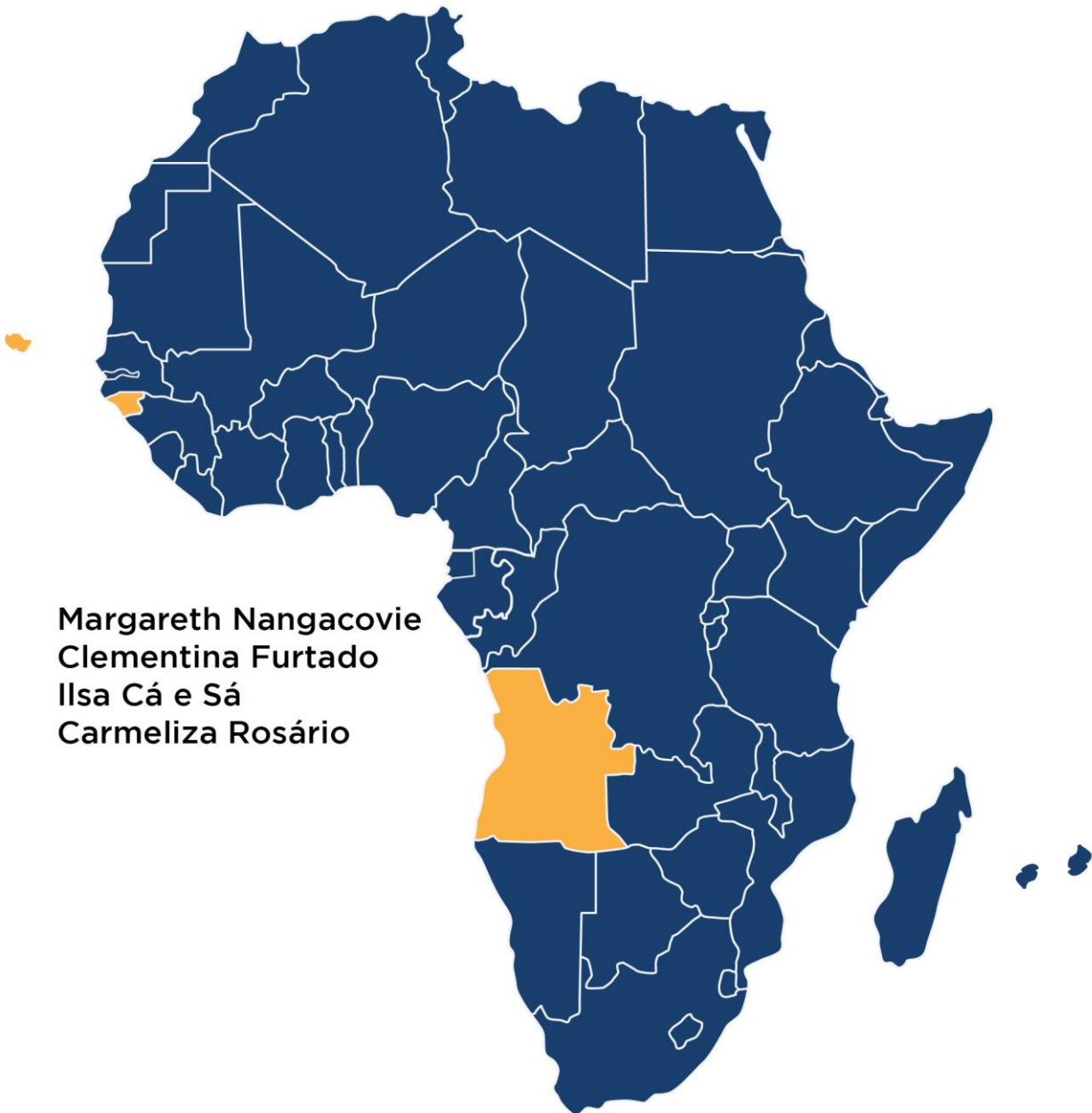


Africa's Social Policy Trajectories Since the Colonial Period

Constructing social policies in Portuguese speaking African countries, the nefarious effects of instability.



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Ilsa Cá e Sá
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Period:** Constructing social policies in Portuguese-speaking African
countries, the nefarious effects of instability

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Overview and Timeline

This report is the synthesis of the Cluster IX (Lusophone) country findings. We aimed to investigate the conceptualisation and framing of social policies, from a historical perspective, from colonial times to the present day. The work intends to answer the following central question: "How have the social policies adopted over time in the study's focus countries impacted on the ideals of gender equality, particularly during the pandemic COVID-19?" This cluster focused on the following four sectors: education, health, work/employment, and social security.

The analysis of social policies for each sector included a comprehensive review of social policies from colonial times to the present; consultations of important legislation, reports, and articles on the subject; semi-structured interviews with key informants and those responsible for financing and implementing social policies and programmes in the country to gather perceptions about the evolution of social programmes and policies. We also assessed relevant statistical data related to the sectors under analysis.

Based on the common history of the countries within the cluster, we established a timeline that permeates this report. The timeline is as follows: (1) the colonial period, from the establishment of the New State to the Independence Agreements (1933-1974); (2) the post-independence period, from independence to multi-partyism (1975-1986/9); (3) the period of structural adjustments (1987-1999), and (4) the period after the millennium declaration to today (2000-to Present).

While there would be good grounds to include a pre-colonial period, in recognition of the countries' own historical roots, we chose to start from a particular period in the late colonialisation, which has been the most influential in the postcolonial and some of the current policy trend and shortcomings. We do acknowledge that pre-colonial and early colonial historical dynamics also shape current state-citizen relationships and policy design.

The report is organised in the following manner. After this overview follows a section with a comparative analysis of patterns and trends in social policy over time in the four countries, namely Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. In this section, the following issues are discussed: key ideologies, norms, and values of these policies; the interests and institutional actors; how ideologies, interests and actors interact to produce the social policies; and gender dimensions of inequality. The next section focuses on a thematic analysis of social policy-making overtime in these countries, including the colonial legacies on social policy-making. The final chapter presents reflections on the opportunities for transformation of social policy, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, given the countries' particularities.

Overall, the social, economic, and political paradigm in the four countries changed very little. In three out of four, the state acted and continues to act as a paternalistic, authoritarian, centralised decision-maker. Cabo Verde stands out for having progressed further in their social development indicator improvements. This is likely related to differentiated colonial legislation, though equally subject to similar discrimination dynamics between settlers and indigenous people, experiencing no armed conflict.

Comparative Analysis of Patterns and Trends in Social Policy Over Time in Lusophone Countries

In this section, we present the key ideologies, norms and values that permeated social policies from colonial to current times in our Lusophone countries. We also describe the existing interests and main institutional actors implementing these policies. We then analyse how ideologies, interests and actors interact to produce social policies. We also discuss the gender dimensions of the different social policies and other dimensions of inequality.

