief overview of the colonial education model inherited by Angola and highlights its important aspects for national and international readers. It covers the education policies of the Portuguese colonization of Angola and the post-independence period, emphasizing initiatives for the indigenous peoples. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the education systems. They are: the Jesuit (1575-1759), the Pombaline (1759-1792) – introduced by the Marquis of Pombal –, the Joanine (1792-1845), the Falcão and Rebelo da Silva (1845-1926), the Salazarist (1926-1961), the education during the Armed Struggle phase (1961-1974), and finally, the education during the post-independence period (starting in 1975). A summary of the main stages of development and features of Angolan education will be presented.

During the Jesuit period (1575-1759) in Angola, Portuguese navigators aimed to occupy, dominate and exploit its economy. To achieve these goals, it was first necessary to dismantle the native culture through Christian doctrine, which began to be taught in catechesis (Eduardo 2019) as part of a civilizing mission. According to Brito Neto (2005), Catholic missionaries in Africa, as partners of the Portuguese state, were tasked with civilizing the local population. Their primary goal was to convert the natives to Christianity rather than educate or train them in the broader sense of the term.

According to Brito Neto (2005), two key moments stand out in the Jesuits' efforts to convert the native population to Christianity: i) the crisis suffered by Portugal due to Dutch ambition and that of other European countries over African territories, and ii) the failure of the Christian doctrine carried out by the Jesuits. Two factors contributed to this failure. First, evangelizing the interior of Angola was challenging due to limited access, requiring much greater effort compared to the coastal areas, where access was much more straightforward. On the other hand, the slave trade seduced many missionaries who reduced or abandoned evangelization once they saw the opportunity to engage in profitable education. Being among the few educators available at the time, and with the backing of the monarchy, they established schools that also enrolled the children of the Portuguese. These schools gained prominence with the construction of the Luanda College in 1659. During this period, the curriculum structure was universal and elitist.

From 1759 to 1792, the Pombaline education underwent reforms introduced by the Marquis of Pombal in the context of Portuguese society, which also affected the overseas provinces. Pombal called for a clear separation between the State and the Church, especially in education, where the State took over control of the educational system, a responsibility previously controlled by the Jesuits. At the time, the Jesuits held considerable economic power, posing a threat to maintaining Christian culture and civil society. Their educational philosophy focused on preparing citizens for religious service (Brito Neto, 2005) rather than contributing to the nation's needs.

Pombal redefined the educational objectives in Portugal from this perspective. Since Angola was an overseas province and its education system at the time was tied to the Portuguese system, these objectives were put into effect in 1764. In this context, education and training became increasingly connected to work, adopting a focus on practical education (Eduardo, 2019).

However, the guiding principles and educational philosophy of the Portuguese in Angola and those of the African natives began to be reevaluated. The logic shifted from submission to Christianity to a commitment to the country. The content taught moved away from literary and memorized knowledge based on Catholic precepts. It adopted a more experimental, practical, and functional approach to establish a stronger connection between theory and practice. Such changes enabled the introduction of courses related to the natural sciences, including engineering, geography, and others (Eduardo, 2019).

Silva Neto (2010) notes that the first vocational training school, elementary professional training in arts and crafts, was established in 1764. The author also says that the education of the natives was limited to preparing them for professions such as mason, tailor, blacksmith, shoemaker, etc., which were seen as unattractive activities for Portuguese residents in Angola.

The Joanine education, which spanned from 1792 to 1875, was marked by a series of political events that slowed down the progress of the previous educational perspective. The Marquis of Pombal education reforms - in the context of the social reforms - aimed to improve society. At that same time, Portugal was strengthening its presence in Angola and other overseas provinces, driven by growing European interest in African territories, particularly Angola. This development led Portugal to open the doors of Luanda and Benguela to external traders (Eduardo, 2019). In 1808, French troops invaded Portugal, forcing the royal court - and family - to seek refuge in Brazil with the support of the British army. It worsened the internal political and economic crisis. Thus, Portugal felt compelled to reorganize and transfer its central administration to Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). From there, it issued directives that regulated all overseas provinces (Brito Neto, 2005).

