

Profiling youth involved in the informal markets of Luanda

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INTRODUCTION

Following the civil society workshop held in June 2004 at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) the Angolan Centre for Strategic Studies (CEEA) identified health, education, poverty, lack of economic opportunities, land, political rights, safety, and state and governance as challenges to Angolan security in the post-conflict period. Although participants acknowledged that much had already been done by the Angolan government after the end of the conflict, they felt that each of these areas should be the object of further research and support. The CEEA identified 'education' as the topic they would like to research.

METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL CONSTRAINTS

Linking education to security proved to be a challenge. Literature about education in emergencies and reconstruction periods does not make an obvious link to human security; it focuses, rather, on the difficulties around the rehabilitation of the formal education system. The research team, however, felt the need to establish a link between education, human security and regional implications. This was not entirely uncharted territory. Many authors have recently related education to conflict² and a short time ago the World Bank published an outstanding report on education and post-conflict reconstruction.³

In this report the World Bank team incorporates and systematises findings that, in spite of coming from other fields of knowledge, relate to education and stress the role that education can play in post-conflict reconstruction. "The central message of this book is that education has a key role in both preventing conflict and rebuilding fractured post conflict societies."⁴

This seems to indicate that the impact of education on human security is an area opening up for study. "The outpouring of analysis, publications,

and research projects in this field in the past two years suggests that there is now strong recognition of the importance of early investment in education as a prerequisite for successful post conflict reconstruction.”⁵

Furthermore, education features prominently in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and pressure is put on governments to restore or reform the education system as a vital component of national reconciliation in post-conflict situations. The MDGs consist of a set of goals and targets, with the respective indicators, that “... commit the international community to an expanded vision of development. One that vigorously promotes human development as the key to sustaining social and economic progress in all countries ...”⁶

The second goal of the MDGs is to “achieve universal primary education” and its target is to ensure that by 2015 children everywhere will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The indicators developed for this goal include:

- net enrolment ratio in primary education;
- proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach Grade 5;
- primary completion rate (suggested but still to be adopted); and
- literacy rate of 15 to 24 year olds.⁷

While the MDGs consider education an indicator of development, the Human Security Network establishes the link between development and human security as follows: “Human security and human development are thus two sides of the same coin, mutually reinforcing and leading to a conducive environment for each other.”⁸

Furthermore, the report from the Commission on Human Security (CHS)⁹ cites “Empowering all people with universal basic education” as one important policy conclusion, stating that “The human security perspective underscores the importance of basic education, particularly for girls.”¹⁰

This report argues that policy development in education should not only be framed by development considerations but should also be evaluated in terms of its implications on human security. Although the impact of education on conflict and on reconstruction seems to be acknowledged, indicators and analysis seldom (if ever) include a human security perspective – none of the MDGs’ indicators for education take into account the impact of education on human security. The chosen indicators focus on measurable rates of school enrolment and completion, but there is no indicator to evaluate the quality of the education or the impact education is having on the social fabric.

When thinking about this subject – education and human security – their relation seems obvious: education means more opportunities and choices; education is the engine of economic development and growth; education is an essential tool in poverty reduction; education leads to personal enrichment. In short, education and human security seem to go hand in hand. The connections between security and education seem to be manifold – from the obvious physical security of the school environment to other more subtle forms of articulation with human security – power relations.

In terms of physical security of the school environment, the existence of landmines and other unexploded ordnance all over the territory poses a real threat. However, in Luanda, as in many other urban centres, the threat to students and teachers comes rather from crime. The National Police of Angola (PNA) have recently established a school policing programme in an effort to control the violence and criminality plaguing some schools in Luanda. According to an article published in the PNA magazine, the police are setting out to tackle crimes in schools “... that evolved from a minor problem or an occasional incident to a social problem; civil society commented and condemned the constant assaults, by well organized groups of delinquents, that victimised the students”.¹¹

To respond to this problem, the PNA created the School Security Brigade. The brigade relies on the support of various committees and multiple disciplines, such as sociology and psychology, taking into consideration that most of these incidents happen with and to minors. The PNA agents assigned to the brigade use deterrence strategies by making sure their presence is obvious and visible in the school grounds and neighbouring public places.

The PNA considers the programme effective and “... is carrying out a survey of schools in order to assess the efficiency of this programme, the performance of their officers, the exact number of victims and also to profile [perpetrators], so that better prevention strategies may be developed”.¹²

It was now time to brainstorm on education as an instrument of power, exploring ideas around the following:

- how unequal educational systems, such as under the apartheid system, may be the source of social tension and resentment;
- how education can be used to alienate (or deny) group identity;
- education as a vehicle of dissemination of ideology, as happens in most dictatorial regimes and also in missionary schools, for instance where

political indoctrination and religious education may be provided on a par with other school subject matters;

- how the education system has been used to co-opt youth into political affiliations or into military recruitment – be it through the attribution of scholarships or by raids on school buildings; and
- how the quality of the education provided may be equally important as it will probably impact on the range of economic opportunities available to school leavers.