Key ideologies, norms, and values

The colonial main ideology was based on racial separation ideology with separate policies for indigenous and settler populations. This meant a paternalistic state, with top-down policy-making. Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique generally had the same or equivalent laws. Policies in Cabo Verde were differentiated from the remaining African colonies, or overseas territories, as they were called in the late colonial period. For example, the Indigenate Statute (Decree-Law no. 39.668) did not apply to Cabo Verde. However, this did not mean that there was no racial discrimination and differentiation between the white and non-white populations. The ambiguity of the Indigenate for Cabo Verdeans applied specially to those who worked in the swiddens in S. Tomé and Angola, through denying their right to citizenship. However, we argue that this differentiation may have played a role in the logic of state building in Cabo Verde, through more stable democratisation process and the ability to continue to produce differentiated legislation from the other three countries.

The colonial economy relied on forced indigenous labour; and economic and social policies were set up to match and complement each other. Laws like the Legislative Diploma no. 518/1927 in Angola reorganised primary education and created indigenous rural education, simultaneously dividing the population racially and contributed to the Portuguese assimilationist project (Ribeiro 2015). The Indigenate Statute from 1954, applied to all but Cabo Verde, further deepening the differences between assimilated and indigenous and the respective elements of social inclusion and exclusion. Overall, though there was legislation mandating social responsibilities to employers, workers were still exposed to material conditions of exploitation that did not follow the letter of the law. A weak state had little recourse, if it had the will to counter the actions of powerful economic actors that sustained the colonial economy.

All four countries followed a Marxist ideology after independence. A single party governed all these countries. The legitimacy of these parties was contested in Angola and Mozambique, where civil wars followed immediately after independence, seriously compromising the social enterprise. The main post-independence narrative aimed at eliminating the inequities created by colonialism, with a strong focus on education, health, and housing. Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique based their efforts on education and health, relying on the experiences from the liberated zones, where they had begun piloting proto-universal education and health programmes. In all countries, the new economic project started by either nationalising or expanding overall all social services. Cabo Verde was the only country which started early

with a social protection programme by creating the Institute for Insurance and Social Providence (ISPS) in 1978. In the remaining countries, Social Protection legislation was not introduced before 1990 — in Angola by means of Law no. 18/90; and in Guinea-Bissau as late as 2007 through Law no. 4/2007; and in Mozambique through Law no. 4/2007. However, it must be noted that Mozambique already had social security legislation in place since 1989 through Law no. 05/89.

This means that, for most countries, social protection policies were introduced as an aftermath of the structural adjustments and consolidation of a neoliberal logic of protection, detached from the remaining social sectors and linked directly to individual productivity. The structural adjustments also meant an opening to the market economy, and defunding social sectors. It also meant the introduction of multi-party politics and effecting changes in the national constitutions. In Mozambique it coincided with the peace accords. Most constitutions changed in 1990-1992, to allow for multiple parties (Constitutional Law of 1992 for Angola; Constitutional Law no. 2/III/90 for Cabo Verde; Constitutional Law no. 1/1991 for Guinea-Bissau; Constitution of 1990 for Mozambique). Gradual opening for privatisation of social sectors followed. For Cabo Verde this period truly represented a period for democratisation. Whereas Angola would continue its war until 2002, and Guinea-Bissau would have a second coup d'état and a civil war between 1998 and 1999. These conflicts made the consolidation of the democratic institutions difficult. Renewed tensions in 2012 and a new conflict from 2017 in Mozambique also meant a back-slide in the democratisation process.

From 2000, the Millennium Declaration introduced a global development vision where developing countries would strive to achieve certain goals, namely eliminate poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women. This meant the introduction of Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP) that would overhaul all other policies. Unlike other countries, Cabo Verde developed a Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2004. This suggests is a markedly different approach, which integrates economic and social elements in the strategy. Angola seems to be attempting a similar approach with its Integrated Municipal Plans for Poverty Reduction and Rural Development, initiated in 2012, away from the initial Poverty Reduction Strategy of 2004 (Resolution no. 9/04). The Angolan strategy focuses on decentralisation and funding from its own oil revenue, subject to oil price fluctuations (Feliciano 2015).

An important distinction between Cabo Verde and Angolan approaches is that the former follows a more redistributive and care approach, whereas the latter favours a trickle-down approach, as can be seen from the investment in the social sectors discussed hereafter. Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, on the other hand, are donor-dependent, and their social investment is not linked to their economies, but rather to the investments of development partners. Especially in these two countries, planning is 'siloes,' which means that each sector plans with very little integration with the other sectors.

Social policy in three of the four countries follows 'assistencialist' (or welfarist) approach, which was also reflected in the COVID-19 policies. Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire argued that the 'assistencialist' approach worked against social transformation.

Assistencialism is an especially pernicious method of trying to vitiate popular participation in the historical process. In the first place, it contradicts man's natural vocation as Subject in that it treats the recipient as a passive object, incapable of participating in the process of his own recuperation; in the second place, it contradicts the process of "fundamental democratization." (Freire 2005, 12)

Instead, Freire proposed a process of working with the people, reflecting on durable and transformative solutions for their problems through a critical consciousness. Freire proposes that this is done through a particular kind of education, capable of arousing such critical thinking and enabling agency.

Again, Cabo Verde distinguished itself from the other three by designing a National Care Plan (Resolution no. 143/2017) to reduce the domestic burden of care that befell women. It also provided support, though insufficient, through solidarity grants and one month of income support to individuals operating in the informal sector, including domestic workers (Schwettmann 2020). Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique had conversations with trade unions for the protection of workers and the latter planned, but largely failed to increase the support base of those eligible to basic income support. Angola followed neither option, preferring support through cash transfers to poor and vulnerable people, largely overlooking people in the informal sector. In both Angola and Mozambique, there were reports of violent crackdown on informal vendors.

Different regional and global actors mostly influenced these disjointed approaches from which each country derives influence. Angola, as an important oil producer, is more aligned with neo-liberal social and economic approaches, and as mentioned, favours a trickle-down framework. Cabo Verde, economically intertwined with the EU, takes inspiration from the European social states, particularly Portugal. Guinea-Bissau is in too much turmoil to be able to develop a meaningful social policy strategy. Most actions are left to civil society and international organizations, without any relation to economic strategies or performance. Mozambique favours neoliberal economic approaches but has, for the most part, favoured inclusive social policies, largely because socially inclusive countries like the Nordics and Canada funded it. Lately, USAID has become the largest funder in the health sector; and the World Bank in the Social Protection sector. This means a slide towards the neoliberal approach.