However, the development of a formal education policy in Angola did not occur without coercion. It was marked by minor progress and significant setbacks, mainly due to historical events in Portugal. So, to understand Angola's education policies, it is necessary to consider some historical events in Portugal (Eduardo, 2019; Oliveira, 2015). Subsequently, with the opening of the doors of Luanda and Benguela, the political conflict between the Dutch and the Portuguese during the absence of the royal family, the development of commerce, and the push to end the slave trade, Portugal faced some pressure. It led them to adopt social measures to justify its presence in Angola.

In practice, the Jesuits and the royal family imposed an academic ideology in the overseas provinces, requiring a high level of education and cultural refinement for acceptance by the privileged social classes. As a result, secondary education took precedence over primary education. This approach served only the narrow, possessive bourgeoisie, who sought to climb the social hierarchy through culture and education (Eduardo, 2019).

The *Falcão and Rebelo da Silva education*, which took place between 1845 and 1926, was marked by the growing international importance of Angola. It coincided with a global movement - led by the British - to abolish the slave trade and protect cheap labor. It is crucial to highlight the significance of the British protest against the Portuguese on August 13, 1887, opposing the expansion of Portuguese influence in Southern Africa (Eduardo, 2019; Silva Neto, 2010).

On August 14, 1845, Joaquim José Falcão issued the first legal instrument regulating public primary education in overseas provinces. It assigned the Portuguese state the responsibility for

public education. This decree established the first primary education system and created the position of inspector to oversee it. It also set a normative framework to expand the school network and educational levels in 1869. It consisted of two levels: one equivalent to primary education in Portugal and a higher primary level, which represented the highest form of education available in Angola at that time. These developments altered the structure of the educational system (Silva Neto, 2010).

As a result, the last decree issued was decisive for the colonial education system. It comprised elementary, secondary, and higher education, with supervision and management delegated to local inspection councils and boards. This decree allowed for a reorganization of education levels: primary, secondary, and higher education (Silva Neto, 2010). Falcão's initiatives to expand the school network and education levels led to more secondary schools in major urban centers, including Luanda, Namibe, and Huíla. They also restructured primary education into two grades, each with two series. However, it is crucial to note that a convention was signed between the Portuguese state and the Vatican. It granted the Catholic Church priority in missionary work within the colonies and allowed it to take significant control of education system.

Decree No. 18,570 of July 8, 1930, reinforces this, stating that the Portuguese State

Accepts and assists Portuguese religious missions as effective agents of civilization and sovereignty and the houses that train personnel for them, recognizing them as legal entities, and allows the free practice of different faiths without prejudice to subjecting it to the demands of Portuguese sovereignty and public order (Portugal, 1930, p. 1308).

The preference of the Catholic Church for missions over the Protestant Church began in 1640 during the Dutch invasion of Luanda. From 1878, the Catholic Church participated in the education of natives. However, the mission of the Protestant activity intensified, especially in educational matters. Protestant churches from Great Britain, the United States, and Canada played a key role. Initially, these missions focused on religious education and later expanded to include elementary, primary, secondary, normal, biblical, technical, rudimentary, and vocational education. Despite being implemented on a small scale, early childhood education was well-received by the native population (Eduardo, 2019).

In this context, the presence of Protestant missionaries facilitated access to education for native peoples, particularly in rural areas where the Catholic mission was not present. Protestant schools met the educational needs of the native population, which was discriminated against by the Catholic education system that served the interests of the Portuguese colonial elite (Eduardo, 2019).