The team then looked at the recent history of countries in Africa and realised that some intrastate conflicts and coups have apparently been staged by semi-educated youth who are discontented with the lack of opportunities. In Ghana, for instance, many authors claim that supporters of former military leader Jerry Rawlings were mainly high-school leavers. Another case in point is the conflict in Sierra Leone, where the founders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) were educated and semi-educated youth, while the recruitment pool was formed by youth pervaded by feelings of exclusion.¹³

This discussion seems to have provoked another set of questions linked to the hopes and expectations raised by education. The ultimate question was: What happens when after leaving school those hopes and expectations do not materialise? The ISS has been a pioneer in the development of the concept of ‘recruitment pools’ – educated and semi-educated youth with few economic opportunities leading to a sense of social exclusion and ready to be co-opted by networks of crime.¹⁴ The World Bank team seems to have used the concept of recruitment pools in its analysis too:

“Slow progress in the expansion of the secondary and tertiary education tends to generate a backlog of frustrated and unemployed youth ripe for recruitment into violence or crime. In addition to its impact on security and social stability, this situation hampers economic development and, in the longer term, weakens the entire educational system. Two clear implications emerge from this: the importance of focus on sector-wide reconstruction, and the need to attend to the learning needs of youth who lost out on educational opportunities as a result of conflict and who run the risk of becoming a ‘lost generation’ for the education system and the wider society.”¹⁵

According to the same report by the World Bank and building upon findings from existing literature and a database of 52 countries affected by conflict since 1990, several factors may increase the risk of social

conflict in a society. The team confronted the Angolan context with the risk factors mentioned in the report.¹⁶

ECONOMIC FACTORS

Poverty alone is not a cause of violent conflict, but is associated with an increased risk of civil war. In spite of being portrayed as a wealthy country, Angola is among the poorest countries in the region. War was the main cause of the underfeeding of 50% of the population; of the lack of improved sanitation for 70% of the urban population; and of the lack of access to clean water for 34% of the urban and 40% of the rural population. In terms of the human development index (HDI) of the SADC region, Angola is only ahead of Mozambique and Malawi. Whereas poverty alone does not lead to armed strife, widespread poverty in post-conflict situations increases the risk of renewed conflict and slows down national recovery.

IDENTITY-BASED FACTORS

Ethnic and religious diversity

Diversity can decrease the risk of violent conflict, but only on the condition that there are no hegemonic tendencies in any of the coexisting groups. The Angolan conflict is often referred to as a conflict disputed by three ethnically (and, some would argue, religiously) defined movements, all with hegemonic intentions – the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) – mestiço-dominated, urban-based; the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) representing the Bakongo peoples of the north; and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) – as the representative of black peasants, the Ovimbundu.¹⁷ Support provided by opposing sides during the Cold War compounded divisions among the three movements and reinforced ideologically identities that were already defined ethnically. Adding to this, peace in Angola seems to have been achieved through the military victory of one of the opponents.

However, this was disputed by the Angolans on the research team and later confirmed during the research. In general Angolans were quick to point out that an analysis of the membership of the three movements would not sustain this perception. Ethnicity and tribalism, according to them, have been political cards played at different times to legitimise political agendas, but have currently no weight in terms of political affiliation. What seem to be prevailing these days in Angola are widening socio-economic inequalities and geographical imbalances. Angolans

disputed also the perception that the conflict was won by military victory, even if this perception was spreading internationally. People would often mention that the guerrilla war could have continued for some more years, especially in the north; that the death of the UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi, in February 2002 would not have meant peace unless both parties were ready for peace. Furthermore they stress that peace was achieved by an agreement – the Memorandum of Understanding agreed in Luena. It is true that the Luena memorandum refers mainly to military and security questions, but according to the Angolans interviewed social concerns were already being addressed long before the end of the hostilities. In education, for instance, Angolans pointed out that professionals, such as teachers, trained in UNITA-controlled areas had already been integrated into government structures. They agreed though that education could play a vital role in reinforcing national identities. The way Angolan history will be analysed and taught may contribute to cementing or curtailing an emerging national identity. They seemed to agree that in Angola special care should be given to this aspect of school curricula and regular assessment should be undertaken in order to determine the impact of education in national reconciliation.

Language

Language can be a symbol of identity and union but also of division and exclusion. During the war internally displaced persons (IDPs) from different regions of Angola gathered in the same camps, which helped to develop Portuguese not only as the official language but also as the *de facto* lingua franca.¹⁸ Currently, Angolans are debating the introduction of local languages into the formal education system. Reactions to the debate have been mixed: whereas some agree with the reform, others believe this to be an artificial way of keeping alive a language that would otherwise disappear. This report does not argue that Angola should drop the inclusion of local languages; on the contrary, this inclusion may be a vehicle of cohesion. But it can have the adverse outcome and reinforce ethnic differences where they are disappearing. Particularly when internationally the conflict continues to be analysed in ethnic and tribal terms, ethnicity remains a card that is open to misuse.

CIVIL WAR-RELATED FACTORS

Countries affected by civil strife are more likely to revert to conflict within the first decade of peace. Angola has experienced conflict since the 1960s,

with occasional periods of relative peace. According to the World Bank report, if education is to play a role in national reconciliation, the sooner the education system is rebuilt and reformed, the more the likelihood of renewed conflict decreases.¹⁹ But the rebuilding of the education system in Angola should also provide for education opportunities for those youth that are already outside the regular schooling system, be it due to age, economic circumstances or family constraints. Given the decades of violence that Angola has experienced, providing diversified educational opportunities may be the incentive youth need so that they do not continue to engage in violent alternatives.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

As mentioned above, the education system can multiply and reproduce the causes of conflict and create new imbalances. Angola has already experienced the impact that a distorted educational system can have on the social fabric: the colonial regime used the education system to accentuate existing social divisions in Angola and the system favoured some social groups to the detriment of others. Given the difficulties that the education system experienced in Luanda during the decades of conflict (lack of teachers and classrooms), private schools opened all over the city. This trend seems to have expanded to private secondary and tertiary institutions, and it is in the interest of the Angolan authorities to monitor it closely.