Interests and institutional actors

The Portuguese state was unable to manage its overseas territories fully. Consequently, the Catholic Church became an important actor in the education, health and general social assistance sector. Many of the approaches and even infrastructures of the church were reclaimed by the post-independence state. There were different tiers of education. The state provided education, mostly to settlers. Missionary education was provided to African elites, with a clear civilising purpose. In Angola, for example, Salvador Correia High School trained most of the MPLA elite and the first presidents, namely Agostinho Neto and Jose Eduardo dos Santos. In Cabo Verde, the St. Nicolau Seminary High School trained students in

religious matters and in public administration until the first Portuguese Republic in 1910. It was the precursor of other educational projects on the island. There was also a more basic education for rural populations, almost exclusively for boys to serve in the colonial economic enterprise of resource exploitation. In resource rich countries like Angola, Mozambique and partially Guinea-Bissau, the same economic logic continues to date. Women were generally kept unschooled and unskilled, tending the fields, and acting as labourers. Alternatively, they were educated to become good housewives.

In Mozambique, the Protestant church was important in the anti-colonial struggle. Many of the leaders of the independence struggle were Presbyterian, educated by Swiss missionaries. This church created an educated elite with an anti-colonial conscience, especially after the Second World War and the increasing African countries becoming independent (Cruz e Silva 1998).

The main actors after independence were the governing parties of each country — MPLA¹ in Angola, PAIGC² in Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau, and FRELIMO³ in Mozambique. They determined all policies, economic and social. The same party has remained in power since independence in Angola and Mozambique. Despite their multi-party constitutions, they still dominate parliaments and policy-making. Cabo Verde has had a more successful regime change, although two parties PAICV⁴ and MPD⁵ dominate the political environment — the former having transitioned from Marxist to Social Democrat and the latter identifying as Christian Democratic Liberal. Since 1973, Guinea-Bissau has had political instability through frequent coup d'états.

As mentioned, the resource-rich countries have continued to rely on extractive and export-oriented economies, whereas the resource-poor Cabo Verde turned into a service-oriented economy. This means that the exploitative nature of labour relationships and social protections found still continue. Meanwhile, Cabo Verde managed to establish a privileged relationship with the EU through the Special Partnership in 2007. In 2008, the country has become a middle-income country. Angola, despite its equally high GDP per capita, has not been able to do the same. Due to some crisis in 2014, owing to the low oil prices and the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's ability to transition has delayed.

After the structural adjustments, the main actors have been the development partners, as well as bilateral and multinationals such as the World Bank and the UN. These have varying and sometimes even contradictory interests. The strongest example is in sexual and reproductive health, where the US has a policy that differs from most other western countries regarding, for example, abortion. This created a dysfunction between the policies that are approved and the ones that are funded with stronger likelihood for their implementation. In Mozambique, for example, while safe abortion has been liberalised, its implementation is fully donor-

¹ Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

² Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde). After the first coup d'état in 1980 that deposed the president, Luis Cabral, the party split into the Cabo Verdean (PAICV) and the Guinea-Bissau branch, where it retained the original name.

³ Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front).

⁴ Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Cabo Verde).

⁵ Movimento para a Democracia (Movement for Democracy).

funding dependent. This suggests that the interests of donors and receiving countries may also be at odds, particularly in a highly dependent country like Mozambique.

Interaction of Ideologies, Interests, and Actors

In the late colonial period, despite legislation attributing responsibilities to employers for the health, housing, and education of employee dependents, forced labour-like conditions persisted. Slavery and forced labour had a long tradition in the Portuguese colonies, and later in overseas territories. Portugal was forced to amend legislation condoning forced labour when the League of Nations established that forced labour equated to slavery in 1933 (Cooper, Holt, and Scott 2005). Again, while unequal and unjust labour relations existed in Cabo Verde, it was only in the other African colonies that there was specific legislation and widespread practice. Cabo Verdeans instead, could be conscribed into forced labour in other colonies, as way of legal punishment.

The brutal violence and far-reaching social disruption created by forced labour had a profound impact on colonized communities. It was one of the most important ways that individual subjects interacted with the Portuguese colonial state. Forced labour was also fundamental in structuring the economic, political, social, and ideological contours of the Portuguese empire: the colonial economy was deeply dependent on the exploitation facilitated by forced labour, and both the operations of the Portuguese colonial administration and the justification for its existence were closely intertwined with conscripting forced workers (Guthrie 2022).

It was difficult, if not impossible to dislodge this logic of violent relationship with the state, which also echoed pre-colonial state-subject relationships. Additionally, social programmes in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique were derailed by post-independence wars and general instability. In the 16 years that the war lasted, between 1976 to 1992, more than half of Mozambican health network collapsed with the destruction of the infrastructure, killing of health staff, and stealing of medicine. The sparse education network suffered a similar fate. In Angola, the conflict created increased polarisation between the warring parties, MPLA and UNITA. It impoverished the country and slowed down its economy. Guinea-Bissau continues to suffer from persistent low social indicators due to lack of government ambition to implement social policies, deepened by cyclical political instability. Drought and desertification had negative effects on the efficacy of policies in Cabo Verde, but it was not as paralysing.

Table 1 shows statistics of persistence to last grade of primary school children enrolled in the first grade who eventually reached the last grade of primary education, for the four countries. Only Cabo Verde has managed to significantly improve its outcomes.

Table 1. Persistence to last grade of primary, percent of cohort

Country	At independence (1974/75)	Current	Male	Female
Sub-Saharan Africa	64%	57%	54%	60%
Angola	24%	32%	37%	27%
Cabo Verde	13%	90%	89%	91%
Guinea-Bissau	14%	8%	9%	7%
Mozambique	21%	43%	43%	43%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022

The Health Sector

HIV/AIDS pandemic has been the primary shaper of health policies and priorities in the health sector. Together with the global sustainable goals they have tended to focus on sexual and reproductive health approaches. Some of the lessons learned from the HIV/AIDS pandemic have been useful to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, namely regarding communication to the public. Cabo Verde and Mozambique have also led successful vaccination drives. Mozambique has a long tradition of childhood immunisation and used this infrastructure to roll out the COVID-19 vaccination efforts. Cabo Verde also has a high vaccination rate, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, they rolled out HPV vaccination and Hepatitis B campaign for health workers. Overall, health systems in most of these countries are unable to adequately serve populations; the policies mostly focused on maternal and child health.

Although all countries improved their mortality rates, only Cabo Verde improved even beyond the sub-Saharan average. Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau have consistently the worse results, chiefly due to the prolonged crises and underserving of rural areas, where most of the population lives. Due to its war, most of the Angolan population have become urban. Although most of its social indicators do not fare much better than in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, a large urban population concentrated where they could have access to social services and higher revenues.