*Salazarist education* (1926-1961) faced several challenges, both financial and related to foreign relations. These challenges included the Spanish Civil War, World War II, and democratic expansion movements. They were notably involved in the liberation movements in Angola and Mozambique, which led to the start of the Armed Liberation Struggle (Eduardo, 2019). In response to these issues and with the establishment of the New State under the Constitution of 1933, Salazar, the Prime Minister of Portugal, published several legal and administrative instruments, including the "Colonial Act" under Decree No. 18,570 (Portugal, 1930), and the "Statute of Indigenous and Assimilated Peoples" under Decree No. 39,666 (Portugal, 1954), which defined the "Indigenous."

According to Decree-Law No. 39,666 of May 20, 1954 (Portugal, 1954), “indigenous” refers to African natives of black or similar race. They did not exhibit Portuguese cultural habits or speak the Portuguese language. To enhance the living conditions of the native population, this law declared that

[...] The State will promote by all means the improvement of the material and moral living conditions of the indigenous, the development of their natural skills and abilities, and, in general, their education through schooling and work, to transform their primitive customs and elevate their activity, integrating them actively into the community with access to citizenship (Portugal, 1954, p. 560).

Regarding educational and training infrastructure, several primary and secondary schools were established in major urban centers like Luanda, Huambo, and Huíla. However, these schools primarily served Portuguese and some mixed-race students (Brito Neto, 2005; Eduardo, 2019; Paxe, 2014). A basic education system was created for the native population. It aimed to provide moral and civic training and to instill work habits. It also sought to prepare them physically and intellectually for regional economies (Portugal, 1954).

According to Decree-Law No. 39,666 (Portugal, 1954), this type of education

[...] Will always seek to spread the Portuguese language, but native languages may also be authorized as instruments of education. [...] Indigenous peoples who have completed adapted education or are exempt from it by law are guaranteed admission to public education under the same terms as other Portuguese citizens (Portugal, 1954, p. 560-561).

From a colonial perspective, the goal of education was not to develop indigenous people with a critical consciousness or quality technical training that would allow them to compete with Portuguese whites in society, whether in the economy or labor markets in Portugal, adjacent islands, or overseas territories (Paxe, 2014).

The colonial government aimed to educate native peoples. They wanted “to spread among the indigenous in their wild villages the most useful principles of hygiene and morality, to teach them a trade and the Portuguese language” (Paxe, 2014, p. 50). The practical nature of education focused on preparing cheap labor for use in economic projects.

## **Education During the Period of the Armed Struggle (1961-1974)**

The period of armed struggle (1961-1974) forced Portugal to cease its human and economic exploitation of its colonies. As mentioned earlier, Portugal adopted a policy of deception that manifested in disdain towards the African population. It also segregated the natives into assimilated and non-assimilated groups. This shaped education during this period.

A plan was created to establish higher education in response to these pressures in response to these pressures. The Catholic Church founded Angola’s first university-level institution in 1962. The Pio XII Institute offered training in Social Assistance. Following the creation of the Pio XII Institute in 1962, Decree-Law No. 44,530, issued on August 21 (Portugal, 1962), introduced the General University Studies in Angola. It was an overseas province with campuses in three key urban



centers: Huambo (Nova Lisboa), Huíla (Sá da Bandeira), and Luanda. However, academic activities only began in the 1963-1964 academic year with the approval of Decree-Law No. 45,180 of August 5, 1963 (Portugal, 1963). It established the courses in Angola, including Pedagogical Sciences, Medical-Surgical, Civil Engineering, Mining Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical-Industrial Engineering, Electrotechnics, Veterinary Sciences, Agronomy, and Forestry.

In general, the Angolan education system followed three paths:

1. The official system, which included the following levels: preschool and primary, elementary and professional (arts and crafts), secondary (technical and high school), intermediate, and university; it also included a public servant training program and artistic education;
2. Ecclesiastical religious education, which was under the control of Catholic missionaries and generally considered official education;
3. Protestant religious education, conducted by Protestant missions.

