Public Policies to Mitigate Hunger and Poverty in Angola. Case of the Municipality of Bembe, Province of Uíge (2021-2023).

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SUMMARY

This study addresses public policies for hunger and poverty mitigation in Angola, particularly in the municipality of Bembe, Uíge Province. The overall objective was to analyze the impact of public policies implemented by the government between 2021 and 2023 on hunger and poverty mitigation in the municipality. The research used a qualitative and quantitative approach, where data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, using a digital platform (Google Form), and analyzed using tools (Power BI, LiveGap Charts) and statistical software (Python and SPSS), which ensured data security, accuracy, reliability, and visualization. Qualitative data were analyzed using content and thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns and emerging themes, enabling a broad and multidisciplinary understanding of the perceptions and challenges related to public policies for hunger and poverty mitigation. Thus, it was concluded that the public policies implemented by the government to combat hunger and poverty from 2021 to 2023 did not significantly impact the development of the municipality of Bembe. This essentially leads us to the rush for new actions that enable changes in this paradigm, in ways that will improve the lifestyle of residents, prioritizing sustainable development, well-being, and quality of life. Therefore, we accept the study's second hypothesis: that the public policies implemented by the government took a clinical view of family life but, unfortunately, did not have a significant impact on mitigating hunger and poverty in the municipality.

Keywords: Public Policies; Hunger; Poverty; Bembe.

Authorship contribution(by author):

José Mario João: Conception of the idea, research and review of literature and statistical analysis, preparation of tables, graphs and images, preparation of the database.

Antonio Afonso Bindanda: Preparation of instruments, application of instruments, applied information resulting from the applied instruments, compilation of information resulting from the instruments.

Moniz Efraim Tunga: General advice on the topic covered, writing of the original (first version)

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INTRODUCTION

Hunger and poverty are persistent and multifaceted problems that affect many regions of the world, and Angola's Uíge Province is no exception. Within this province, the municipality of Bembe faces significant challenges related to food insecurity, unemployment, and inadequate access to basic services such as health and education.

These problems not only affect the immediate well-being of the population but also compromise socioeconomic development in the medium and long term. Between 2021 and 2023, several public policies were implemented with the aim of mitigating hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe. These policies include food security programs, local economic development initiatives, improvements in infrastructure and basic services, and actions focused on education and health, but unfortunately, the municipality's development is still weak. It is important to emphasize that the effectiveness of these policies depends on a number of factors, including the quality of implementation, the engagement of local communities, the goodwill of policymakers, and the availability of resources.

Public policies aimed at alleviating poverty in Angola have been extensively studied and discussed in academic literature, as well as in reports by leading international organizations. These studies address the causes of poverty, highlighting a series of structural factors in Angola, including a history of armed conflict, poor governance, corruption, poor distribution of natural resources, inadequate infrastructure, and other factors that contribute to this social ill. Many studies explore the devastating impact of Angola's long civil war, which lasted nearly three decades until 2002 (Pearce, J. and Lázaro, 2018). This conflict left a destroyed infrastructure, a weak economic system, and a legacy of inequality. Poverty, mitigation policies, and anthropological and sociological perspectives, such as economic and social inequality and the impact of the oil-dependent economy, negatively affect sustainable development and contribute to population instability (Amaro, 2001). According to data released by the United Nations, considerable progress has been made in reducing poverty worldwide in recent decades. Poverty-related issues remain a topic of debate today. Although the global poverty rate has fallen since 2000, one in ten people in developing regions still live on less than $1.90 a day (the figure used to define people living in extreme poverty), and millions of others live on little more than this daily amount. The most recent estimates show that in 2013, 10.7% of the world's population lived on less than $1.90 a day, compared to 35% in 1990 and 44% in 1981, with 42% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa still living below the poverty line (UN, 2021).

This study aims to analyze public policies adopted in the municipality of Bembe from 2021 to 2023, using an approach that includes stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and analysis of official documents. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how government and partner initiatives are contributing to the reduction of hunger and poverty in the municipality, while also identifying areas for improvement for future interventions. By assessing the effectiveness of these policies, this study is expected to offer valuable insights for policymakers, non-governmental organizations, and other actors involved in the development of the municipality.

The study aims not only to reflect on progress made to date but also to propose ways to improve hunger and poverty mitigation policies and strategies in light of future aspirations, at a time when more than 780 million people live below the International Poverty Line (less than $1.90 a day). More than 11% of the world's population lives in critical and extreme poverty and struggles to meet basic needs in health, education, and access to water and sanitation. Most individuals living below the International Poverty Line reside in two regions, namely South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, according to UN data. It is important to note that to measure poverty, the more traditional idea proposed by the World Bank is used, which involves dividingGross Domestic Productof a country (GDP) by the number of inhabitants it has, and countries whose income is below the national standard are considered poor. Since 2015, it has estimated that the universal poverty line is $3.10 per day and the critical poverty line is $1.90 per day. For the World Bank, GDP growth is essential for making better decisions about the region's development and combating poverty.

Measuring poverty and evaluating the effectiveness of programs that combat it is essential to find strategies and solutions for its mitigation, sinceThis phenomenon results from a combination of socioeconomic and political factors and is closely related to social exclusion and inequality, constituting one of the greatest concerns of United Nations member states (Lomasky, L. and Swan, K., 2009). For these reasons, we decided to continue this highly relevant study, aiming to assess results and propose measures to reduce this problem that so severely affects communities, such as the municipality of Bembe in the province of Uíge in Angola, where we noted many families experiencing various difficulties. We hope to present some scientific measures capable of mitigating hunger and poverty in that region of the country. Hunger and poverty are critical problems affecting millions of people worldwide, and their implications are profound, affecting the health, education, and economic

development of communities. In Uíge Province, these problems are especially relevant due to the lack of effective policies to address this social problem. Many families face various difficulties, such as a lack of adequate infrastructure, access to decent education, healthcare, employment, food, clean water, and other issues affecting the region. For these reasons, we will seek to propose measures to implement scientific strategies capable of solving these problems in the region, addressing the concerns of the local population. Given the relevance of the topic, the formulation of the problem is based on understanding how public policies implemented between 2021 and 2023 contributed to mitigating hunger and poverty. To this end, we have posed the following central study problem:Have the public policies implemented by the government had a significant impact on alleviating hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe? This question will be answered at the conclusion of this discussion.