Table 2. Maternal and child health indicators

Country	Maternal mortality, per	Neonatal mortality rate,	Infant mortality rate,	Under 5 mortality rate,
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	100,000 live births	per 1,000 live births	per 1,000 live births	per 1,000 live births
Angola	281	27	48	72
Cabo Verde	47	9	12	14
Guinea-Bissau	898	35	51	77
Mozambique	589	28	53	71

Source: Country data (maternal mortality), UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation

Angola (US\$ 2,138) and Cabo Verde (US\$ 3,446) have a higher GDP per capita average in sub-Saharan Africa (US\$ 1,646) while Guinea-Bissau (US\$ 813) and Mozambique (US\$ 500) have the lowest of the four. Angola’s economy relies on its extractive industry, mostly oil. It is, therefore, vulnerable to global crude prices. Cabo Verde’s economy is service-oriented, mostly focused on tourism, although it does have some industries such as fish processing and salt mining. Its economic vulnerability was tested under COVID-19, with the slowing of air travel and tourism. Guinea-Bissau’s economy is mostly linked to agriculture. Mozambique had an economy which relied on agriculture until recently. It is now shifting to an economy relying on its extractive industry. Its GDP is expected to more than double.

Social Policies and Investment

The wealth of a country does not presage investment in its social sectors. Angola, which favours a trickle-down approach, has Education expenditure (7 percent) that is the lowest of the four; 15 percent for Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau; and 17% for Mozambique. Angola also has the lowest in Health expenditure (3%), followed by Cabo Verde (5%), then Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau (8%). The brunt of the health expenses in Guinea-Bissau is borne by its citizens, constituting 65% of their out-of-pocket cost. This reflects the virtual ineffectiveness of social policies in the country. Angolans pay 38%, Cabo Verdeans 25%, and Mozambicans only 10%. Since donors funded social services upwards to 60%, this means that Mozambican health policies are more amenable to donor influence.

Meanwhile military expenditure is highest in Angola (8%), followed by Guinea-Bissau (7%) and Mozambique (3%). Cabo Verde only spends 2% of its GDP on the military. Whereas in the other three countries, as is to be expected, expenditure increases during crisis and conflict. Political instability and previous warfare seem related to a higher military expenditure. Additionally, Cabo Verde (7%) and Angola (3%) rely very little on external support for their health systems. Guinea-Bissau (25%) and, especially Mozambique (63%), are more donor-dependent. Donor-dependence affects of economic and social policies.

Gender Dimensions of Social Policy

The gendered dimension of social policies did not become apparent in policies until late 1990s. In the colonial period, women and children depended on male workers. All benefits, to

which they were entitled, mostly in the area of health and education, came through this relationship of dependence.

In the post-independence era, despite women's emancipation rhetoric, class inequality concerns were rife. Although women were expected to work alongside men, they continued to be over-represented in the social sectors, like education and health and continued to bear the brunt of care work domestically. Alternatively, this work was passed on to other women in the domestic service under precarious and informal arrangements, even after approval of legislation regulating domestic worker's rights in Angola (2016), Cabo Verde (under the general labour law of 2007, and specifically in 2017) and Mozambique (2008). Care work is highly gendered and remains a major source of inequality.

Angola (Presidential decree no. 155/16) and Mozambique (Decree no. 40/2008) have legislated on domestic workers' rights. However, the legislation does not account for the fact that the domestic worker is vulnerable in outsourcing their care responsibilities. Consequently, the domestic worker's benefits are only as good as their employers' economic capabilities, which in weak or unequal economies, are often precarious. In Cabo Verde, there is the recently approved National Care Plan (Resolution no. 143/2017), which aims to address the gendered inequity of unpaid care work. It has yet to show its efficacy in implementation. For example, one of the areas that this legislation focused on was early childhood care. Nursery and pre-school children became the responsibility of the municipalities. A law decree (no. 58/2018) provided for the increase in the number of kindergartens, prioritising children from 0 to 3 years and provided a guide for ludo-pedagogic content. In training caretakers, NGOs and the private sector would complement the public sector. This presents an opportunity to fight especially female youth unemployment, due to the gendered nature of the work. Despite its potential, subsequent evaluations have found that training, for example, has not translated into employment (Furtado 2019).

The Beijing conference (1995) adopted by CEDAW (1979), precipitated explicit consideration of gender in policies. Subsequently sectoral plans, empowerment programmes, women's poverty reduction strategies were developed. This included the revision of family laws, as well as gender-based violence laws. We discuss the latter in more detail in the section on policy deficiencies. Family law in all the four countries is part of the Civil Code, which also includes legislation over inheritance and property. The Codes from which each country legislates were introduced in 1966, during the colonial period. These were contentious because they were pieces of legislation that clashed mostly with customary beliefs and values. Limited changes were introduced to accommodate post-independence values but the overhaul of family legislation was done differently in each country.

Angola revised its family code in 1988 (Law no. 1/88), although it maintained the structure of the previous Code. Cabo Verde did a complete overhaul of the Civil Code and introduced a new Family Code in 1981 (Law Decree no. 58/81). In 1997, however, it reintroduced the 1966 Civil Code (Legislative Decree no. 12-C/97), with reference to the validity of the amendments already in place. Guinea-Bissau, like Angola, maintained the structure of the Civil Code. However, it introduced legislation in 1976 that cancelled some of the precepts of the colonial legislation. Law no. 3 recognised *de facto* unions. Previously only Catholic marriages were valid. Law no. 4 cancelled the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate

children. Law no. 5 established 18 as the age of marital consent. Law no. 6 allowed for divorce. This was a major source of contention in all four countries.

Somewhat different from the other countries, Mozambique first introduced similar changes to its Civil Code through minor legislation. However, it later overhauled its Family Code twice, once in 2004 (Law no. 10/2004) and again in 2019 (Law no. 22/2019). The intention was to accommodate international legislation to which it had subscribed by way of constitutional changes. Despite legislation and policies aimed at gender equality, gaps still persist, as women continue to be very vulnerable to violence and poverty, least educated, and have the least access to formal employment.

Table 3. Indicators of violence, education attainment and participation in the working force

Country	Violence ⁶	Education ⁷	Employment ⁸
Angola	25.9%	22.2% female	67% female
		36.5% male	73% male
Cabo Verde	7.8%	28.2 % female	40% female
		30.6% male	52% male
Guinea-Bissau	–	–	59% female
			74% male
Mozambique	15.5%	10.6% female	74% female
		19.9% male	76% male

Source: UNSD, UNESCO, ILOSTAT

One of the major focuses for the attainment of gender equality, in addition to the change of legislation has been the focus on political participation, to reach or surpass 30% of parliament seats. This has been achieved in all but one of the countries, Guinea-Bissau, where female representation in parliament is only 15%. Angola has reached 30% of women representatives and Mozambique 42%. These countries have a long tradition of women’s political participation, including the independence struggle. In Cabo Verde, the Parity law (Law no. 68/IX/2019) was instrumental in helping the percentage of women in parliament to increase to 39%.