At their core, these two educational approaches (Catholic and Protestant) were in complete contrast, operating on different principles and foundations (Eduardo, 2019). Note that ecclesiastical education was only for the children of Portuguese colonists, making it primarily elitist. Occasionally, it also served the children of some assimilated individuals or the small black bourgeoisie elite that formed during this period. Conversely, the Protestant mission's education focused on native residents in rural areas, both assimilated and non-assimilated, prioritizing liberation.

## **Influence of Multilateral Organizations in the Internationalization of Educational Policies**

This section will analyze one of the most debated issues in current research on educational policies: the significant influence of the United Nations (UN) and its specialized agencies in promoting an international educational agenda based on the guarantee of human rights. With the advent of globalization, which drives and advances a global economic and political agenda that nation-states – particularly developing countries – must adhere to, education has become central to these interests. International organizations and transnational actors advocate for a global educational agenda through a policy transfer. When developing countries receive financial aid from developed countries and international organizations, they often lose autonomy in crafting and implementing local policies.

The Policy Cycle Approach (PCA) proposed by Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2016) views developed countries, international organizations, and transnational actors as key influencers in shaping learning policies adapted to different national contexts. These entities play a central role in the transfer of educational policies. According to Verger (2019), it has achieved the status of Global Educational Policies (GEPs). He posits that the creation of national policies is inevitably “a process of bricolage; a continuous process of borrowing and copying fragments and ideas from other contexts [...] investing in anything that seems to work” (Ball, 2001, p. 102).

The context of influence refers to the original territory from which international educational policies emerge. In this context, interest groups compete to define educational goals. There are

clear global and international influences in the formulation of national policies. A dense network of international organizations interacts and competes to promote their educational ideas and policies in global education. They also play a crucial part in setting and monitoring agendas at both national and international levels, with control mechanisms strengthened and rooted in accountability standards (Fernandes, 2013; Lopes; Macedo, 2011; Mainardes, 2006; Verger, 2019).

However, through its specialized agencies, the UN promotes the notion that education is crucial for achieving sustainable development, mainly through investment in human capital. This is reflected in the partnerships formed with poorer countries, which are frequently enforced rather than voluntarily embraced. These nations are frequently subjected to external mandates instead of freely implementing the recommendations from these agencies (António, 2023; Dale, 2004; Souza; Pletsch, 2017). Thus, it aligns with Verger's (2019) concept of Global Educational Policies (GEPs) disseminated by international organizations and transnational actors. Dale (2004) refers to a Globally Structured Educational Agenda (GSEA), which sees education as a dependent variable. It is rooted in political-economic mechanisms that aim to organize the global economy and is driven by the need to maintain hegemonic interests. Here, the funding of local projects pressures them to adopt key international recommendations. Therefore, globalization is the primary condition for understanding the GSEA, as it is driven by the emergence of "economic forces operating supra and transnationally to break or surpass national borders, while simultaneously reconstructing relations between nations" (Dale 2004, p. 423).

However, the main handicap does not lie in the fact that national states benefit from financial aid and technical advice in the implementation and development of these projects. Problems arise when international recommendations ignore local idiosyncrasies, ignoring political, economic, and cultural contexts. As Lendvai and Stubbs (2012) suggest, globally conceived and developed educational policies are applied locally, but they are not mere transfers; they are adaptations. Therefore, as Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2016) emphasize that contexts matter. They mediate the political work done in schools, and each school is unique. Likewise, despite similarities between different countries, each represents its unique context.

The differences between contexts of practice – where policies are subject to interpretation and recreation, where texts are read differently and adapted according to local and institutional contexts – demonstrate incompatibilities with the internationalization of educational policies, which often disregard each country's unique conditions. In Angola, a recent doctoral study by António (2023) confirmed the following thesis on the National Special Education Policy Oriented Towards Inclusive Schooling:

The global and homogenizing agenda under the banner of inclusive education, advocated by specialized UN agencies, has not been compatible with the specific contexts in which it is translated, posing great challenges to educational and school administrators, who are required to ensure the enrollment of the target audience for special education, even without the necessary technical and professional conditions. This has resulted in a weak process of inclusion that is far from achieving its primary objective (António, 2023, p. 164).