Currently, in Luanda, according to the Angolan press, “It’s enough to own a yard, a garage, an annex, and some money, to be in condition to open a private school, without any of the pedagogic, psychological and administrative considerations that are recommended by the Ministry of Education.”²⁰

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has strong evidence that many of these private schools did not apply for the necessary permits, thus being unable to provide students with legal certificates of education. Although private initiative may be welcome and represent a lesser burden on state education, the government should undertake measures to guarantee not only the quality of education in these private institutions, but also that education provided both in public and private learning institutions reaches the same level of quality. Privatising education may entail the risk of having the best teachers abandon the state schools in favour of better paying private institutions. The Ministry of Education may wish to consider the inclusion of incentives for teachers who remain in state

schools. It is equally important to guarantee that quality education is extended to rural as well as urban areas. Given the socio-economic and geographic tensions existing in Angola, the perceived association of a particular group with better education, and thus better economic opportunities, can lead to further resentments and feelings of exclusion.

Several interviews carried out during the fieldwork seem to indicate there is already a perception in Angola that uneven reconstruction and growth may be widening the development gap between the coastal region and the interior of the country. Expanding and decentralising education facilities and training programmes may contribute to removing this geographical imbalance.

The research team then debated which demographic group should be included in this research. From the various readings and discussions it became obvious that links between education and human security would have to be threaded through children and youth, as the first beneficiaries of education and the primary protagonists in most African conflicts. The team thus identified the target group – youth – and decided to focus on those engaged in the informal markets of Luanda, as they seemed to be the youth group currently most vulnerable to violence, either as victims or as perpetrators.

Youth is the biggest demographic group in SADC countries. In Angola, 50% of the population are under the age of 12 and more than 70% are under the age of 35.²¹ The streets of Luanda are crowded with hundreds of people selling their wares among the long queues of cars and buses small stalls seem to pop up unexpectedly, and informal markets are spread all over town. Most of the Angolans involved in these informal activities are young men and women, and they could well become the universe of our sampling. This decision was also based on the findings of a 1998 survey on the informal market of Luanda, such as:

“The informal sector is dominated by economic agents who are mainly illiterate ... The average age in this sector is considerably lower than in the formal sector ... The informal sector sustains almost 55% of families of Luanda but it has the highest levels of poverty.”²²

And later in the same report:

“... the index of creation of employment for heads of household shows a fall of 53 points from 1991 to 1995, which indicates a general withdrawal

of supply of employment, particularly affecting the heads of household segment of the market. The informal sector contribution to the creation of employment for heads of household is 40% in the last ten years.”²³

According to the same report, the low salary was the reason for 72% of people leaving the formal private sector and entering the informal sector. It commented that “the informal market is like a shelter/refuge for the youngest heads of households”.²⁴

The fundamental questions were:

- What level of education, if any, have youth selling in the informal markets of Luanda?
- If they have some level of education, why are they working in the informal sector?
- Does the education provided in the education system in Angola capacitate youth to enter the job market?
- What expectations did they have when they joined school? Were those expectations fulfilled when they left school? If not, how do they feel about it?
- When and why did they leave school?
- Given the chance, would they go back to school?
- Could the hopes and expectations raised by education, and not realised due to few economic opportunities or poor quality of the education received, create in these youth a sense of frustration and social exclusion, thus forming the recruitment pools necessary to networks of crime or warlords?
- And if so, given the geo-strategic importance of Angola, could recruitment pools pose a regional problem?

This report does not aim to respond to all these questions, but to provoke thoughts around these issues and contribute to the ongoing debate on education and security. Post-conflict situations represent a difficult challenge, but also an opportunity for analysis and reform

of the education system. Being a vital tool in human development, education in post-conflict situations should be able to address the educational needs of vulnerable youth. Profiling youth involved in the informal sector could provide insights into a reform of the education sector or for the development of education initiatives targeting this group.

The immediate physical danger that many of these youth face every day is obvious – they squeeze between cars and buses; they constantly dodge traffic; and they spend long hours unattended on the streets, subject to nearly every kind of abuse. This group seems to be more exposed to violence, be it as victims or as perpetrators.

Luanda seemed a good choice of city for research: Luanda did not experience direct war²⁵ and thus became a haven for people fleeing more affected areas – according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the population of Luanda grew to an estimated 3.8 million during the war years;²⁶ being the capital and under government authority the education system in Luanda was never severely disrupted by war, but rather by overcrowded classrooms, lack of school facilities, and lack of qualified teachers; and Luanda is likely to be the first place in Angola to experience the full impact of any education reform. But Luanda should not be regarded as representing Angola and rural areas will probably experience different needs and outcomes. Thus, findings from this survey and report should not be extrapolated to the whole country.

Finally, the team decided to undertake a quantitative survey of youth involved in the informal sector of Luanda and their education, hopes and expectations. Respondents were chosen randomly in the places where they trade. Trained interviewers posed the questions and filled in the questionnaires.