Importance and impact of public policies

The importance of public policies is undeniable in any modern society. They represent a set of government guidelines and actions aimed at responding to the needs of the population, promoting economic and social development, and ensuring general well-being. Through public policies, the government can influence various aspects of daily life, from education and health to security and the environment.

The effective implementation of these policies is crucial to building a more just, equitable and sustainable society.Public policies play a crucial role in guiding and shaping the social, economic, and environmental development of any country or region. Their impact can be seen in various areas, including the economy, health, education, the environment, social justice, and infrastructure.

Economy:

It ends up having an impact on the economy, due to the promotion of economic stability, established by fiscal and monetary policies to control inflation, unemployment and promote sustainable economic growth, which triggers sectoral development, through incentives and subsidies with the aim of developing specific sectors, such as technology, agriculture or renewable energy.

Health:

From a health point of view, public policies end up impacting better access to health services: Public health policies can expand access to medical services, vaccines, and disease prevention programs.

Quality of Life: Public health interventions improve the quality of life and increase the life expectancy of the population.

Education:

Access and Quality: Educational policies can guarantee universal access to basic education and improve the quality of teaching, contributing to the development of human capital.

Inclusion: Programs aimed at the educational inclusion of minorities and disadvantaged groups help to reduce social inequalities.

Environment:

Sustainability: Environmental policies can promote the preservation of natural resources, combat climate change, and promote sustainable practices.

Public health: Reducing pollution and proper waste management benefit the health of the population.

Social Justice:

Poverty Reduction: Social assistance programs, income transfers, and employment policies help reduce poverty and inequality.

Human Rights: Policies that guarantee civil, political and social rights promote a more just and equitable society.

Infrastructure:

Urban and Rural Development: Investments in infrastructure, such as transportation, energy, and sanitation, are crucial for economic development and improving quality of life. Connectivity: Connectivity policies, including internet access and telecommunications, are essential in the digital age.

Public policies aimed at social development should have a positive impact on reducing poverty and improving the population's living conditions. However, in several regions, significant challenges remain, such as high unemployment rates, social inequality, and the lack of access to decent housing for all. Public policies are, therefore, powerful instruments for promoting development and the well-being of the population, requiring careful planning, effective implementation, and constant evaluation to ensure their positive impact on the community.(Miranda, 2022).

Types of public policies

Public policies are measures created by the government to guarantee rights, assistance, or service provision to the population. They represent government planning and are designed to improve society and meet citizens' needs. They can be classified into different categories according to various criteria, such as their objectives, instruments used, and target audience.The typology of public policies is an analytical tool that helps us classify and understand the different approaches and strategies used in the formulation and implementation of policies, by allowing us to identify common patterns, characteristics and guidelines among them.The main concepts and models for formulating and analyzing public policies also encompass reflections on their various sub-areas, particularly implementation and evaluation. Theoretical and conceptual knowledge of a given field is fundamental to its practical application (Lowi, 1972).

Regarding the different types of public policies presented, our research is characterized by redistributive public policies, which specifically ensure social well-being, aiming to reduce poverty and social inequality through the redistribution of income and wealth, helping to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, ensuring that everyone has access to a minimum level of well-being; promoting social justice with the purpose of contributing to the construction of a more just and egalitarian society, where everyone has the same opportunities for development; and stimulating economic growth through a fairer distribution of income to increase the demand for goods and services, capable of driving economic growth.

Public policy cycle

The set of stages a public policy goes through until it's implemented is called the public policy cycle. Learn about each of these phases:

1. Problem identification: phase of recognizing situations or problems that need a solution or improvement,
2. Agenda formation: definition by the government of which issues have the most social importance or urgency to be addressed,
3. Formulation of alternatives: phase of study, evaluation and selection of measures that may be useful or more effective in helping to solve problems,
4. Decision making: stage in which the actions to be implemented are defined. Technical and political analyses of the consequences and feasibility of the measures are taken into account,
5. Implementation: moment of action, is when public policies are put into practice by governments,
6. Assessment: after the measure is put into practice, it is necessary to evaluate the efficiency of the results achieved and what adjustments and improvements may be necessary,
7. Extinction: It is possible that after a period of time, a public policy will cease to exist. This can happen if the problem that gave rise to it no longer exists, if the actions were not effective in solving it, or if the problem lost importance in the face of other more relevant needs, even if it has not been resolved.

Agendais nothing more than the list of issues or problems to which participants in the political process are paying attention. Each participant and each process can act as an incentive or a veto point. Governments set their agendas in three ways. The first focuses on the problem that enters the agenda when it is assumed that something must be done about it. The second focuses on politics itself, that is, how collective awareness is built about the need

to debate a problem. The third focuses on participants who are classified as visible—that is, politicians, media, parties, pressure groups, etc.—and invisible, such as academics andbureaucracy. Visible participants set the agenda, and invisible participants set the alternatives. In the alternative identification phase, the theory ofpublic choiceadopts a skeptical bias regarding the ability of governments to formulate public policies due to self-interest and the capture of government agencies by private interests. This theory is probably the one that demonstrates the greatest distrust in the capacity of political decision-making mechanisms, defending the superiority of decisions made by the market over those made by politicians and bureaucracy. Public policies can be understood as a system (a set of interconnected elements aimed at achieving a goal: the common good of the population for whom they are intended), or even as a process, as they have interconnected rituals and steps, aiming for a specific purpose.