Corroborating Fernandes (2013), it is possible to observe a consensus in the literature that globalization of educational issues arises from the actions of specific organizations and their influence



in defining new directions for education in Europe and around the world. In this context, Africa is one of the continents most affected by these standardized measures. In Angola, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (WB) have led UN agencies involved in public education policies.

As Meyer (2000) observes, influential international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, are shaping educational development by providing standard models. Examples include UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (WB) in Angola. These organizations offer concrete technical assistance, project financing, and consultants to collaborate.

In contexts such as Angola, research and analysis of the diverse interventions by international organizations in local public policies become highly significant. These organizations not only support and finance the education sector but also fund the National Development Plan, ensuring alignment with the commitments of the 2030 agenda. Today, international organizations aim to expand educational markets. Their interest guides national states in making crucial decisions about education (Lobo; Castro, 2023).

To conclude this chapter, we turn to Libâneo (2016), who asserts that the internationalization of educational policies is a movement embedded in globalization. Multilateral international agencies deal with money, trade, and finance. They recommend public policies for emerging or developing countries. The author adds that these recommendations include regulating public policies resulting from cooperation agreements, especially in health and education.

## **A Local Educational Policy: From Colonial Heritage to the Normative Framework of an International Agenda**

This section aims to analyze the intricacies of the current Angolan Education and Teaching System. This analysis will examine the influence of the colonial education model, along with the major interventions by UN-specialized agencies that have contributed, and continue to contribute, to the development of public education policies. Currently, Angolan education policy seeks to align with the core educational standards advocated by UNESCO and other specialized UN agencies, which fund and oversee social sector projects. However, the Angolan engagement with UNESCO dates back to the 1970s. On September 14, 1976, José Eduardo dos Santos, then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, submitted Angola's formal request to join UNESCO, which was accepted later that same year (UNESCO, 1976).

Since then, Angolan educational policy has been shaped by its colonial legacy and the difficulties stemming from the Civil War. Currently, it prioritizes global education policies that often conflict with local needs, creating tension between local and international forces and limiting the political agency of educational and school administrators (António, 2023).

Although Angola became a UNESCO member in 1976 and officially took its oath in 1977, it is crucial to note that the country had already been receiving support from UN-specialized agencies in the education sector before its independence, as stated in a UNESCO document (1998, p. 3):

From 1971 to 1975, during the colonial period and the liberation war, UNESCO had already been organizing youth education in the Angolan Education Institute, founded in Dolisie, Republic of the Congo.

Over time, the relationship between Angola and UNESCO strengthened and solidified. It led to the creation of the Angolan National Commission for UNESCO, as stated in a UNESCO report (1998, p. 3):

With the establishment of the Angolan National Commission for UNESCO on September 1, 1980, and the creation of an Angolan delegation to UNESCO in May 1982, a permanent bridge was built between the public authorities and the UNESCO Secretariat. This ensured the implementation of diverse projects in fields within UNESCO's competence and the participation of Angola in UNESCO meetings and regular activities.

To better frame this chapter, it focuses on the context of influence in Angolan educational policy. It examines two critical post-independence periods: the first and second reforms of the Angolan Education and Teaching System. It is important to acknowledge that the educational system in Angola experienced a transitional phase after independence between 1999 and 2005. This period was characterized by the coexistence of two different systems: the 1977 system, established by Decree No. 40/80 of May 14, and the 2001 system, implemented by Law No. 13/01 of December 31 (World Bank, 2007).

Following Angola's independence in 1975, a new education system was implemented. It was needed to replace the colonial education system inherited from the Portuguese. The colonial system was deemed inefficient, limited, and focused on Portuguese culture. With this change, the Angolan State sought to adopt, in 1977, a new Education and Teaching System. It aimed for better access to education, the opportunity for continued studies through free education, and the permanent improvement of teaching staff. This new system also sought to meet the country's while reinforcing national independence (Angola, 2001; Nguluve, 2006).

