

Chapter 11

The OW in the former Portuguese Colonies of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and São Tomé e Principe.

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Angola: the paradox of an abundance of jobs with no-one to fill them

As we have already seen in the previous chapters, the first experiences with the

¹ based on the personal recollections of Clodomir Santos de Morais

application of the Massive Capacitation Method in the self declared lusophone Popular Republics of Africa happened in an environment where the need to create Workplaces was hardly recognized for the simple reason that there was an overabundance of them. The real problem, on the contrary was an abundance jobs, but with not enough qualified people to fill them. The most telling example of this paradox was the case of Angola, which we want to briefly illustrate here. The victory over colonialism had meant that the Portuguese had left, head over heels, their former so called 'overseas province' of Angola where the dictator former Salazar had been thinking of installing the seat of his future empire. In preparation for this, he had a town built called 'New Lisbon' (Nuva Lisboa), known today as Huambo. The void left by the sudden departure of thousands of Portuguese who did see no alternative but to leave the country, for reasons of debt or because of crimes they had committed - (or simply because they could not stomach being ruled by 'negros') - went hand in hand with an equally sudden Workplace inflation which with a corresponding dearth of professionals to fill those posts. Offering a massive capacitation program to 'fight the scourge of unemployment' was, in a country with a superabundance of jobs, tantamount to preaching in the desert or carrying coals to Newcastle. On top of this, in the constitutional style of the Socialist Republics of Eastern Europe, the new Angolan State set out to provide jobs for all its citizens. Not difficult to understand, therefore that no-one and no Institution in Angola saw any need whatsoever for a program specifically aimed at 'tackling unemployment'.

But the governments of these countries nevertheless did see the need for a modicum of professional training for those who were going to fill the posts abandoned by the Portuguese, or, at the very least, try to extract a better performance from those actually doing (or supposedly doing) those jobs. There was, for example, the case of the male nurse Mendes de Carvalho who was put in charge by the new victorious revolutionary party, the MPLA (the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) of the destiny of the Angolan capital, Luanda, without ever having been in charge of even a small clinic, let alone a hospital. His only grand and proud claim to fame consisted in having suffered for many years in prison, at the concentration camp of Tarrafal, which the Portuguese Dictatorship ran in the Cabo Verdian Archipelago the middle of the Atlantic Ocean where it caged its antifascists.

In the spring of 1976, ie shortly after the Declaration of Independence of Angola, fellow male nurse and eminent writer of Angolan folkloric stories, Mendes de Carvalho, was invested with the office of Mayor of the capital Luanda and put in charge of leading a delegation of a couple of dozen of personalities and experts representing the government of Angola to the World Conference which was to decide about the creation of a new UN agency, HABITAT (the UN Organization

for Human Settlements on the 'Blue Planet'). The weeklong Conference attended by representatives from 126 other countries, took place in Vancouver, Canada. A parallel conference, organized by an NGO Forum, took place at an abandoned Canadian Air Base, attended by 8,000 people. As far as it was possible to ascertain, two years after that conference, more than half of the persons on that Angolan delegation was already not living any more in Angola, ie had abandoned their posts and their country. This did not represent the loss of the odd couple of professionals: in view of the dearth of people with university training, the impact was massive and worsened the skilled job vacancy situation. Mr. Mendes de Carvalho in rapid succession became Minister of Health and Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of (East) Germany.

The nationalization of employment was at its most extreme in Angola: whether you were a simple barber, a shoeshine boy, or newspaper seller on the streets, all of them, down to the most petty occupations, were State employees, a fact which did not prevent a profound social diversification in the country at a later stage, with the appearance of nouveaux riches. In the first years of its independence, Angola considered itself a country with full employment, with the State as 'Grand Patron' of all and sundry. Nowhere was there the slightest hint of an unemployment, and, therefore, no-one and no institution ever bothered with a program for the fight against a non existing unemployment problem. Nor had the Angolan government, prior to this, been interested in an Alphabetization program offered by Professor Paulo Freire. Matters pertaining to Education and Alphabetization were considered to be the proper domain of the Ministry of Education and of their own National Workers' Union of Angola, the UNTG, whose General Secretary, Pascual Luvualu, held the rank of government minister, while at the same time member of the Central Committee of the Party in power, the MPLA.

Mister Luvualu exercised an extreme vigilance over the ideological purity of the 'Worker & Peasant Education Programs', understandable, to a certain extent, in a country where religion, ie Catholicism, had become fused with colonialism. For many of the Angolan revolutionaries, Salazar and Cardinal Cerejeira (who had been in the habit of blessing the government troops before they went into battle against the nationalists, were hand in glove associates in the same Colonialist venture. So, an alphabetization program led by Paulo Freire, then at the World Council of Churches(WCC) in Geneva, had little chance of being welcomed by the Angolan Government, even less so after the intervening but failed coup d'état by Nito Alves, and the disappearance of 'the Father of Independence', Doctor-President Augostinho Neto, and the gathering struggle for power between the two cultural majority groups in the country, the *Kibundos* and *Mobundos*.