These are normally associated with important steps such as its conception, the negotiation of interlocutors useful for development (technicians, sponsors, civil society associations and other institutional partners), the research of applicable solutions, a public consultation agenda (which is an important phase in the process of legitimizing the program in thepublic spacedemocratic), the selection of reasonable and suitable options for achieving the purpose, the budgeting and search for resources or partners to support the programs, an opportunity to establish objectives and evaluation targets. Finally, the direct and/or associated implementation, during the estimated timeframe agreed upon with managers and financiers, the monitoring (monitoring and readjustment of guidelines - refinement) and its final evaluation, with objectively measurable data.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Analyzing public policies to mitigate hunger and poverty requires a theoretical framework that articulates the concepts of human development, social justice, and the redistributive function of the State. According to Sen (1999), poverty should not be understood solely as insufficient income, but as a deprivation of the fundamental human capacities that allow people to live a dignified life. This approach, known as the capability approach, emphasizes that public policies should focus not only on the transfer of resources, but above all on creating opportunities that allow communities to develop their potential.

Along the same lines, Sachs (2005) argues that sustainable development rests on three inseparable pillars: economic efficiency, social equity, and environmental sustainability. In the Angolan context, rural poverty is deeply linked to the degradation of infrastructure, dependence on subsistence agriculture, and the absence of consistent social protection mechanisms.

In the field of public policy, Dye (2013) defines it as "everything that governments choose to do or not do," highlighting the decisive role of political will and institutional capacity. Lasswell (1951) introduced the notion that public policy should be understood as a decision-making process involving multiple actors, from the central government to local communities, in a movement of shared governance.

In Africa, the debate on hunger and poverty inevitably leads to issues of structural inequality. As Mkandawire (2001) points out, many African countries remain trapped in an economic model dependent on the export of raw materials, which weakens food sovereignty and limits social inclusion. This reality is evident in Angola, where dependence on oil hinders productive diversification, directly affecting the lives of rural populations.

Literature review

The literature on public policies to combat hunger and poverty in Africa highlights both significant progress and persistent weaknesses.

First, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2020) emphasizes that food insecurity results not only from food scarcity but also from poor physical and economic access. Therefore, agricultural investment policies should prioritize family farming, which is responsible for ensuring a large portion of food security in African countries (FAO, 2017).

In the Angolan case, the Integrated Municipal Intervention Plan (PIIM) emerges as a relevant instrument for reducing regional asymmetries through the construction of roads, schools, and hospitals (MPLA, 2021). However, studies by Marques (2020) demonstrate that the centralization of decisions and insufficient technical support compromise the effectiveness of these measures.

According to UNDP (2022), poverty in Angola remains high, particularly affecting rural areas such as Bembe, where access to basic infrastructure and social services is limited. The literature points to the need for more participatory policies that include the voice of local communities and promote context-adapted solutions.

Ferreira (2019), studying family farming in Angola, concludes that the lack of organized markets and distribution systems hinders the marketing of cassava and other staples, perpetuating cycles of poverty. In this regard, Oliveira (2016) emphasizes that land use planning and improved agricultural logistics are crucial for sustainable development.

Internationally, successful experiences in countries like Brazil, through the Zero Hunger Program, show that the combination of direct subsidies, support for family farming, and nutritional education policies can significantly reduce hunger (Silva, 2018). These examples offer important insights for Angola, particularly regarding the need to combine immediate social assistance measures with long-term structural reforms.

Thus, the literature converges on the idea that the mitigation of hunger and poverty in Bembe must be based on four main axes:

1. Promotion of sustainable local agriculture;
2. Investment in social and economic infrastructure;
3. Community empowerment and education; and
4. Strengthening social protection mechanisms.

These axes find theoretical support in Sen's (1999) vision of human development, in Sachs' (2005) paradigm of integrated sustainability and in the conception of public policies as dynamic decision-making processes (Lasswell, 1951; Dye, 2013).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research adopts a mixed methodology, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to address Public Policies for Alleviating Hunger and Poverty in Uíge Province, particularly the municipality of Bembe, and to analyze the population's perceptions of the impact of their implementation on combating hunger and poverty in the studied area. To achieve the objectives of this research, we used the following research methods and techniques.

Research methods

- Qualitative: This method aims to answer questions that provide insight into the project and its surroundings, enabling better analysis of the situation and theorization of the problem (Thiollent, 2007). To this end, adopting this method for our research allowed us to focus on the analysis of phenomena related to hunger and poverty, taking into account the social situation of the local residents.

- Quantitative: This method involves reducing social, political, and economic phenomena, which provides a greater chance of measuring and processing data (Marconi and Lakatos 2003). This method was useful in the research process because it helped us quantify the data numerically, identify relationships between variables, develop descriptions using statistical analysis of the collected data, select theories, and draw conclusions. This method was used by a representative sample of respondents based on the responses obtained in the research questionnaire, which included a series of questions related to the mechanisms and strategies used by the state to mitigate hunger and poverty, analyzing their impact on the lives of families in the province of Uíge, particularly in the municipality of Bembe. Broadly speaking, the qualitative-quantitative method was used to gain a deeper understanding of public policies, allowing us to explore the perceptions, living conditions, and livelihoods of communities, providing significant insights from the quantitative data collected.

Research techniques

- Descriptive Technique: The descriptive technique is an approach in scientific research that focuses on the detailed analysis and interpretation of data to describe a specific phenomenon or situation. It is characterized by providing a comprehensive and detailed view of the object of study, without necessarily seeking causal explanations. This descriptive approach provided a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the phenomenon, promoting important data and recommendations with plausible arguments to guide future policies and strategies to mitigate hunger and poverty in the region.

