Assessment of Public Policies to Combat Unemployment in the Municipality of Uíge (2021–2024)

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ABSTRACT

This article assesses perceptions of the effects of public policies to combat unemployment in the Municipality of Uíge, Angola, from 2021 to 2024, focusing on job opportunities, vocational training, entrepreneurship and socio-economic inclusion. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach and included a sample of 187 participants. Data collection involved a questionnaire and, according to the original research design, semi-structured interviews, document analysis and direct observation. The findings indicate that programmes and institutions such as PRODESI, PIIM, PROAPEN, INEFOP and CLESE are recognised as instruments for promoting opportunities, although limitations remain in coverage, training and institutional coordination. The response table on job opportunities records 67 participants (36%) as “agree” and 62 (33%) as “strongly agree”, amounting to 69% positive perception. The original dissertation also reports that only 31% received adequate vocational training. The article concludes that these policies are perceived as relevant, but their reach depends on better alignment of training with the local labour market, inclusion of young people and women, access to finance and systematic monitoring.

Keywords: Public policies; Unemployment; Vocational training; Entrepreneurship; Socio-economic inclusion; Uíge.

1. INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is one of the most persistent socio-economic challenges in developing countries. Beyond the absence of labour income, it can undermine household autonomy, deepen poverty, limit young people's economic participation and widen social inequalities. In contexts where informal employment has a significant weight, analysis must consider not only the lack of jobs but also the precariousness and instability of existing activities.

In the Municipality of Uíge, employment promotion is related to the ability to stimulate productive activities, qualify the workforce, facilitate entrepreneurship and bring public programmes closer to the actual needs of the local market. Between 2021 and 2024, the dissertation highlights initiatives such as the Integrated Municipal Intervention Plan (PIIM), the Programme to Support Production and Employment (PRODESI), PROAPEN, the National Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP) and CLESE.

The central question is whether public policies implemented in the Municipality of Uíge between 2021 and 2024 effectively contributed to reducing unemployment and improving the population's socio-economic inclusion. This article aims to assess the results and limitations of these policies based on the data and perceptions collected in the original study.

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2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Unemployment and the labour market

Unemployment refers to the situation of working-age people who do not have a job, are available for work and are seeking employment, according to the applicable statistical criteria. Analysis should distinguish open unemployment, underemployment and forms of informality, since participation in some income-generating activity does not necessarily mean stable, productive or decent employment.

In economies with a strong informal sector, employment policies need to combine job creation with increased productivity, vocational training and the gradual formalisation of economic units. Participation in a programme or training course alone does not guarantee lasting labour market integration.

2.2. Public employment policies

Public employment policies may be active or passive. Active measures include vocational training, labour intermediation services, hiring incentives, entrepreneurship support and financing for productive initiatives. Their effectiveness depends on identifying the needs of the productive sector, institutional coordination and the existence of monitoring mechanisms.

The local development approach emphasises that strategies should take account of each territory's resources, opportunities and constraints. In the Municipality of Uíge, aligning courses with agriculture, trade, services and technological opportunities is important for bringing training closer to the actual needs of employers and entrepreneurs.

2.3. Training, entrepreneurship and social inclusion

Vocational training can strengthen technical skills and improve employability, provided that courses correspond to labour market demand. Entrepreneurship, in turn, can expand self-employment and the creation of small productive units, but it depends on access to finance, technical assistance, markets and administrative procedures proportionate to the scale of businesses.

Social inclusion requires young people, women and vulnerable groups to have effective access to opportunities. Therefore, the evaluation of employment policies should consider not only the number of initiatives implemented, but also who benefits, under what conditions and with what continuity.

3. METHODOLOGY

The original research adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative component sought to measure participants' perceptions of job creation, vocational training and the effects of programmes on living conditions. The qualitative component was designed to understand the experiences, challenges and assessments of beneficiaries and institutional stakeholders.

The sample consisted of 187 participants with different ages, educational levels and employment situations. The main instrument was a structured questionnaire. The methodology described in the dissertation also includes semi-structured interviews, document analysis and direct observation, with quantitative data treated through descriptive statistics and qualitative data through thematic content analysis.

This article reorganises the results actually presented in the source document. It should be noted that some percentages differ between the dissertation's abstract and its tables. Where a table provides verifiable frequencies and percentages, it is prioritised; values not accompanied by complete tables are identified as results reported in the dissertation.

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4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Sample characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	102	55%
Sex	Female	85	45%
Age	18–25 years	22	12%
Age	26–35 years	25	13%
Age	36–45 years	28	15%
Age	46–60 years	74	40%
Age	Over 60 years	38	20%
Education	Primary education	67	35%
Education	Secondary education	76	41%
Education	Bachelor's degree	29	16%
Education	Master's degree	15	8%

The sample comprised 187 participants, with a male majority (55%) and a greater concentration in the 46–60 age group (40%). Regarding education, 76 participants (41%) had secondary education and 67 (35%) had primary education. This diversity brings together perceptions from people in different labour market positions, although it does not replace a probabilistically representative sample of the entire municipal population if the selection procedures do not ensure such representativeness.

4.2. Perceptions of job creation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	67	36%
Strongly agree	62	33%
Disagree	41	22%
Strongly disagree	17	9%
Total	187	100%

The combined agreement categories account for 129 participants, or 69% of the sample. In turn, 58 participants (31%) disagree or strongly disagree. The table therefore indicates a predominantly positive perception regarding the creation of formal and informal employment opportunities. This result should be distinguished from the 36% mentioned separately in the dissertation abstract: 36% refers only to the “agree” category, while the aggregate positive perception, including “strongly agree”, is 69%.

4.3. Vocational training and programme reach

The dissertation reports that only 31% of participants stated that they had received adequate vocational training. This suggests that recognising the existence of employment policies does not mean that citizens have directly benefited from training or labour market integration mechanisms. Limited coverage may reduce the reach of policies, particularly when courses do not respond to the needs of local economic sectors.

The programmes mentioned in the study — PRODESI, PIIM, PROAPEN, INEFOP and CLESE — have distinct but complementary areas of intervention. For their contribution to be sustainable, coordination should be strengthened among the responsible entities, employment services, training institutions, local administrations and the private sector.

4.4. Socio-economic inclusion and institutional challenges

The qualitative analysis and discussion in the dissertation identify challenges related to gender inequality, limited coverage, insufficient coordination between entities and difficulties in accessing finance and formalising small businesses. These factors may limit the conversion of announced opportunities into stable employment and sustainable income.

Policy evaluation should therefore go beyond counting existing programmes. It is necessary to monitor the number of beneficiaries who complete training, find employment, establish businesses, maintain their activities and increase their income. Disaggregating indicators by sex, age, education and employment status would also help identify groups that remain excluded.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis indicates that public policies to combat unemployment in the Municipality of Uíge between 2021 and 2024 are recognised by a majority of participants as creating opportunities. The response table shows 69% aggregate agreement regarding job creation, although the dissertation also reports that only 31% received vocational training considered adequate.

The findings point to a positive but partial and uneven contribution. The existence of programmes such as PRODESI, PIIM, PROAPEN, INEFOP and CLESE provides a relevant institutional foundation, but effectiveness depends on coverage, training quality, access to finance, institutional coordination and the ability to follow up beneficiaries after intervention.

It is recommended that vocational training be expanded in areas aligned with the local economy, including agriculture, trade, services and digital technologies; that procedures for formalising micro and small enterprises be simplified; that young people and women have greater access to programmes; and that a municipal monitoring system be implemented with indicators on labour market integration, job retention, business creation and income trends. Future studies should present the full datasets and interview findings to enable more robust impact assessments.

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