Studies have shown that the increase in female representation influences legislation. In effect, the three countries with higher female representation have introduced more equitable legislation (Pande and Ford 2012). However, the implementation of these laws has been deficient, which counters the expected benefits. This is not surprising as there is literature that is wary of focusing on measurement (Kabeer 2005; Merry 2011); as well as merchandising of policies, which just exist and therefore not effective (Adesina 2020). Persistent cultural values and norms and increased state authoritarianism are to be blamed for a slow achievement of gender equity, and overall inclusivity.

⁶ Proportion of women subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (% of ever-partnered women ages 15-49).

⁷ Educational attainment, at least completed lower secondary, population 25+.

⁸ Employment to population ratio, 15+.

Other dimensions of inequality

There are multiple dimensions of inequality in the four countries, the most important of which is the rural and urban divide. In Mozambique, 62% of the population is rural; in Guinea-Bissau it is 55% and in Angola and Cabo Verde it is 33%. The reason for this gap stems from longstanding divisions, arising from colonial economic strategies. These have been exacerbated by continuous insufficient social and economic investment in rural areas, and ironically a social policy protection that mostly targets rural people. This has meant that urban poverty has gone largely ignored, while rural poverty has been addressed inadequately. By some estimates, in Angola 88% of people living in poverty live in rural areas (INE 2020). In Cabo Verde it is estimated that these constitute 86% (INE 2018), in Guinea-Bissau 81% (OPHI 2022), and in Mozambique 79% (Santos and Salvucci 2017).

Table 4. Rural-urban asymmetry in access to electricity and water

	Angola	Cabo Verde	Guinea-Bissau	Mozambique
Access to electricity rural	7%	94%	15%	5%
Access to electricity urban	74%	95%	56%	75%
Basic drinking water facilities rural	28%	89%	50%	49%
Basic drinking water facilities	72%	93%	71%	88%

Source: EIA, IRENA, UNSD, WB, WHO, UNICEF

Rural populations have poorer access to basic living conditions, from drinkable water and electricity, to schools, health facilities, banking services, to name a few. Mobile access has proven a transformative technology. The rural-urban divide in access to banking services, for example, has shrunk on account of access to mobile services. The gender technological divide has also reduced, as mobile services have expanded. There are, however, important differences between the four countries, in terms of access to mobile services. While Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau have 100% access, Angola and Mozambique have 44% and 43%, respectively. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has stalled, and in some cases, reduced women's access to mobile technology (Shanahan 2022).

Identification of vulnerable groups in donor dependent countries or programmes is externally influenced. One example is the “Leave no one behind” programme in Cabo Verde, which is part of the United Nation Cooperation framework, and which includes a list of vulnerable groups in its Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development 2023-2027. Among the ten vulnerable groups are some whom social programmes consistently target, like the disabled and the elderly, and most recently sexual minorities. At times the programmes mention women as targets for protection, without distinguishing intersecting vulnerabilities like age, disability, marital and employment status. Due to the HIV pandemic, child led households also became a priority vulnerable group in some social programmes, despite them being a relatively rare phenomenon. Typically, orphans were absorbed into other households,

primarily grandparents. To be fair, these households were also targeted for social protection. Also due to the HIV pandemic, men who have sex with men (MSM) have been part of priority groups, while other LGBT groups have been neglected.

The countries also have a deep regional divide. In Mozambique, the northern and central regions have high and persistent levels of inequality accessing health, education, and employment. Poverty reduction policies have given equal weight to provinces, but effectively invested more in social infrastructure in the southern region (with fewer population), and whose infrastructure was less affected by the war. As a result, the remaining regions have responded poorly to the development policies (Libânio 2021). In Angola, the coastal provinces have better social and economic outcomes. Ironically, the richest provinces in resources, like Cabinda, Zaire and Bengo are also the least prosperous with worst social development indicators. This is greatly due to centralised policies, previous colonial resource exploitation, and continued lack of communicability. In Cabo Verde, inequality overwhelmingly affects the most remote islands.

Despite policies and investments in girls’ education, there is a persistent education gap between men and women. The gap is even wider in rural areas, where opportunities are scarcer. This affects women more, as they are the most important source of labour in agriculture. Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, being the most rural countries, have the highest participation of women in agriculture (above the Sub-Saharan average), where revenues are low or non-existent. It should be noted that many women do not control the income they make from the sale of the crops they produce or help to produce.

There are several factors for this; most are linked to persistent social norms. For example, in Guinea-Bissau women holding land tenure is low. According to the country’s gender profile, their work also tends to concentrate in the lower end of the value chain, i.e., farming, harvesting, and sorting. Men almost exclusively sell the produce to their fellow male traders. The decision about spending the revenue, however, is decided by women (AfDB 2015). In Mozambique and Angola, by contrast, women may legally own plots, albeit often smaller ones than men (Morgado and Salvucci 2016; AfDB 2008). However, they have lower access to markets, favour food crops over cash crops and in some instances do not manage the plots they own (Navarra 2019). Cabo Verde is distinct from the other three countries in two important ways. Agriculture is less prevalent, and men, not women, dominate the sector even in production. Women who work the land tend to be older, poorer and do it mostly for subsistence (UNWomen and AfDB 2018).

Table 5. Employment in agriculture

Country	Total	Men	Women
Angola	51%	45%	57%
Cabo Verde	11%	15%	5%
Guinea-Bissau	60%	57%	64%
Mozambique	70%	60%	80%

Source: ILOSTAT, 2021

Climate crises have also contributed to increased vulnerability and inequality. Cabo Verde, as part of the Sahel region is affected by cyclical drought, which increases in severity and frequency. Rural areas and more remote islands are expected to be the most affected. In Mozambique, cyclones and floods have become also more severe and frequent. The already impoverished central and northern regions have seen infrastructure and livelihoods destroyed, and population migration. To this is added, a deadly insurgency that has sparked a humanitarian crisis with the displacement of over half of the population of the northern province of Cabo Delgado. The Mozambican government and donors are focusing on existing scarce resources in the area of military and humanitarian efforts. There is, however, political exclusion in the authoritarian states of Angola and Mozambique, where belonging to the opposition reduces opportunities at multiple levels. In Cabo Verde, despite a more democratic process, political affiliation may also be used to temporarily provide benefits or create exclusion.

Analysis of Social Policy-Making Over Time

In this section we present the colonial legacies of social policy-making, and the strengths and weaknesses of the existing policies. We first present an assessment of the aspects that are largely continuities from colonial structures and failures in policy-making. We end with a reflection of the policy strengths and weaknesses across the sectors analysed.

Colonial legacies on social policy-making

The governing structures established during colonialism left a legacy of persistent inequalities that the post-colonial states have failed to resolve. In many instances, colonial legislation persisted until very recently. Furthermore, the economies are largely based on resource extraction, and exports have created new or even exacerbated some of the previous exclusions.