- Exploratory Technique: The exploratory approach in scientific research is a strategy that seeks to investigate a phenomenon without relying on pre-established hypotheses. This methodology stands out for its flexibility, allowing for the exploration of new discoveries and an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon in question. In the study on Public Policies for Alleviating Hunger and Poverty in the Province of Uíge, particularly in the municipality of Bembe, this technique was useful for understanding the perceptions and difficulties faced by the population in the study area. Through detailed analysis and group discussions, we were able to identify significant patterns and trends in the survey data, which could provide a solid foundation for formulating future proposals and recommendations, thus contributing to a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of public policies with significant impact on the lives of families in the municipality.

- Documentary Research: Documentary research is a type of research that uses primary sources, that is, data and information that have not yet been analyzed or analyzed in scientific research. In general, documentary research serves to answer someresearch problemspecific, especially to complement abibliographic research(Rodrigues, WC 2007). In the context of our research on Public Policies, the application of the technique allowed us to examine documents, legislation, institutional reports, books, articles and studies related to the topic, which allowed us to obtain a broader and more in-depth view of public policies in the constituency under study.

Research procedures

Data collection procedures "are a set of precepts or processes used by a science, and which correspond to the practical part of the collected and observed content (Lakatos & Marconi 1991). The procedures used in collecting research data were: bibliographic research, interviews, questionnaires, and observation.The procedures allowed us to understand how the research was conducted and the steps taken to achieve the desired objectives. Therefore, in terms of the nature of the research, it was applied research, as it raised a specific problem. The study focused on determining whether the state's anti-poverty policies have actually impacted communities and on proposing mechanisms for a new strategic approach to address this situation. Regarding the approach to the problem, the research is qualitative and quantitative, as the collected data were qualified and subsequently quantified, analyzed, and interpreted using specific data analysis and processing tools.

Regarding its objectives, it is exploratory, as it involved an exploratory study of the main research objective, as well as the formulation of hypotheses. Following descriptive statistics, data were tabulated and then graphed using data analysis procedures. This allowed us to analyze and discuss each question, understanding the relationship between variables and drawing appropriate conclusions. Suggestions and recommendations may be useful in mitigating hunger and poverty in the region, as well as providing insights for future researchers who may develop similar research. Data collection instruments and research techniques vary depending on the type of research, the research subjects, and the research intent (Kauark, SF et al. 2010).

Development of the Research Instrument

A research instrument is the tool used to collect data and information relevant to answering research questions, ranging from a simple questionnaire to a complex interview, and the choice will depend on the nature of the research and the intended objectives.

For our research, the questionnaires and interview guides were compiled based on existing literature, following the guidelines of the works of Brynjolfsson and Kahin (2000) and Howells and Bain (2001). The studies and guidelines adopted by these authors provide a solid foundation for the creation of relevant and highly rigorous data collection instruments for the development of scientific research.

Data collection and survey

The data were collected through a questionnaire and interview, with the help of a digital platform (Google Form) for questionnaires directed to children, natives and the population residing and non-residents in the municipality of Bembe, as well as going to the area under study and distributing and physically collecting the questionnaires to residents unable to complete them digitally.

Additionally, we conducted interviews with some public policymakers on-site, via WhatsApp and in person. This method of data collection allowed us to reach a wide range of participants and obtain specific information regarding public policies to alleviate poverty. Quantitative data were analyzed using tools (Power BI, LiveGap Charts) and statistical software (Python and SPSS), which ensured data security, accuracy, reliability, and visualization. Qualitative data were analyzed using content and thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns and emerging themes, enabling a broad and multidisciplinary understanding of the perceptions and challenges related to public policies.

Population

This constitutes the larger population from which the sample comes and for which interference is made. The research covers two specific groups:

Residents of the municipality of Bembe:

Residents of the municipality of Bembe, aged between 18 and over 55 years, an estimated 49,000 inhabitants spread across three communes, representing around 3.43% of the total population of the province of Uíge, estimated at 1,426,354, inhabitants spread across 16 municipalities, according to census data released by the National Institute of Statistics of Angola (INE, 2014).

Natives and children not residing in the municipality of Bembe, as well as opinion makers and public policy executors:

It involves the age group from 25 to over 55 years old, which considered the natives, friends and supporters of the area under study, including members of civil society, academics, administrators, public officials and other local development actors, in order to obtain in-depth information and suggestions on policies to mitigate poverty in the region.

This group was selected based on relevant age groups, as well as the functions occupied in the public service apparatus, aiming to guarantee valuable information and a comprehensive analysis that can involve all agents, for better implementation of policies aimed at combating hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe.

Sample size calculation

Calculating sample size requires the use of highly specialized statistical procedures, based on basic formulas for calculating sample size for a population. For this study, the target audience was previously identified and divided into four (3) groups, and the sample size was determined for representativeness and practical feasibility. Therefore, our sample included 366 individuals living in the municipality of Bembe, including 75 individuals born in the municipality and children not residing in the municipality, and two individuals who were opinion makers and public policy executors. The total sample size was 443 individuals who responded to the questionnaire for the study, selected from a universe of approximately 737 families, as reflected in the following data:

Data:

N= 737 Families

$E_{\circ}$ =0.03 = 3%

n=?

$n_{\circ}$ =?