However, transitioning from a colonial education system to a national one did not yield the expected results. The country faced a shortage of qualified teachers to meet its aspirations in this new era. Additionally, independence ignited a civil war between Angola's three main liberation movements: FNLA, MPLA, and UNITA. Each sought power and control of the country. These events negatively impacted the new education project adopted in 1977 and implemented in 1978.

The country's colonial legacy and civil war resulted in political instability, social unrest, and difficult economic conditions, prompting increased involvement from international organizations. These organizations entered the national policy framework through their philanthropic programs and financing of state-building projects in Angola. During the first educational reform, the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien/Thailand, 1990), ratified at the World Education Forum (Dakar/Senegal, 2000), and the World Conference on Special Educational Needs (Salamanca/Spain, 1994) opened numerous avenues for international organizations to intervene in a weak educational system that faced enormous challenges in ensuring the right to education. In 1991, Angola held a National Roundtable on Education for All. It aimed to analyze the feasibility of responding to the World Declaration on Education for All. The event was under the auspices of UNICEF and the UN Development Program. In 1995, in light of the recommendations outlined in the Salamanca

Declaration, Angola developed and implemented project 534/ang/10 designed for the Promoting Educational Opportunities for the Rehabilitation of Vulnerable Children program. This initiative integrated students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) into regular schools by establishing special and integrated classrooms (INEE, 2006).

Despite these efforts, Angola's educational challenges persisted. The UN, through its specialized agencies, in collaboration with the then Ministry of Education and Culture, "identified and formulated the National Framework Plan for the Reconstruction of the Educational System for the Decade 1995-2005" (Angola, 2001, p. 11), to align education with the requirements for sustainable human development. The plan envisioned a new system with the expectation of armed conflict resolution. However, six years into the National Framework Plan, worsening political-military instability and the economic recession led to its near-total failure, as noted by Angola (2001). Consequently, access to and the quality of education remained the main problems. Fewer than 6 in 10 people had access to schools.

Twenty-three years after the implementation of the first educational reform in 1978, and considering that the results achieved were far below expectations, the Government of the Republic of Angola, in collaboration with its main partners, developed and adopted the Integrated Strategy for the Improvement of the Education System for the period 2001-2015. This document was a 15-year strategic guide for the country's education sector. It aimed to unit efforts toward a public education system of quality for all (Angola, 2001). Furthermore, because of its informative, adaptable, strategic, and comprehensive nature, this document became a vital benchmark. It was to adapt its implementation to the local reality.

According to the National Institute of Special Education (INEE, 2006), both the Integrated Strategy for the Improvement of the Education System and the Basic Law of the Education System No. 13/01 of December 31, which marked the beginning of the second educational reform, are instruments of strategic guidance for the Government in the Education Sector for the period 2001-2015. These documents outlined specific guidelines for stabilizing, enhancing, and broadening the various education models in coordination with the end of the civil war. From this point onward, Angola entered the second phase of educational reform.

Nguluve (2006) observes that, unlike the first reform, the second introduced a new methodology designed to meet UNESCO's education-for-all policy. During the second reform, the Angolan Education and Teaching System was adapted to better suit the local context while still routed in the theoretical and philosophical principles of the United Nations. Therefore, Law No. 13/01 of December 31 sought to:

- Expand the School Network;
- Improve the quality of the teaching and learning process;
- Strengthen the efficiency of the education system; and
- Guarantee equity in the education system (Angola, 2014).

Despite the successes and challenges of the second reform, it was the subject of many debates among education professionals. Furthermore, the dominant discourse on guaranteeing the right to education for all assumed and recommended by the United Nations led to the revocation of Law No.

13/01 of December 31 by Law No. 17/16 of October 7, 2016. The new law establishes the principles and general foundations of the Education and Teaching System, later amended by Law No. 32/20 of August 12. The main amendments to the new law, compared to Law No. 13/01, include necessary alignments with the recommendations of UN specialized agencies that support and finance crucial projects in the education sector.