The quantitative survey was developed and undertaken by ISPRA, in partnership with the CEEA and ISS. The interviewers, also trained by ISPRA, targeted 16 of the best-known informal markets and randomly interviewed 1,344 people. Although youth are usually defined as being between 16 and 25 years, in Luanda, the team decided the target age would be from 16 to 30 years, given the constraints to school life that students may have faced during the war.

This quantitative survey was complemented by a qualitative survey of 98 respondents, undertaken in the same way – a random choice of participants and questions posed by trained interviewers. This survey was developed and undertaken by the CEEA, ISS and ISPRA.

The following section presents the results from the analysis of both reports.

FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEYS

The statistical analysis of the data gathered via the surveys and some of the findings turned out to be surprising, even to attentive observers of Angolan society. The analysis and the findings of the surveys were thoroughly discussed with Angolan citizens from different economic sectors. The team asked people how they would interpret a specific outcome or how would they explain certain findings. The team hopes that, together with the observations *in loco*, these comments will add richness to the interpretation of the data and will help to clarify or raise some issues.²⁷

The first surprise the research team encountered when analysing the survey data was the gender ratio of the sample – 73% of the respondents were male (980) while women made up only 27% (364) of our sample. Why did our sample have such a gender gap, particularly when there seem to be far more women than men involved in the informal market?

Besides, according to OXFAM UK:

“As a result of the deaths of many young men during the war, Angola has developed an unusual demographic profile. Recent figures released by UNICEF show that there are only 91 men for every 100 women in Angola. This imbalance is even greater among Angolans between the ages of 20 and 35 – the principal fighting age groups. While, in the longer term, this imbalance might create new leadership or employment opportunities for women, in the short term it means that there are very large numbers of households headed solely by women.”²⁸

Many explanations were given for this outcome: some say women are more zealous and dedicated to their work; others argue that time is too precious for women to be ‘wasted’ replying to surveys – women spend the whole day walking, carrying merchandise, sweating, and labouring on the streets and markets, only to arrive home and find all the household chores, children and husband waiting for them. Men, the team were told, are busy in the informal market for lack of a formal job, they do not consider this activity ‘proper’ work and always find time for a chat, a drink or even a flirtation, so why not answer a survey?

A comment provided by one of the respondents to the qualitative survey seems to illustrate these statements. Respondent 63, a female lottery seller, when halfway through the survey, said:

“Hey little lady, don’t you think that you have already asked too many questions? Look the papers [meaning the lottery tickets] are finished, I earn daily, I didn’t leave lunch prepared at home so come back tomorrow, OK. Ya! I must go home and talk to my neighbour [the man who sells her the lottery tickets]. Sorry but I can’t answer any more, I am also very hungry. Sorry.”²⁹

Another plausible answer is that women seem to be generally less educated than men and might feel inadequate to participate in surveys. Unequal gender access to education seems to be a pattern in most developing countries and, some would argue, even in developed societies. Already in 1998 “in the informal sector women heads of household [formed] a high-risk group, given that 42.2% of them cannot read or write”.³⁰

However, the findings from the current survey seem to be different. An analysis by gender of other variables, such as monthly income levels, age, and education, showed that while there was a differential in monthly income between the two groups – 5,600 kwanza (US\$70) for women versus 7,400 kwanza (US\$92.5)³¹ for men – the male and female cohorts were similar in many other ways. While female respondents found themselves in a particularly invidious situation with average earnings only three quarters those of men, the average age of respondents in both groups was 21 and both groups had, on average, similar education levels (slightly over five years each). The difference in earnings does not seem to be attributable to education or age, and this was probably the first surprise of the survey – why this difference in income?

This income gap may be due to the gender gap of the sample; or men may be more inclined to inflate their income; or it may even reflect attitudes towards gender. Further research on this topic should endeavour to clarify the income gap, as many households in Angola are headed by women.

Where the two groups do differ markedly is in their exposure to economic activity. While 63% of male respondents who named their activities sold goods, female respondents were almost totally confined to this sector: 92% of women who declared an economic activity were sellers. Men enjoyed greater exposure to other opportunities in the informal sector as well as to work as mechanics and ‘middle men’.

Selling constituted 77% of all the economic activities declared by respondents, making this sector a key driver of economic trends and attitudes, while 20.6% of the respondents were connected to services in the informal sector (guarding and washing cars, *roboteiros*,³² ‘middle men’, prostitutes). However, slightly more than one third (36%) of respondents said they were not economically active or declined to declare in which sector they operated.

When sellers are considered on their own, neither the predominance of men nor the income differentials disappear. Women made up only 38% of sellers. The gender differential in earnings is reduced, but does not disappear. Female sellers earn on average 6,200 kwanza (US\$77.5) a month compared to 7,800 kwanza (US\$97.5) earned by male sellers.

When clustered by monthly income, the sample presents the following picture:

- 7.2% earn more than US\$200
- 20.7% earn between US\$100 and US\$200
- 10.6% earn between US\$50 and US\$100, and
- 13.8% earn less than US\$50

Although profit is very low, it is higher than was originally assumed by the research team, particularly considering that the minimum national salary for formal employment in Angola is US\$50.

The second most striking thing about the respondents is the size of their households and the number of people who depend on them. The average household size is 5.7 (approximately double the average household size in South Africa, for instance). Half of all households have more than five members. Despite their relative youth (the average age of respondents is 21), the respondents have an average of 2.1 children each, indicating that household facilities are shared with kin or other families. The large household size is reflected in the high dependency ratio (the ratio of economically active to not economically active). The average household has 2.2 economically active members. Therefore every economically active household member has, on average, 1.6 other household members depending on him/her – despite the abysmal income levels.