Formula $\quad n_0 = \frac{1}{E^2}$

$n_{\circ}$ andthe first approachherethe sample size

ANDandthe sampling error toleratedthevel

Note: The margin of error is the range within which one expects to find the data one wants to measure from the universe of research under development.

$$n = 1 + \frac{N.n_{\circ}}{N + n_{\circ}}$$

N is the Universe

n is the sample size

    a) Resolution

$n_{\circ}$ = 1 / $(E_{\circ})^2$

$n_{\circ}$ = 1 / $(0.03)^2$

$n_{\circ}$ = 1111

$n_{\circ}$ = (N x $n_{\circ}$) / (N + no)

$n_{\circ}$ = (737 x 1111) (737 + 1111)

$n_{\circ}$ = 818,807 / 1,848

$n_{\circ}$ = 443.07≈ n = 443 Respondents

With a tolerable sampling error of 3%, 443 was the number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire.

This means that our sample is considered significant because the test result is greater than 50%. According to Daniel Bernoulli's theory, results are considered significant when the sample significance level is equal to or greater than 50%.

RESULTS

To analyze and interpret the results, data were collected using a single questionnaire conducted using a script of closed, mixed, and open-ended questions to gather valuable information with a broader understanding, allowing us to address public policies to mitigate hunger and poverty from a technical and scientific perspective.

Sociodemographic Data

Table 01. Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Masculine	311	70
Feminine	132	30
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

The graph below reveals the sample's gender distribution, highlighting a significant male predominance (311 participants (70%), in contrast to 132 female participants (30%), out of a total of 443 respondents (100%). This discrepancy suggests that, within the social and economic context of the municipality of Bembe, men participate more frequently in the dynamics studied, which may be associated with various structural and cultural factors. However, it is important to emphasize that this lower female representation does not imply a lack of relevance within the socioeconomic fabric. On the contrary, studies show that women play a crucial role in family farming, food management, and family livelihoods, particularly in rural areas (FAO, 2020; Ferreira, 2019).

Table 02. Age Group

Age range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-25 years old	86	19
26-35 years old	123	28
36-45 years old	132	31
46-55 years old	64	14
Over 55 years old	38	8
Total sample	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Analysis of the sample reveals a diverse age distribution, with a higher concentration of participants aged 36-45 (31%) and 26-35 (28%), followed by those aged 18-25 (19%), 46-55 (14%), and finally, those over 55 (8%), for a total of 443 respondents. This age profile suggests that the majority of participants belong to economically active age groups, that is, between 26 and 45 years old, which together represent 59% of the sample. This data reveals the importance of this segment in the socioeconomic dynamics of the municipality of Bembe, as this population has greater productive, decision-making, and social participation capacity (World Bank, 2021). The 18-25 age group (19%) is also relevant, as it corresponds to young people entering the job market and building life projects. Their presence highlights the potential of youth as a driver of transformation, but it also raises challenges related to youth unemployment, access to education, and the lack of opportunities in rural settings (UNDP, 2022). On the other hand, the presence of 14% in the 46-55 age group and 8% over 55 suggests a less representative, but still crucial, adult and older population. These age groups can play important roles in the transmission of traditional knowledge, particularly related to agriculture and community organization (Ferreira, 2019). However, they face greater vulnerabilities in accessing health services, social protection, and stable income, which can increase their exposure to poverty and food insecurity (FAO, 2020).

Table N. 03 LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary Education	230	51.9
High School	157	35.4
Licensed	51	11.5
Teacher	1	0.2
Doctor	4	1
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Analysis of the sample shows that the majority of respondents had only primary education (51.9%), followed by secondary education (35.4%). Higher education, however, was quite limited, with 11.5% holding bachelor's degrees, only 0.2% holding master's degrees, and 1% holding doctorates, out of a total of 443 participants. This distribution reflects an educational landscape marked by significant asymmetries and the predominance of basic education levels. The high percentage of individuals with only primary education suggests persistent weaknesses in access to and retention in the educational system, particularly in rural areas such as the municipality of Bembe, where school infrastructure is limited and many families face socioeconomic hardships that compromise continued education (INE, 2023; Marques, 2020). The fact that only 12.7% of the sample had a higher education

degree (bachelor's, master's, or doctorate) reflects a significant deficit in qualified human capital, which limits the possibilities for innovation and productive diversification in the region. According to Becker (1993), investment in education is crucial for increasing individual and collective productivity, serving as one of the main drivers of economic development. In summary, the educational profile of the sample demonstrates that:

- The municipality of Bembe faces serious challenges in terms of the academic qualifications of its population.

- The prevalence of primary education reflects structural inequalities that compromise access to higher levels of education.

- The low percentage of senior management limits innovation, local governance and the capacity for socioeconomic transformation.

Table No.4Knowledge about programs to combat hunger and poverty

Reactions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	91	21
No	352	79
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Data analysis reveals that only 21% of respondents (91 people) claimed to be aware of public policies, while the vast majority, 79% (352 people), stated they were unaware of them. This result highlights a significant lack of information and awareness among the population regarding the public policies in force in the municipality of Bembe. This predominant lack of awareness can be interpreted as a structural flaw in the communication and community engagement mechanisms of the State and local governments. As Habermas (1997) emphasizes, the legitimacy of public policies depends on the existence of an inclusive public space where citizens can access information, debate collectively, and actively participate in decision-making processes.

On the other hand, the 21% who claim to be aware of public policies represent a small but important group of informed citizens who can play a strategic role in increasing knowledge and community awareness. As Freire (1975) points out, social transformation requires citizens to become active participants in the process, and this is only possible if they have access to knowledge and a critical awareness of political and social realities. These data reinforce the need to invest in more inclusive communication strategies, such as awareness-raising campaigns in local languages, the use of community radio stations, and open assemblies, which bring public policies closer to the daily lives of the population. Furthermore, as Sen (1999) emphasizes, sustainable development can only be achieved when citizens actively participate in shaping solutions that affect their quality of life. In short, the predominance of "no" reflects not only a lack of knowledge, but also a sign of distance between the State and citizens, which could compromise the success of policies aimed at combating poverty and promoting development in the municipality of Bembe.