The OW called in by the Angolan Trade Union Movement

The only technical cooperation assistance from the ILO Mr. Pascual Luvualu was interested in was strictly limited to Trade Union education, as the UNTG, with its gigantic membership structure spread over the entire country of more than 2 million square kilometer with 10 million inhabitants, was in urgent need of courses in Trade Unionism and Trade Union Administration, as well as of courses in Trade Union politics, in the context of a new burgeoning African Socialism. Of the over 50,000 workers who participated in the 1987 May Day celebrations, singing the 'International' while marching past the official stand, no-one was unemployed, as the Constitution gave the right to a job to everyone, even though that job may have been extremely poorly paid, not sufficient to feed themselves, let alone their families. Many of them were registered on Worker Education courses at the gigantic centre for Trade Union Education in the city of Malange.

The courses in professional training for the industrial and service sector were the responsibility of a section of the Ministry of Labor, under the directorship of a certain David Gove Lussoke, while the courses in hygiene and safety at work were in the hands of the department directed by Augusto Lot, another ex-prisoner. However, so as not to disappoint too much the ILO EDUC Director, Césare Poloni, former Italian Socialist Party militant in charge of Worker Education program at the ILO who had given them so much support in their Trade Union Education efforts, Pascual Luvualu agreed that the external consultant, Clodomir Santos de Morais be called in to run an Organizational 'Center' Workshop on the UNTG premises (23, Ave Rainha Ginga). There were 50 participants, the majority of them Trade Union leaders from the capital Luanda. Manuel Augusto Viage, aka "Rivas", Director of Training at the UNTG, inaugurated and closed the 4-week Organizational 'Center' Workshop run for the formation of specialists in organizational matters and to strengthen UNTG teams. The Worker Education Department of the Central Trade Union subsequently made good use of those specialists in most of the regions of the country. Other ILO Angola missions entrusted to Clodomir Santos de Morais were confined to studies on urban drift (of the labor force) which could easily be verified by contacts and interviews with the inhabitants of the enormous 'musseques' (townships or slums) around the main cities. That is how he became involved in the large ILO mission investigating the needs of the Angolans around Workplace Hygiene and Safety issues.

The 1981 ILO Research Mission to Mozambique

The first Mozambican mission in which Clodomir Santos de Morais took part was FAO-funded, in response to a request by the Minister of Agricultural Planning, Luis Pereira, in 1981. The team of international experts was led by David Beitelman, Economics Professor at the ISS(Institute for Social Studies) in the Hague and ex-minister of Agrarian Reform of the government of Salvador Allende in Chile. All the other members of the investigation team were equally displaced and/or exiled by the respective dictatorships of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. The main aim of this mission was to identify the most urgently needed projects in the country. Mozambique was the only country neighboring former Rhodesia which had become actively involved in the struggle against Apartheid on top of giving material support and asylum to persecuted Rhodesians. For this reason, the UNDP and the Overseas Development arm of the Swedish Government, under the premiership of Olaf Palme, was to provide ample financial technical cooperation assistance to the projects allotted to the Mozambican Development Plan for the next quarter century.

The extreme hunger for Experts

The mission traveled the entire country overland, from the Northern Province of Cabo Delgado near the Tanzanian border to the Southern Province of Gaza, near the South African and Swazi borders. Just as in the case of Angola, there appeared to be no employment problem in Mozambique, rather the diametrically opposite was true, namely an oversupply of available jobs. But with no properly qualified people to fill them. This situation was due to 250,000 Portuguese having fled the country as soon as the revolutionary leader Samora Machel with his victorious troops had conquered half the country. The reasons for this precipitate flight were the same as those behind the massive exodus from other former Portuguese territories: crimes against the State or against workers and/or the African populations, among others. One thing is certain: the Portuguese colonialists never really believed that educating its colonized masses would allow them to extract any more profit from its colonies. It was not an accident that at the time of their hasty retreat, Mozambique's population had hardly been educated beyond grade four. In the entire 400 years of colonialism they had also only managed to educate one solitary doctor in medicine.

The only reason why the enormous cranes of the port of Maputo kept working was the arrival of German, Rumanian and Polish workers or engineers, sent in the context of solidarity among socialist countries. The dearth of cadres was so desperate in Mozambique that hundreds of lifts in town stopped working for months on end, due to the lack of mechanics and electricians to repair them. A

telling episode which illustrates the hunger for technicians and specialists in Mozambique, in stark contrast with an overabundance of workplaces on offer, was the arrival, in the beginning of 1978, of Luis Pereira and Antonio Garcès sent by the Mozambican government to Lisbon to recruit Clodomir Santos de Morais, even though there had been a simultaneous request by the United Nations for him to lead the PROCCARA project in Honduras. Two years earlier, the project which Clodomir had directed in Mexico had already lost one of its best specialists, namely Jaime Toha - (who, at present, is the minister of Planning in the Chilean government) -, because he had been recruited by FAO for Mozambique. The Mozambican Government appointed Jaime Toha as vice-minister for Forests and Mrs de Toha as evaluator attached to the presidential palace.