Once again female respondents find themselves in an adverse situation. Their households have fewer economically active members (2 versus 2.3) and are larger (5.8 versus 5.7) than those of male respondents. Female respondents similarly had, on average, 2.2 children versus the 2.0 reported by the male respondents.

The questionnaire included a question on marital status. Most respondents considered themselves ‘single’, although they may co-habit with a partner and even have children with that partner (and/or others). When the research team confronted their Angolan family and friends with this finding, all of them agreed that most Angolans do not ‘marry officially’. Stating that one has a husband or wife seldom has to do with marriage. For instance, women regard a man who contributes to household expenses as a husband, independently of whether they live together or not and of being married to him or not. This fluidity in relations merits further research.

Another common feature in Angola seems to be polygamy:

“Each man with some wealth gets a second woman, sometimes even a third and more women. Doing this, he fulfils an old African tradition, and also satisfies his ego, shows his machismo, splits his bad temper, and he has a shelter to hide in case of domestic quarrel. She accepts the situation, a little by tradition – her parents and grandparents have lived like that – but also because having a man at home increases her respectability, gives her some protection, enlarges her financial capacity, and she gets a father for her children. But this is not always the case, since many men don’t have the financial capacity to maintain even one family, don’t help, and only come when the problems on the other side are too big and they must run away from them.”³³

According to many of these interviewees, another consequence of the gap between female and male seems to be prostitution:

“Prostitution is often the outcome of these relationships, only with much worse consequences. It seems to affect all kinds of women – young and old, illiterate or academics, poor or rich. The motives can be the most disparate – some so frivolous as getting a dress, a mobile phone, or just to go for a walk, others for poverty and necessity, like paying for studies, feeding a son or buying medicines. Always a risky profession, but now much riskier with the HIV/AIDS threat. But all of this is the result of a society experiencing many problems, without means to guarantee the livelihoods of everybody, with great economic differences and where war left a deep imprint not only in terms of emotional and social relations but also in terms of living for the day with little consideration for the future.”³⁴

Concerning this last point – the future – it is interesting to notice that 58.6% of the respondents do not know what retirement is, and many others have a distorted notion of what a pension might mean.

Another surprise in this survey is the literacy level of the respondents. Whereas the initial assumption was that many of these youth would be illiterate, the survey sample revealed only 1% of illiterates, even though Angola's national illiteracy rate is 58%.³⁵ On the other hand, 44.9% of the respondents have attained more than the fifth grade. The explanation is linked with the high rates of unemployment, which seem to be sending many qualified people to the informal market. This finding also surprised the Angolans with whom the team discussed the results. The most frequent remark was: "If people with education are selling in the informal market, what are the illiterate supposed to be doing?"

A further unexpected finding concerned the kind of family structure in which respondents said they had grown up. It is inevitable that the war would have had a pronounced impact on how households are constructed physically and socially. And yet most respondents (77%) say they grew up with one or both parents, while 19% grew up with another family member. Almost one quarter (23%) of respondents who answered the question reported growing up with someone other than a parent. Four per cent of respondents reported growing up with neighbours, friends or other people who were not relatives.

Respondents who did not grow up with a parent were asked where their parents were. Almost all of those who answered the questions explained their parents' absence in terms of reasons that might – though not necessarily – have been directly related to the conflict. Over half of those growing up without a parent said their parents were dead or had 'disappeared'. Whereas one can assume that the 'disappearance' may have been caused by the war, it is more difficult to relate the war to death, as the questionnaire did not include a question on the cause of death. Given the low life expectancy in Angola, one should not extrapolate and assume that these deaths may be attributable to the war.

And yet one cannot argue that the sample seem to enjoy familial instability, as most of the respondents continue to live in stable families. Thus, 75.3% still live with family (parents, husband/wife, others); 93.3% claimed to have had a well-cared-for infancy; 83.9% were sent to school by a member of their family; relatives helped 63.9% of the respondents with their homework; 50.1% left school for familial reasons ('parents, difficulties', 'hunger at home', 'help parents'); helping the family was the aim of 34.4% of the respondents when they started working; 46.5% of the respondents support their family with their income from work; and 74.3% want to give a medium (professional) or higher education to their children. Statements provided by respondents to the qualitative survey

seem to indicate family stability and eagerness to have the children educated:

“I had a religious education, my parents are religious, I’m the youngest of 14 siblings, my father is a gardener and my mother a *lavadeira*³⁶ and with what they earned they had to feed us ... we were well respected due to our education.”³⁷

“I had a very nice infancy, I grew up with my parents. My parents were always very good and tender with me ... we were 30 siblings, some died, now we are 14, and this because my father had three wives.”³⁸

Another important finding of this survey was the degree of stability that most respondents claimed to have, in spite of all the violence of war. This feeling of stability may be related to the family situation. Thus, 92% of the respondents said that they had friends in school; 76% of them felt equal to everybody in the same school; 92.8% liked their teachers; 93.5% liked do to homework; 74.3% liked attending school; 94.8% wished to pursue their studies; and 70.8% feel that studying had been worth even if it did not seem to improve their livelihoods.