Table 5 - Poverty in the population

Reactions to Poverty	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	292	**66**
No	37	**8**
Perhaps	114	**26**
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Own creation, based on measured data, 2024

Of the sample presented, 292 respondents (66%) admitted to being poor, 37 respondents (8%) claimed not to be poor, while 114 respondents (26%) expressed uncertainty, making a total of 443 respondents, resulting in a 100% margin. However, this drew our attention and leads us to conclude that immediate intervention by economic agents, especially local and central governments, is necessary to improve this situation as quickly as possible.

This includes real actions aimed at improving access roads, infrastructure, medical centers, technical assistance, encouraging increased local production, and other initiatives that contribute to the well-being of this region.

Table NO. 6 Main causes of hunger andPOVERTY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BEMBE

Causes of Hunger and Poverty	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Corruption	58	13
Embezzlement	25	6
Nepotism	17	4
Partisanship	48	11
War	74	17
Poor production	51	12
Infrastructure (Access roads)	43	8
Poor distribution of resources	93	21
Lack of food security	22	5
Others	12	3
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Regarding the causes of poverty in the municipality of Bembe, it was found that 93 elements, corresponding to 21%, claimed to have been the Poor Distribution of Income. In second place, the War factor was highlighted with 74 elements, corresponding to 17%; in third place comes Corruption with 13%; in fourth place, with 12%, comes Poor Production; followed by party issues with 11%; then comes Infrastructure with 8%, since access roads are degraded, as they are unable to carry out some economic activities within and outside the region, as well as small traders having difficulty reaching the locality, all because access roads are in poor condition, and transportation has been very difficult to facilitate the mobility of people and goods.

According to Bunga (2015) he highlighted that the causes of poverty in Angola are identified by the conflict, the displacement of populations, the destruction of traditional systems of economic activity and social solidarity, the destruction of social infrastructure and communication and distribution routes, the strong demographic pressure; the destruction and degradation of economic and social infrastructure; the weak functioning of education, health and social protection services, the very sharp drop in the internal supply of fundamental products, the weakness of the institutional framework, the disqualification and devaluation of human capital, low wages and the extent of unemployment and underemployment. But the present study brings us innovative results in that the causes identified above, many of them are common, but in some cases different, since making a comparative analysis it is observed that the main causes of poverty in the region, that is, according to the results obtained, are the poor distribution of income with an intervention in the order of 21%, Corruption with 13%, Weak local Production with 12%, partisan issues with 11%, the Embezzlement factor with 6%, and the nepotism factor with 4%.

Table No. 7-Impact of public policies on community life

Impact of PP	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	**4**
No	386	**87**
Perhaps	39	**9**
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Own creation, based on measured data, 2024

The results show evidence that public policies have not significantly impacted families' lives. This analysis was made possible by data collected from respondents in the study area, where it was observed that of the 443 sample members representing the 100% percentage margin, 386 members, corresponding to 87%, confirmed that public policies have not significantly impacted families' lives. This essentially leads us to the rush for new actions that enable a shift in this paradigm, transforming the lifestyles of residents, prioritizing sustainable development,

well-being, and quality of life. These policies shape community life in various ways, directly impacting quality of life, opportunities, and local development, a fact that does not occur in the region.

Table no 8 Reasons For The Negative Impacts Of Public Policies On The Community

Reasons for negative impacts	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of supervision	127	29
Changing the mindset of public managers	201	45
Lack of momentum	14	3
Policies are not accurate	101	23
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Table No. 9 The need for a new approach to the National Development Plan (PND) to mitigate hunger and poverty

Impact of PP	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	416	94
No	11	2
Perhaps	16	4
Total	**443**	**100**

Source: Prepared by the author based on measured data, 2024

Public policies, when poorly designed or implemented, generate significant negative impacts on communities. Understanding the reasons behind these impacts is crucial to seeking solutions and ensuring that public policies are increasingly effective and fair. In fulfillment of this premise, the results show that the reasons why public policies have insignificant impacts on the lives of families in the municipality of Bembe are listed as follows: First, 201 respondents, corresponding to 45% of respondents, say it is a lack of change in the mentality of public managers in implementing policies; 127 respondents, corresponding to 29%, say it is a lack of oversight in implementing actions; 101 respondents, corresponding to 23%, say the policies are inaccurate; while 14 respondents, corresponding to 3%, claim it is a lack of impetus, making a total of 443, the research sample size.

Hunger and poverty continue to be two of Angola's greatest social and economic challenges, particularly in rural areas such as the municipality of Bembe in Uíge province. Although the country has made significant progress in national reconstruction and economic growth since the end of the armed conflict, persistent structural inequalities, fragile productive infrastructure, and dependence on the oil sector limit the state's ability to guarantee food security and social well-being for the entire population (UNDP, 2022; World Bank, 2021). The public policy approach in this area should be understood as an intervention strategy that articulates the state, civil society, and the private sector, aiming to promote social inclusion, strengthen family farming, diversify the economy, and ensure access to essential goods and services (Silva, 2018).

In Angola, mitigating hunger and poverty requires not only emergency measures but also structural policies that favor local agricultural production, equitable redistribution of resources, and improved living conditions for rural families (FAO, 2020). The municipality of Bembe is characterized by a strong dependence on subsistence agriculture, especially cassava, a staple of the diet and the local economy. However, limited access to transportation, storage, and marketing infrastructure weakens income-generating capacity and perpetuates cycles of poverty (Ferreira, 2019). Food vulnerability in the region intensified from 2021 to 2023, in part due to national economic instability, rising inflation, and difficulties in accessing markets, which compromised the acquisition of basic goods (INE, 2023).