Table 6. Civil and Penal Codes revision dates

Country	Civil code		Penal code	
	Colonial	Post-colonial	Colonial	Post-colonial
Angola		Still in place		Law no. 38/20
Cabo Verde		Legislative Decree 12-C/97		Legislative Decree no.

				4/2003
	Law decree no.		Penal Code	no. 4/2015
Guinea-Bissau	47 344/1966	Still in place	1886	Law Decree no. 4/93
Mozambique		Still in place with punctual changes (e.g., succession law – Law no. 23/2019)		Law no. 35/2014 Law no. 24/2019

Constitutions constitute legislation, which is intended to address the most glaring inequalities. However, a mixture of internal and external factors contributed to inability to fulfil universal coverage, for example, in health, education, or social protection. In Angola and Mozambique, post-independence wars, and in Guinea-Bissau, political instability was the main culprit for this inability to fulfil social policies. In Cabo Verde, despite great advancements, rural-urban inequities persist, as most social investments were made in urban areas.

With the privatisation of social services, like health and education, social benefits have, in fact, become two-tiered. Wealthier citizens purchase their social services and poorer ones are offered sub-standard services. Most glaringly, legislation over civil relations still follow rules established for a mostly unequal society, which are divorced from customary practices. For example, in Cabo Verde, women when separated (but not divorced) from their husbands cannot register children they had with another man until the divorce is completed. This stems from Catholic-inspired bastardy laws and ideology. Linking paternity to marriage has an impact on a society where most civil relationships are customary, *de facto*, and are not civil marriages. In any of the countries, inheritance legislation tends to focus on the nuclear family, ignoring kinship complexities and their derived customary responsibilities. The same logic applies to social protection beneficiaries and those who qualify as their dependents.

With the rural-urban divide, this often means that access to justice is unequal, particularly for women. Although all countries changed the Family Law within the Civil Codes, the issue of judicial inequity is still a challenge to their full implementation. This manifests in multiple ways. Women are less educated than men, poorer, less proficient in the official judicial language (Portuguese), and are less aware of their rights. In rural areas, information about change in legislation is not well disseminated even among those responsible for dispensing justice. Hence, customary norms continue to dominate (MGCAS 2016; Embaló 2020; CEDAW 2019). A study in Angola showed also that conflicts that affect women disproportionately, like separation, alimony, and other domestic disputes, including violence, are more likely to be discussed and resolved within the family or at the most with the mediation of community/traditional leaders (Mosaiko and FEC 2021).

Colonial educational and health policies were never too comprehensive. Although the post-colonial project intended to counter this, in general, public education and health services have become increasingly inadequate across the board, not just in rural areas. Student-teacher ratio varies from 50 in Angola and 55 in Mozambique. Only Cabo Verde has a lower ratio (21)

than even the Sub-Saharan average (37). In two instances, the ratios were higher at the time of independence. Mozambique has managed to decrease from a 69 ratio at independence, and Cabo Verde from 42, thus making it the highest reduction. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fragilities of both public and private education systems and widened the gap between the two systems due also to the digital divide in Angola and Mozambique, and an overall weak education system in Guinea-Bissau. In Cabo Verde, however, the digital reach is over 100%, and the government-supported lesson delivery, involving the use of tablets.

In the health sector, all countries continue to have a shortage of medical personnel. Angola has the lowest number, with 0.4 nurses and midwives per 1000 inhabitants and Cabo Verde having the highest ratio of 1.3 per 1000 inhabitants. There are systematic shortages of medicine and other supplies, along with other unending woes. As mentioned above, citizens pay for a large percentage of these services out of their pocket, both in public and private health facilities. This creates a barrier for the poorest. In rural areas, long distances further hindered access to health services. Much of this is a result of the divestment in the health sector during the structural adjustments. The end result, is a two-tier system that gives the common citizen services equitable to the ‘indigenous wards’ during colonial times (Weimer, n.d., 436).

Non-labourers and precarious labourers continue to have deficient access to social protection, including medical assistance. One of the main issues is that the social protection systems assume continuous payment, which even for less precarious labourers, with fragmented labour history fail to fulfil (Castel-Branco 2021; Castel-Branco and Andrés 2019). From the colonial period, the legacy is the protection, at times inadequate, only of labourers. In countries with relatively high unemployment levels, particularly among women and the youth, many find themselves in the informal sector. The colonial state combated informality with forceful conscription into forced labour. The current authoritarian states exact similar violence over the informal sector, cracking down on it. However, contrary to the colonial state, it can only apply violence but not provide alternatives, as the economies are less productive and less labour intensive.

Policy strengths and insufficiencies

Despite some shortcomings, there have been some positive developments in social policies. For example, all countries have inclusive policies promoting gender equity and against harmful practices, as detailed below. There are revised and new legislation for social sectors. All countries have adhered to treaties and international conventions promoting gender equality.

Table 7. Date of ratification of CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol

Country	CEDAW	Maputo Protocol
Angola	17 Sep 1986 (a)	22 Jan 2007 (s)
		30 Aug 2007 (r)
Cabo Verde	05 Dec 1980 (a)	21 June 2005 (a)
Guinea-Bissau	17 Jul 1980 (s) 23 Aug 1985 (r)	08 Mar 2005 (s)
		19 Jun 2008 (r)
Mozambique	21 Apr 1997 (a)	15 Dec 2003 (s)
		09 Dec 2005 (r)

Source: UN Treaty Body Database, African Union (a) accession date, (s) signature date, (r) ratification date

Further to this, Guinea-Bissau created the National Committee for the Abandonment of Harmful Practices in 1995, aimed at raising awareness among communities for the abandonment of practices that violate women's rights, such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices of child labour associated with young girls. In Mozambique, legislation preventing premature unions was only approved in 2019 (Law no.19/2019). Otherwise, legislation against domestic violence was established in the aftermath of the Millennium Goals Declaration in the four countries (2009) in Mozambique (Law no. 29/2009); 2011 in Angola (Law no. 25/2011); Cabo Verde (Law no. 84/VII/2011); and 2014 in Guinea-Bissau (Law no. 6/2014).

Table 8. Domestic violence laws, denomination, nature, and content

Angola – Law against domestic violence	Cabo Verde – Law on gender-based violence	Guinea-Bissau – Law against domestic violence	Mozambique – Law of domestic violence practiced against women
It applies to any violent acts against any person by someone related by family ties, proximity, trust, affection or naturally, in any establishment, such as schools, health facilities, churches or equivalent.	It applies to any violent acts contrary to gender equality and are derived from the exercise of power where gender-based violence, domestic violence, family violence and affective violence are practised.	It applies to domestic and family aggression acts, in which the result is not death.	It applies to cases where the victim is a woman and the perpetrator has blood or affective bonds, if it does not result in death.