In spite of all the negative and counterproductive events that have taken place in the recent history of Angola – civil war, economic difficulties, and social conflicts – it seems that at least some aspects of the African traditional family may have survived, even in a big urban centre such as Luanda. If so, this could represent a solid ground on which to build peace education and national reconciliation.

The impact of the war is also evident in the degree of mobility shown by the respondents. Less than a quarter (22%) of respondents said they had been born in Luanda province.

The answers respondents gave to the question on what they would like to have been as an adult also seem to suggest the value and the hopes that respondents (and their families) pinned on education: 32.7% were aiming for a tertiary education. All the professions that were mentioned most require education or some kind of technical knowledge: 12.1% mentioned businessman, 11.6% wished to become drivers and 10.6% were aiming at becoming teachers.

It is interesting that respondents expressed their wish for tertiary education by using the term ‘doctor’. In Angola ‘doctor’ has very wide use, and applies to physicians, lawyers, economists, mathematicians: in short, to any profession requiring tertiary education. These are commonly

regarded as liberal professions, well paid and bringing prestige to those who practise them. Businessmen are considered influential people, without any employer. 'Driver' may seem a strange choice, but given the circumstances it may be not so surprising. Angolans who live in urban centres had their mobility severely curtailed by the war and 'driver' seems to invoke a wandering life, the ownership of a truck and the money you can earn when travelling, ferrying goods from one place to another.

The qualitative survey gives a different picture, as more male respondents prefer technical professions such as engineers and mechanics. This may be because in the qualitative survey this was an open question, whereas in the quantitative survey it was a closed question with several options, among which was 'doctor'. The results of the quantitative survey seem to indicate the high regard most Angolans have for education and the clear perception that better education equals better economic opportunities. However, the qualitative survey provided insights into the frustrations of some respondents:

"I still didn't stop dreaming of being a teacher so I can teach my sons."³⁹

Some showed more altruistic and social concerns:

"He insists on being a soccer player as he likes very much soccer. But then he said that he wanted to be a politician to finish with banditry."⁴⁰

And others proved to be dreamers and ambitious too:

"He didn't like to do anything, but had a dream being president to help his friends."⁴¹

Professions such as soldier, policeman, sportsman and artist were hardly mentioned. That most respondents omitted soldier and policeman could be attributed to the war. After periods of protracted violence people commonly reject professions associated with it. In Mozambique, for instance, most combatants preferred demobilisation to integration with the new armed forces, and youth have consistently been evading mandatory conscription.⁴² But this does not seem to be true of Angola. When talking to people involved in the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process in Angola, they all stated that most fighters were looking forward to remaining with the armed forces. They felt they would have shelter, food, a salary, and a pension. Not an unpleasant life

in peacetime. Civilian life seemed too uncertain for most fighters and the DDR kits would not last forever. In a conversation with officers of the armed forces they mentioned that they are often asked when they will start recruiting again. Thus, the research team was quite surprised that military professions were chosen so seldom.

When analysing the graphic about the years in which respondents joined school, peaks are clearly visible on the years 1992, 1999 and 2003. The same peaks appear in relation to the years in which respondents dropped out of school. Going back to the historical context, 1992 was the year of the first peace agreement and elections; 1999 was when the war started to turn into the foreseeable defeat of UNITA; and 2003 was the first year of total peace since the 1960s. These years may have been ones of great hope, thus encouraging families to send their children to school and probably to take older ones out of school to maximise the window of economic opportunity that the end of a conflict always brings.

But there may be another explanation. If we look at the average age of respondents, most of them are between 16 and 25 years. Assuming that entry to school is usually at 7 years, the majority of the sample should have joined school between 1986 and 1994. Leaving school would then be between 1994 and 2000 for those who dropped after Level 1 and between 1999 and 2004 for those completing Level 2. For one reason or another, this finding may require further research, particularly if cross-referenced with the reasons respondents gave for dropping out of school.

Answers to this question – why did you leave school – were clustered in external (92.3%) and personal reasons (4.3%). Under ‘external’, the team considered all reasons that were beyond the control of the respondent, such as war or poverty, and ‘personal reasons’ expressed individual choice, such as “I wanted to marry and start my own family”. The qualitative survey showed that many girls abandoned school because of pregnancy:

“I left studying because I became pregnant, but even pregnant I used to go to school, but the headmaster said that they didn’t accepted pregnant students, only in the evening class, but at that hour there were many bandits so I decided to leave school.”⁴³

This particular reply illustrates how lack of security, even in peaceful times, may hinder school attendance.

Sometimes children were taken out of school for reasons that they perceived as unfair :

“My father made me go and live with a man, because I was assimilating little. I was sad looking at the other ones going to school and me staying at my in-laws not being able to join them on the way to school.”⁴⁴

But going to school in some cases was an difficult process requiring tough choices and acceptance:

“I went to school when I was 5 years old, but I only finished 3rd grade when I was 8 years old, the 4th grade at 9, 5th grade at 11, and this because when I passed I had to stay one year at home without studying because the money was not enough for all of us siblings to study at the same time. The same happened to my brothers and sisters, we were many at home.”⁴⁵

The team tried to cluster the replies into different categories and produced the following analysis: 67.8% of the respondents claimed economic reasons for dropping out of school, while 26.9% blamed war, and 1.9% gave other reasons. This cluster of replies seems to imply that economic reasons may weigh more heavily than war when families have to face decisions regarding the education of their young. It is true that Luanda may not be the best place to make such an analysis, as the city itself was hardly hit by war. However, the education system suffered impacts from the conflict: the influx of refugees and displaced people translated into overcrowded classrooms; lack of facilities and equipment; and shortage of qualified teachers. So, it is not very clear what respondents meant when they mentioned war as a reason for dropping out of school – they could be referring as much to lack of schools and teachers as to having been drafted or even to economic hardships brought about by the conflict. However, this finding seems to be relevant and deserves more research, as many governments in the region are under pressure from international financing agencies to control state expenditure and privatise many services, education being one of them.