These agencies promote a humanitarian discourse that emphasizes the productive nature of education, seeing it as a critical mechanism for reducing poverty in developing countries. At the same time, education is viewed as a strategy for social regulation, poverty alleviation, and security by constantly aligning with external directives. Moreover, this new trend primarily focuses on developing human capital, often prioritizing economic growth over the well-being of individuals. Consequently, the recommendations of these agencies are not always voluntarily accepted and sometimes take on a mandatory character, often disregarding local specificities (Leher, 1999; Oliveira, 2015; Souza; Pletsch, 2017).

In this regard, the current Basic Law of the Education and Teaching System (LBSEE) is the result of joint efforts between the Ministry of Education and other government departments, including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, which also partners with other international organizations in the formulation, financing, implementation, and monitoring of projects within the Angolan education policy framework. In 2013, the World Bank's Board of Directors approved the "Learning for All" project in Angola, implemented in June 2014 with an initial credit of USD 75 million, complemented by a USD 5 million counterpart contribution from the Angolan government. The project aimed to strengthen educators' knowledge and skills, improve school management in target areas, and establish a systematic framework for student assessment (Angola, 2022; PAT-Angola, 2014). In the last ten years, the intervention of these agencies has become increasingly significant. Similar to current efforts in teacher and school management training, the Special Education Policy Oriented Toward Inclusive Schooling is another factor that prompted changes in the current LBSEE. This policy was designed and financed by UNICEF and the World Bank, which invited the Rodrigo Mendes Institute (IRM) from Brazil to develop the policy and train National Institute of Special Education (INEE) technicians.

Today, as part of its response to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, the Angolan government, supported by the UN, has developed a National Education Development Plan covering the period up to 2030, called PNDE EDUCAR – Angola 2030. The main goal of this plan is to "promote human and educational development based on lifelong education and learning for all Angolans" (Angola 2015, p. 5). The UN has supported and guided the creation of this National Development Plan to align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 agenda. All of the previously discussed points demonstrate the significant role of international organizations and actors in the process of policy borrowing and mobility, which adheres to a global education agenda.

## Final Considerations

The guarantee of the right to education in Angola, within the context of related public policies, has been a highly debated issue and has seen significant progress in the post-war period. Nevertheless, the current educational policy is influenced by specific factors and events from Angola's historical development as a nation-state. In other words, given Angola's historical background under Portuguese colonial rule and the civil war that led to setbacks in the limited educational infrastructure inherited from colonialism, the country has become heavily dependent on external support and funding provided as philanthropic actions.

Although the country adopted an educational policy (the first reform) in 1977 and implemented it in 1978, the strong influence of the colonial model was inevitable. The few Angolan teachers trained during the colonial period were entrusted with implementing the new policy to expand access to education and support continued studies, aligning to consolidate national independence. On the other hand, the colonial past - marked by Jesuit education, Pombaline education, Joanine education, Falcão and Rebelo da Silva education, Salazarist education, and education during the Armed Struggle phase - remained an obstacle to the aspirations of nationalizing the Angolan Education and Teaching System.

Furthermore, in the post-independence period, marked by civil war (1975-2002) and post-war efforts (2002 to the present), international organizations have played a crucial role in shaping and continuously reforming the Angolan Education and Teaching System. Currently, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank have introduced more global educational policies by diagnosing issues, identifying strengths and weaknesses, proposing solutions, financing projects, providing consultants, and evaluating state actions linked to their funding. In many cases, however, these policies are not compatible with local conditions. The UN advanced its global agenda by framing education as a solution to the world's critical challenges, focusing on developing human capital for the global economy.

In conclusion, it is evident that for developing countries like Angola — with nearly five centuries of colonization and 27 years of civil war — external support and funding from international organizations help alleviate many challenges and bring the country closer to successful international practices. However, the slight loss of autonomy may shift the focus away from addressing local problems.

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