The domestic/gender-based violence laws are public in nature (as opposed to private law). However, there are some important differences between these laws in the four countries. In

the Angolan case, the scope is broad, beyond family and affective relationships, and contemplates several spaces. The Cabo Verdean law is openly feminist and is concerned with gendered power, violence, and inequity. The Guinea-Bissauan law applies to victims of any gender and recognises the concepts of unequal power and cycle of violence. Whereas the Mozambican law focuses exclusively on women as victims, Guinea-Bissau's and Mozambique's laws have in common violence that results in death covered by the Penal Code.

Cooperation with civil society and international non-governmental organisations has contributed to the advancement and implementation of social policies. A negative effect is that the government legislates policies, but does not prioritise in its budget, leaving the policy dependent on donor support. Examples are access to safe abortion in Mozambique, pursuant to Law no. 35/2014, and support to GBV victims in Cabo Verde, pursuant to Law no. 84/VII/2011.

Therefore, for the most part, despite the existence of good policies and legislation, their implementation remains weak. Specifically, the Angolan legislation, in this respect, lacks a comprehensive presentation of the specialised procedures that victims of domestic violence should follow. In the case of Cabo Verde, the law includes reflections and considerations that are out of its scope for implementation, like political and economic equity. Only Guinea-Bissau's legislation presents a clear definition and criminalises hate crimes against women. Mozambique's legislation, on the other hand, focuses excessively on the familial and private spheres, to the detriment of violence that women may face in the public sphere. It also neglects the possibility of women being perpetrators.

This, as mentioned above, is part of a context of policy merchandising, by which the existence of policies is more important than its implementation. Furthermore, the generalist formula ('one size fits all' solution) adopted in some policies is not backed by evidence of its efficacy. Furthermore, the top-down approach is contrary to the historical processes policy-making in the countries which support and promote introducing policies in developing African countries (Adesina 2020).

In highly donor dependent countries like Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, policies tend to be sectoral and non-coordinated, as different donors support different sectors and programmes. As a result, governments also develop weak development programmes, from which donors cannot take effective cues. Power dynamics aside, it is difficult to pinpoint which causes the other. In the resource-rich Angola, on the other hand, the reliance on the Sovereign Fund wealth and a trickledown economics approach has meant that macro-economic outcomes do not influence the improvement of human development outcomes. As Mozambique is setting up its own Sovereign Fund, it has drafted a sound proposal that has the potential of not benefiting the development goals it is also set up for, namely improvement of the public infrastructure. For it to function properly, it should be managed independently from political pressure that have affected other state institutions so far (Mapisse 2020).

Changing global geopolitical dynamics have also meant new actors have become more relevant, the most important of which is China. The new relations are largely based on perceived mutually beneficial agreements. They focus most exclusively on economic

interactions. Though it is important that economic growth and sound economic policies create the revenue for good social policies, that alone is not enough to guarantee inclusive development (Gumede 2018). As such, not only should social policies be coordinated, but they also need to be intertwined and aligned with the economic vision of the societies in which they are to be implemented.

An over-reliance on market dynamics ignores the limited use of the market to absorb further recruits, especially women and youth. This stems from low education attainment, inadequate training for market demands, and also structural impediments that perpetuate some of the exclusions mentioned above (gender-based, regional, political). Overall, there has been a weak reflection on potential policy impacts, whether social or economic. The COVID-19 policies are a good example. By focusing more on the sanitary challenges, to the detriment of the economic impacts, they created new vulnerabilities and areas of concern. This stems from a long tradition of top-down decision-making that is seldom knowledge-based. When it is so, it is most likely knowledge produced elsewhere.

Opportunities for Transformation in Social Policy

From the above, we find that there are few areas where overall approach to social policy could improve the social development outcomes in the four Lusophone countries under study.

The democratization process and state society relations

The democratisation process has proven more successful in Cabo Verde than in the other Lusophone countries, despite its still requiring continued efforts for consolidation. This has undoubtedly created a better environment for the advancement of social policies, however timidly. All states, except Cabo Verde are either authoritarian states (Angola and Mozambique) or politically unstable (Guinea-Bissau). All of them, even Cabo Verde, have followed on the top-down paternalistic tradition of the colonial governance structures that preceded them.

Combined authoritarianism and paternalism are impediments to transformative social change and need to be done away with and replaced by a reconciliatory frame. This means states embedded with solidarity, mediating and pacifying approach that can find inspiration in some customary practices. This includes an understanding of shared responsibility to one another, solidarity in times of hardship, redistribution of wealth to those in need, and achieving peace through acceptable terms to all parties in case of conflict.

Given the state's scarce resource to achieve the above, there is the need for a better articulation of goals and actions between state, non-state actors and development partners in the design of inclusive multi-sector public policies. National actors (both state and non-state) need to drive the discussions and internationally originated policies, if ever accepted, need to be better domesticated.

Urbanizing societies and the informal sector conundrum

African societies are urbanising rapidly and facing new governance challenges. These include housing, sanitation management and youth employment. Additionally, the rural-urban divide has not receded. Despite this, urban spaces are also spaces of innovation and challenges to the *status quo*. It is necessary to harness the transformative potential of urban dwellers and multiplier effects across society, including rural areas. This would mean better investment in those areas, particularly with communication and technology. Access to mobile services has proven transformative, from reinforcing social networks to improving access to financial services. It has also contributed to reducing the gender gap in access to technology.

Women are overwhelmingly represented in the agriculture sector in the more rural countries, and in the informal sector in all countries. They face challenges in accessing land, deciding over, and controlling the revenues from what their produce. In urban areas, the informal sector is criminalised, and engagement with it carries many risks, including those related to state agents. Gender friendly policies, such as protected access to land, production tools and markets in rural areas, and reduced persecution, extortion and violence in the informal sector could go a long way to improve gender equity.

There needs to be an inclusive approach regarding the informal sector in development strategies. Negative attitudes toward this critical sector need to change and its importance to the economy needs to be acknowledged. Indeed, measurement of economic contribution needs to be made beyond direct taxation, but also in terms of employments created, income generated and re-circulated throughout the economy.

Transformative redistribution

Current policies focus on specific groups considered to be the most vulnerable. However, despite policies aiming at the most vulnerable, most remain unprotected. Some strategies have used cash transfers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Support has also included work for payment. These strategies keep many vulnerables unassisted. Conditional cash transfers have provided mixed results (Kakwani, Soares, and Son 2005; Cruz, Moura, and Soares Neto 2017). There has been increasing arguments in favour of Universal Basic Income, which would be unconditional. This would mean return to the responsibility of providing universal education and health coverage, as well as progressive universal basic income, that could give more equitable opportunities to all citizens and protect them against adverse shocks (Castel-Branco 2020; Colombino 2019). Proposals for funding this scheme involve a combination of progressive income taxes, wealth tax and even carbon taxes from climate change redress and offsets. Additionally, resource rich countries could also fund it through wealth generated from their natural resources.