The survey also inquired into the origin of the goods respondents were trading. The general perception in Angola seems to be that informal markets are the preferred means of passing on stolen or illicit goods. The research team clustered the replies to this question – where do you get the goods you are trading – into licit acquisition (wholesale warehouses): 56%; illicit acquisition (goods from hospitals are most likely stolen): 0.2%; and doubtful acquisition (goods procured at the airport and harbour may be the result of theft, but they also may be procured through airplane and boat crews, which implies at worst tax evasion): 2%.

Only 12.9% of the sample claimed to have a selling licence, while 44.8% openly stated that they did not have one. However, 31.3% acknowledged being harassed by the economic police, to whom they seem to pay regular ‘informal fees’. Since this was a quantitative survey with a direct question, it is likely that many respondents may have felt intimidated into admitting to bribing the police. In fact, *gasosa*⁴⁶ seems to be common and widespread in Angola.

“It exists at all levels, mainly in the public sector. Largely created by an excessive bureaucracy; by the lack of legislation to penalise it; by the low wages and the lack of respect for ‘things’ of the state.”⁴⁷

The replies regarding the place where they trade confirms that most activity is undertaken in open public spaces, such as streets and open markets, while only 8.4% claim to trade in institutions such as government departments and schools. This reinforces the vulnerability of these youth by increasing their risk of becoming victims of crime – they walk unaccompanied on the streets, carrying goods and money, thus becoming targets for corrupt officials and thieves alike.

One must keep in mind that street selling is undertaken in two different ways. The first, mainly by young males, is done in places where cars often stop (near traffic lights, fuel pumps, or where traffic jams often occur). The seller takes this opportunity to show and try to sell his products. The seller seldom moves, except when the economic inspectors come near. The second is practised mainly by women, usually young, who carry the product to sell on their heads, almost all with a baby on their backs, and many of them pregnant again, almost permanently moving on the streets, selling to passers-by or knocking door to door. They are known as *zungueiras* and they seem to embody the courage of Angolan women.

And what do respondents do with the income they make? Clustering the replies one obtains the following:

- 72.5% spend their income on essential items, such as family support
- 7.4% spend it on personal gratification, such as entertainment or nice clothing; and
- 2.4% claim that they save money.

It is striking that so few respondents (1.7%) claimed to be working to pay for education. This seems to stress the effect that economic hardship may have when families are considering the education of their young.

It also seems to argue in favour of state intervention and investment in social sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

Although this survey refers to Luanda, it provides some insights that should be further researched.

Education is regarded by respondents and their families as an investment in the future, something that will bring prestige and will open up a range of choices to the family and the individual. Most respondents entered school with great hopes and had to leave out for reasons beyond their control. When they realised they had to drop school most respondents said that they experienced sadness and anger.

This seems to be indicative of an emerging feeling of exclusion, which should be taken seriously and duly addressed. Education can play a vital role in keeping these youth within social accepted parameters and in harnessing their contribution to the reconstruction and development of Angola.

But to achieve this goal, this group has to be targeted with special education opportunities – be they flexible hours of attendance, or specially developed curricula.

Given the economic hardship experienced by most families in Angola, the government may be required to increase expenditure on social sectors. According to a report on public financing in Angola:

“Compared with the majority of other SADC countries, Angola is in a worse position, in terms of the percentage of Government expenditure carried out in the education and health sectors. This fact, which should be cause for concern, is one of the underlying reasons for the weak performance of the education and health sectors in Angola. The average share of education in Government expenditure, in the period from 1997 to 2001, was 4.7% in Angola, while, in the 14 SADC countries, the average was 16.7% ... In short, as a proportion of its total Government expenditure, Angola devoted ... to the education sector less than a third. In the case of education, some countries, like South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, exceeded 20%. In these countries, the weight of education in Government expenditure is four or even five times higher than in Angola.”⁴⁸

Angola has emerged from a long conflict and has tremendous potential to become a key player in the region. Investment in education may

contribute not only to national reconciliation but also to a tremendous increase in the human capital of Angola.

Yet education, insofar as it raises hopes and aspirations in youth and their families, can contribute to a sense of frustration if and when these hopes and aspirations are not realised. The finding of our surveys among street traders, as far as education was concerned, revealed the presence of a large number of relatively well-educated young people forced through economic circumstances to make a living by selling on the street: an occupation which, as we have noted, was regarded at least by the young men as not being a 'proper job'. Such a situation raises the spectre of social exclusion, which may make youth liable to be drawn into a life centred on violence. It is in the interest of both Angola and the remaining SADC countries that such recruitment pools should be confined and controlled. Education on its own can only be a partial solution. As Angola reaps the benefits of peace and booming oil prices experienced over the last two years, a priority must be the development of the economy in a way that draws increasing numbers of young people into the formal employment sector. Only in this way will increasing access to education be matched by the channelling of skills in productive activity, and the kind of social stability that Angola has desired for so long.