Public Policies in Angola: Advances and Limitations

The Angolan government has implemented various programs aimed at mitigating hunger and poverty, notably the Poverty Alleviation Program and the Integrated Municipal Intervention Plan (PIIM), which seek to

strengthen local social and economic infrastructure (MPLA, 2021). However, the effectiveness of these policies has been limited by factors such as centralized management, a lack of technical support, and insufficient qualified human resources (Marques, 2020). According to Amartya Sen (1999), poverty should not be understood solely as a lack of income, but as a deprivation of fundamental capabilities, such as access to education, health, and nutrition. Therefore, public policies in Angola need to transcend palliative measures and focus on long-term strategies that ensure the empowerment of rural communities. In the municipality of Bembe, implementing programs to support family farming, introducing modern agricultural techniques, and improving access roads are key to ensuring the circulation of goods and stimulating the local economy. As Sachs (2005) points out, sustainable development requires a balance between social justice, economic efficiency, and environmental preservation, dimensions that should be at the heart of public policies for the region.

Strategies for Mitigating Hunger and Poverty in the municipality of Bembe

- Promotion of Sustainable Family Farming:Strengthening local agriculture should be a priority, through technical support, the provision of improved seeds, and irrigation programs. Studies show that family farming is responsible for a large portion of food security in African countries (FAO, 2017). Therefore, investing in increasing local production through the provision of agricultural credit, technical support, and training for small farmers and cooperatives can improve the municipality's current situation.

- Improvement of Rural Infrastructure:Investments in roads, education, energy, and clean water significantly increase opportunities for economic and social development. Without these conditions, agricultural production loses its competitive value (World Bank, 2021). Education and Community Empowerment. Poverty reduction also depends on the population's qualifications. Policies that integrate technical and vocational training are essential to diversify income sources and create greater social resilience (Silva & Tavares, 2020).

- Social Transfer and Nutrition Programs:In contexts of extreme vulnerability, direct social support programs, including food subsidies and the distribution of basic food baskets, are essential tools for mitigating the short-term impacts of hunger (UNDP, 2022). Angola uses the Kwenda program to mitigate this situation, but this program is being reinforced, as unfortunately, the residents of the region under study have never benefited from this cash transfer program aimed at needy families and farmers.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Analysis of data collected in the municipality of Bembe, Uíge Province, from 2021 to 2023 allowed us to gain an in-depth understanding of the structural and social weaknesses that hinder the effectiveness of public policies to mitigate hunger and poverty. The results reveal that 79% of the population surveyed stated they were unaware of existing public policies, while only 21% acknowledged their existence, highlighting a lack of communication between the state and its citizens.

This data suggests that, despite the formulation of government programs aimed at reducing poverty and food insecurity, their dissemination and implementation lack greater proximity to local communities. As Sen (1999) emphasizes, development should not be understood solely as economic growth, but rather as the expansion of people's real freedoms, which requires information, participation, and access to opportunities. A lack of knowledge about policies limits families' ability to take advantage of existing support, perpetuating cycles of exclusion and vulnerability.

Another relevant point lies in the sample's sociodemographic profile. The male predominance (70%) can be interpreted as a reflection of men's greater involvement in activities or greater willingness to respond to the survey. However, this should not obscure the reality that women are often the most affected by structural poverty and food insecurity (Silva, 2018). Similarly, the concentration of the population in the 36-45 age group (31%) indicates that the most economically active segment of the community faces barriers to accessing effective public policies, which compromises agricultural productivity and family income.

Regarding educational attainment, 51.9% of the population has only completed primary education, significantly limiting access to information and the capacity for social mobilization. As Freire (1987) and Castel (2008) argue,

education is an essential tool for social emancipation and combating inequality, and is one of the fundamental pillars of poverty reduction. Low educational attainment, therefore, compromises the understanding of public policies and their appropriation by communities.

These results point to the need for more inclusive, participatory, and territorialized policies. According to Chambers (1997), combating poverty requires an approach centered on local populations, valuing community knowledge and encouraging citizen involvement in decision-making processes. In contexts like Bembe, the effectiveness of public policies depends not only on the design of government strategies but also on their ability to communicate, adapt to cultural specificities, and create participatory monitoring mechanisms.

Thus, the discussion of the results reinforces the idea that poverty in Angola, and particularly in Uíge, is not simply a matter of economic deprivation, but rather a lack of social inclusion, accessible information, and effectively implemented public policies. Mitigating hunger and poverty, therefore, requires a coordinated effort between the State, municipal administrations, civil society organizations, and the community itself, so that development programs translate into concrete improvements in the population's quality of life.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained in the municipality of Bembe, Uíge Province, allow us to conclude that hunger and poverty remain one of the greatest challenges to local and national development. Despite the existence of public policies aimed at mitigating these vulnerabilities, the lack of accessible information and effective implementation mechanisms has contributed to a large percentage of the population failing to recognize or benefit from these programs. This reflects a disconnect between the state's intentions and the real needs of communities, confirming the idea that policies only become effective when they engage with local contexts and are appropriated by citizens (Chambers, 1997). The prevalence of low educational attainment, combined with a lack of institutional communication, weakens the population's ability to access opportunities for socioeconomic improvement. This reality reinforces Sen's (1999) argument that development should be understood as the expansion of real freedoms, which include education, information, and active participation in public life. Without these elements, policies remain distant, technocratic and not very transformative.

It was also found that, although the municipality has agricultural potential, the lack of adequate infrastructure and consistent institutional support limits productivity and income generation, perpetuating dependence and social vulnerability. As Castel (2008) warns, poverty is not simply a state of economic deprivation, but a multidimensional phenomenon involving exclusion, inequality, and the absence of social safety nets. The central conclusion of this study, therefore, points to the urgent need to reformulate public strategies, making them more inclusive, participatory, and culturally rooted. It is imperative that policies to combat hunger and poverty in Uíge cease to be merely formal instruments and begin to translate into tangible, sustainable, and perceptible results for communities. To this end, citizen involvement in the planning, implementation, and monitoring processes is essential, as only through a shared approach will it be possible to transform realities marked by scarcity into scenarios of dignity and prosperity. In a culminating gesture, the research demonstrates that the reduction of hunger and poverty in Angola, and in the Municipality of Bembe in particular, depends less on the formal existence of policies and more on their capacity for social inclusion, territorialization and practical effectiveness.