The above approach would have the advantage of also integrating economic and development agendas. Where possible, social support should be backed by existing income. A Universal Basic Income scheme has the advantage of reducing, for example, administration costs — thus freeing up resources for other sectors in need. By this means the state can reassume its redistributive role, as intended at independence, to enable the state wean itself of donor dependency.

Lessons from female and customary solidarity groups

Because states have been consistently unable to provide security and protection, communities have found ways to assist each other. There have been multiple strategies to fend off risk and uncertainty, as well as cope with diminishing or irregular revenues. Most of these include solidarity groups, often exclusively female, that are based on trust and mutuality. The state could learn from these groups to take inspiration for policy-making, for example, identifying the areas of most concern for citizens, where they feel that they need support or protection (i.e., education, health, injury, death). Policy-makers should also understand the functioning of family and households, networks of support and dependency, as well as those the people consider their beneficiaries. Incorporating policy in the areas identified to have the most risk would make the state a meaningful, reliable, and trustworthy support in times of need.

Lessons from COVID-19

Most of the countries showed the ability to learn from previous crises and existing systems to adapt to new crises. Some protective legislation was put in practice that has still left large scores of people unprotected. The pandemic showed that a reliable public health service is essential. It also exposed major fragilities of the existing social support systems. Policies that do not address the root causes of inequity cannot succeed in the long run. For example, if healthcare should be accessible to all, it needs to be continuously and adequately funded. Relying on private solutions will only increase inequities and exclusion. Education needs to be relevant to the existing economic opportunities and create a path to employment or the ability to generate income. Where both the educational system and the market fail to create these opportunities, alternatives created by the people (that do not involve criminal activities) should not be criminalised. Above all, as suggested above, regarding the Universal Basic Income — whichever scheme is put in place — should be able to withstand shocks and provide people with the ability to navigate uncertainty.

Summary and Conclusions

We presented above a comparative analysis of social policies in four Lusophone countries, namely Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. We analysed social policies from 1933, the implantation of the New State in Portugal, to today. We sub-divided this timeline into four broad periods: colonial time, post-independence, structural readjustments, and millennium declaration.

We found that there are many similarities between the four that relate to their colonial history, independence around the same time, and pursuit of similar policies during the post-independence. Cabo Verde stands out from the four, for a few reasons. Legislation during the colonial period was distinct from the others, until the 1960s. The country also did not have any post-independence conflict like the other three. War and political instability have made the implementation of social policies in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique a challenge.

The key ideology during colonial period focused on making the colonies as productive as possible. There was separate legislation for natives and settlers. The natives constituted a major workforce, whose health was protected to guarantee production. Men were the providers. Women were contemplated as spouses to reproduce a new generation of workers. Children were protected as future workers. Protection was guaranteed through employment. Therefore unemployed men, as well as unmarried women, had no protection. Social support included health and education. Education was for privileged boys and, when given, was only basic enough training to make them become good workers for the colonial enterprise.

The post-independence regimes tried to counter the inequalities created by colonialists by adopting a socialist ideology. These inequalities were mostly to the exclusion of the native population to enable them render general and less sophisticated services. They also introduced changes to legislation, especially to the family codes, which most clearly clashed with customary marital, filiation and inheritance practices and values. However, they stopped short of overhauling the whole judicial system and logic. Also, the post-independence wars in Angola and Mozambique, political instability in Guinea-Bissau and constant droughts in Cabo Verde made it difficult to effectively implement the intended policy change. Mostly, they only reached the urban population.

When the countries made structural adjustments to their economies, this translated into divestment from social sectors like health, education, but also social protection. New legislation allowed for privatisation of social services, although the state still maintained support for some basic services, effectively reaffirming inequalities stemming from the colonial period, particularly the rural-urban divide and the protection of the employed. During this period, countries engaged in strategic planning for poverty reduction. From the millennium declaration, gender equality legislation and policies were also introduced. Much of it was donor influenced and poorly domesticated.

The main actors in the implementation of social policy during the colonial period were the state, church, and private sector. In the post-independence, it was only the state. After the structural adjustments, non-state actors (national and international) became increasingly central. These include civil society, non-governmental organisations, and private entities. Religious actors are also returning and filling the gaps that the other actors do not manage to cover. The civilising mission that the colonial state and church introduced had been replaced by both the socialist post-independence state, as well as the current development-oriented states.

In general, Cabo Verde shows the best social development indicators, in terms of education, health and access to basic services. They have also come further in certain gender sensitive legislation, for example with the introduction of a National Care Plan that aims to value and pay for caretaking that falls disproportionately on women. They also have a Law on Gender-Based Violence, which is openly feminist, and face challenges in efficient implementation. There are challenges in implementing gender sensitive legislation (all four countries are signatories to CEDAW and the Maputo protocol) and customary norms that continue to dominate everyday relations, particularly in rural areas. For example, few women in Guinea-Bissau have access to landed property. In the other countries, even with access to land, women produce less, mostly food crops and when they contribute to cash crop production, they seldom have control over the revenue. In urban areas, there continues to be inequalities

that keep women less educated, with fewer opportunities in the job market and overwhelmingly dominating the informal sector. Other dimensions of inequality include the urban-rural divide, a regional divide, political exclusion increased by authoritarian regimes (Only Cabo Verde is the least autocratic and stable democracy), and suffer vulnerability created by adverse climatic factors.

Given the above history, we found that there are five aspects that can contribute to transformative social policy approaches: democratic and conciliatory state-society relations, decriminalised informality, transformative redistribution, customary inspired solidarity, and universal coverage. The case of Cabo Verde shows how a more stable and less authoritarian regime managed to legislate and implement better policies. Cabo Verde and Angola have mostly urban populations, and the other two countries will follow suit. Although most of the poor live in rural areas, opportunities in urban areas remain low and are unlikely to improve. This thrusts women and youth of both genders into the informal sector. States unable to provide economies that generate income-generating opportunities in the formal sector cannot criminalise those in the informal sector.

Moreover, there are important discussions around more transformative strategies of redistribution. Instead of selective or conditional cash transfers, some analysts are proposing the introduction of Universal Basic Income, to match the universal health and education access. Resource-rich countries like Angola and Mozambique can fund this through their natural resource revenues, in addition to taxes and even climate change redress and offset. Importantly, all states need to embrace their responsibility as the universal provider of social services, of which COVID-19 pandemic proved to be an essential part. In addition, it could be beneficial to get inspiration for social policies and legislation in some of the customary solidarity schemes. These can inform the areas where people feel more at risk and willing to find out how solidarity, protection and dependency networks could help them out.

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