NOTES

- 1 Colonel Manuel Correia de Barros (ret) is the head of the Southern Africa Research Department Centro de Estudos Estratégicos de Angola (CEEAA).
- 2 Paul Collier, Paul Gaultier and Jan Willem Gunning, *The microeconomics of African growth, 1950–2000*, although focusing mainly on the economics of conflict, often refers to education as a factor impacting on conflict, for instance.
- 3 The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, *Reshaping the future – education and post conflict reconstruction*, 2005.
- 4 Ibid, p xii.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 <www.developmentgoals.org/About_the_goals.htm> (February 2005).
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 <www.humansecuritynetwork.org/menu-e.php> (February 2005). According to their website, the Human Security Network (HSN) is a group of like-minded countries from all regions of the world that, at the level of foreign ministers, maintains dialogue on questions pertaining to human security. The network includes Austria, Canada, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Slovenia, Thailand and South Africa as an observer. The network has a unique inter-regional and multiple agenda perspective

- with strong links to civil society and academia. The network emerged from the landmines campaign and was formally launched at a ministerial meeting in Norway in 1999. Conferences at foreign minister level were held in Bergen, Norway (1999), in Lucerne, Switzerland (2000), Petra, Jordan (2001), Santiago de Chile (2002), Graz, Austria (2003) and Bamako, Mali (2004).
- 9 The Commission on Human Security was established with the initiative of the government of Japan as a contribution to the UN goals as expressed at the UN Millennium Summit. According to their website, it is co-chaired by Sadako Ogata, former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. It benefits from the participation of ten distinguished commissioners from around the world.
 - 10 *Human security now*, Commission on Human Security, New York, 2003, p 114.
 - 11 S Conceição, Brigada de Segurança Escolar, *Tranquilidade*, Issue 0, 2004, p 8.
 - 12 Ibid, p 9.
 - 13 Although the team did not research this phenomenon, newspapers in Angola periodically include news on youth gangs led, apparently, by educated upper-class youth.
 - 14 This concept has been originally developed by Angela McIntyre, a former senior researcher with the ISS. See any of the many writings of this author on children and conflict.
 - 15 The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, op cit, p 25.
 - 16 Ibid, pp 3, 7 ff.
 - 17 <www.fas.org/irp/world/para/unita.htm> (February 2005).
 - 18 T Hodges, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to petro-diamond capitalism*, Indiana University Press, 2004.
 - 19 The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, op cit.
 - 20 Fernanda Bravo, Há colégios privados com níveis inferiores aos do Estado, *Jornal de Angola*, 21 October 2004.
 - 21 Global survey on education in emergencies – Angola Country Report, Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, December 2003.
 - 22 Alves da Rocha, preface to M Adata de Sousa, *Informal sector in Luanda – contribution for a better understanding*, Author’s edition, Luanda, 1998, p 7.
 - 23 Adata de Sousa, op cit, p 39.
 - 24 Ibid, p 33.
 - 25 Luanda did not experience open conflict, except in 1975 and 1992.
 - 26 <<http://mirror.undp.org/angola/Country%20Profile.htm>> (February 2005).
 - 27 All the members of the research team approached their Angolan relatives, friends and acquaintances and discussed with them the findings of the analysis. These were informal interviews but the team felt that they could add a lot of wealth to the final report.
 - 28 <www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/where_we_work/angola/menandwomen.htm> (February 2005).

- 29 Respondent 63.
- 30 Adauta de Sousa, op cit, p 39.
- 31 The exchange rate used throughout this report is US\$1 = 80 kwanza.
- 32 In Angolan slang this means a man who pushes a cart.
- 33 Núria, Angolan female in her twenties, single with one child, January 2005.
- 34 Nela, Angolan female in her thirties, married with children, January 2005.
- 35 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Relatório do Desenvolvimento Humano 2003, 2001 data.
- 36 In Portuguese this means a woman who washes the laundry from different households. Usually these women collect the laundry from different houses, wash it in the river, dry and iron it and then deliver the washed items to the respective households against a token payment.
- 37 Respondent 62. Male, 25 years old, married, 2 children, 8th grade, 13 siblings.
- 38 Respondent 60. Female, 27 years old, married, 1 son, studies 7th grade, from a family of 29 siblings (now 13).
- 39 Respondent 62. Male, 25 years old, married, 2 children, 8th grade, 13 siblings.
- 40 Respondent 58. Male, 17 years old, single, no children, studies 7th grade.
- 41 Respondent 59. Male, 22 years old, single, no children, 4th grade.
- 42 A Leão, *Weapons in Mozambique – reducing availability and demand*, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2004.
- 43 Respondent 63. Female, 19 years old, married, 1 son, 8th grade, lottery seller.
- 44 Respondent 42. Female, 21 years old, married, 2 children, 5th grade.
- 45 Respondent 60. Female, 27 years old, married, 1 son, studies 7th grade, from a family of 29 siblings (now 13).
- 46 *Gasosa* means soft drink, but in Angola is the usual colloquial term for a bribe or tip.
- 47 M C Barros and F Njele, Human security in Angola, Unpublished essay, CEEA, 2004.
- 48 Public financing of the social sectors in Angola, UNPD, IOM, UNICEF, WHO in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, August 2002, Luanda, p 13.