According to the results, of the 443 elements in the sample representing the 100% percentage margin, 386 elements corresponding to 87% confirmed that public policies have not significantly impacted the lives of families.The specific reasons for the negative impacts are related tothere is a lack of change in the mentality of Public Managers in the implementation of policies, the Lack of Supervision in the implementation of actions, often the policies are not accurate, as well as the Lack of Impulse, according to the results obtained. Faced with these situations, the Government, through the National Development Plan, has created good policies to combat this social evil, but due to the lack of oversight and change in the mentality of managers, the impacts of these policies have not been visible in the communities andhas not impacted the municipality of Bembe, whichessentially leads us to the rush for new actions that allow for a change in this paradigm, in ways that will change the lifestyle of citizens, prioritizing sustainable development, well-being, and the quality of life of the population. Therefore, it leads us to accept the hypothesis of our study, which states thatthe public policies implemented by the government took a clinical look at the lives of families, but unfortunately did not have a
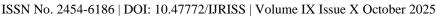
significant impact on mitigating hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe, which is why it requires a new approach.strategic approach, focused on theNational Development Plan 2023 – 2027 in order to resolve the problems of social instability existing in the municipality.

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APPENDIX

Research Questionnaire

Dear respondent:

This questionnaire aims to collect data on Public Policies for Alleviating Hunger and Poverty in Uíge Province, particularly the municipality of Bembe, as well as to analyze the population's perceptions of their implementation in combating hunger and poverty. The target audience of the questionnaire is both resident and non-resident communities (natives of the study area) and will be used for analysis, interpretation, identification of the main causes, and concrete proposals for possible solutions and improvements to this social problem. Therefore, we undertake to treat the data confidentially. We ask for your understanding and cooperation in answering the questions below, marking them with an X and filling in where necessary.

PART 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Identification

Full name_____

Gender: Male_____ Female_____

Resident of the municipality_____ Born and son of the municipality_____ Service mission_____

2. What is your age range?

- 18-25 years_____

- 26-35 years_____

- 36-45 years_____

- 46-55 years_____

- Over 55 years old_____

3. What is your level of education?

- Primary Education_____

- High School_____

- Graduate_____

- Teacher_____

- Doctor_____

4. What is your employment status?

Employed_____ Unemployed_____ Self-employed_____

5. What are your housing conditions?

Own house_____ Rented house_____ Neither own nor rented house_____

6. If you have one, what type of house is it?

Adobe house_____ Wattle and daub house_____ Final House_____

7. How many members live in your household?

From 1 to 5_____ From 6 to 10_____ More than 11_____

8. How many meals have you eaten a day?

1 Meal_____ 2 Meals_____ 3 Meals_____ More than 3 Meals_____

9. What has been the source of financial income?

Salary_____ Agriculture_____ Commerce_____ Other_____

10. Do you have decent access to public health services?

Yes_____ No_____ Sometimes_____

PART 2: KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION ABOUT PUBLIC POLICIES

11. Are you aware of programs to combat hunger and poverty?

Yes_____ No_____ (If no, you do not need to answer the following question)

12. How did you acquire knowledge about the National Development Plan?

Municipal administration_____ Media (newspapers, television, radio)_____

Internet (news sites, social networks)_____ Other_____

13. Which of the government programs aimed at combating hunger and poverty do you know?

PIDLCP (Integrated Local Development and Poverty Alleviation Program)

Social Monetary Transfer Program (Kwenda)_____

Support for production, import substitution and export diversification (PRODESI)_____

Action Plan for Promoting Employability (PAPE)_____

Integrated Municipal Intervention Program (PIIM)_____

National Staff Training Plan (PNFQ)_____

Agricultural Development Support Fund (FADA)_____

Others_____

14. How do you evaluate public policies to combat hunger and poverty?

Good_____ Very good_____ Reasonable_____ Terrible_____

15. What is the main benefit you or your family have obtained from these programs?

_____

16. In your opinion, are the planned public policies effective in combating hunger and poverty?

Yes_____ No_____ In some cases_____

PART 3: PERCEPTION OF HUNGER AND POVERTY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BEMBE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR MITIGATION

17. Do you consider yourself a poor individual?

Yes_____ No_____ Maybe_____

18. What have you been doing to feed yourself?

Agriculture_____ Commerce____ Biscato_____ I hope for donations_____ Others_____

19. Have you received assistance from the Government or a Non-Governmental Organization?

Yes_____ No_____ Sometimes_____

20. In your opinion, what are the main causes of hunger and poverty in the region?

Corruption_____ Embezzlement_____ Nepotism_____ Partisanship_____

War_____ Poor production_____ Infrastructure (Access roads)_____ Poor distribution of resources_____ Lack of food security_____ Others_____

21. Have the public policies implemented by the government had a significant impact on improving the quality of life in communities?

Yes_____ No_____ Maybe_____ (If no and maybe, say Why?)

Lack of supervision_____ Change in the mentality of public managers_____

Lack of Impulse _____ Policies are not accurate_____

22. Do you believe the government is doing enough to combat hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe?

Yes_____ No_____ Maybe_____

23. Is it essential to take a new approach to the municipality's development plan to mitigate hunger and poverty in the region?

Yes_____ No_____ Maybe_____

24. What other types of programs do you think would be important to combat hunger and poverty in the municipality of Bembe?

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your well-deserved attention...

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