Clodomir was in for a surprise when he took the mozambican officials Pereira and Garcès at the famous Restaurant 'Alto de La Trinidad'² for an evening meal. That famous restaurant saw every evening the comings and goings of hundreds of visitors from late evening till the early morning, most of them part of the 'small left', of 'leftish' local intellectual bourgeoisie. The occasion was a most unhappy affair, as the two Mozambicans could not stop lamenting the paradox of rubbing shoulders with so many specialists, most of whom were unemployed, whereas, back in their home country, there was such a crying need for cadres. At the end of the 'David Beitelman' FAO mission, dozens of rural and development cooperation projects had been identified, for a total of \$197 m. Troubled by the extreme dearth of high-level experts in Mozambique, José Dias, ex-director of a Faculty of Agronomy in Uruguay and Gerson Gomes, resident Economist of the Service for Economic Analysis at FAO HQ in Rome, were ready to put themselves at the service of the Mozambican government and go and fill posts in the projects approved by Maputo.

Guinea Bissau and São Tomé e Principe

Preparing the field. The "Center" OW at the ILO, Geneva

The United Nations ILO programme called on Clodomir Santos de Morais, then visiting lecturer at the University of Rostock in the summer of 1984, to come and organize a 'Center' Workshop (CENOW) at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The intention was the capacitation of the most senior labor movement leaders of Portugal and the lusophone countries of Africa: Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and the Republic of Sao Tomé e Principe. In the years

² 'Alto de Trinidad', a public establishment in Upper Lisbon used to be a typical watering place where the left came to eat, drink and discuss historical materialism, convinced that revolutions are made in. . . reunions

following, Clodomir was invited to put in place massive capacitation workshops in the Trade Union centres of those countries.

"Course" OW's in Guinea Bissau: bolstering up the Trade Union system (1983)

The first intensive 'Course' OW run in Guinea Bissau to form Trade Union leaders took place in January 1985 in the headquarters of the local UNTG (the Guinea Bissau Trade Union HQ). The problem was that this institution represented little more than its banner name, which made the task of covering this country of 1 m people all the more daunting. Paulo Freire, five years earlier, had conducted an Alphabetization Project here which was never concluded for lack of financial support. Two of Clodomir's local counterparts were graduates of the Geneva Center OW, Fernando Fonseca and Salvador Fernandes, also spearheading expected to revamp the UNTG structure. Salvador Fernandes, was the former director of the School for Political Education of the Revolutionary Independence Party of Guinea and Cape Verde, which had operated clandestinely from the neighboring country Guinea Conakri from where also the liberation struggle was launched.

During the last two weeks of this Center OW, the specialists being formed there conducted three 'lightning courses' in Bissau, a town of 100 thousand inhabitants, for the formation of trade union leaders. These lightning courses were attended by almost a thousand people, 250 of them dockworkers at the local harbour (stevedores, dock operators, warehouse keepers etc), 230 women belonging to the local horticultural and animal husbandry cooperatives and another 500 or so residents of a former colony with widespread misery. A Service Enterprise for trade union capacitation, - the so-called 'Amilcar Cabral Brigade' for the formation Assistants most of the villages of the interior - was set up by the same specialists formed during the Course. The ILO Worker Education Service had financed the proceedings whereas Clodomir Santos de Morais had the overall direction. Starting from 1983, Clodomir embarked on research in Africa to extract comparative criteria and theoretical frameworks on the Capacitation Method he had experimented with during the 17 preceding years in Latin America. This was to become the principal scientific research theme of his thesis at the University of Rostock. The second big capacitation event conducted by Clodomir in Guinea Bissau was another Center Workshop with a 40-plus attendance. The aim was a refresher course for new trade unionist cadres from the interior and capital city alike in the context of workplace creation. One of the outcomes was the creation in 1987 of a small cloting factory named (in creole) 'No Na Cose' (We have Sewn it Ourselves) and which provided 20 workplaces.

The fight against Unemployment in Bissau: 1989 onwards

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, more than 1,000 students and professionals with University degrees obtained in various Eastern European Countries returned to Guinea Bissau. This resulted in a worsening of the chronic unemployment situation which reached epidemic proportions for the Guinean people from the moment the Portuguese colonialists left the country, taking with them financial and capital resources (machines, vehicles, boats etc). On top of this, the colonialists left the country devoid of any higher education institution. They also left behind an illiteracy rate of 85% which Paulo Freire, assisted by his wife Elza, managed to bring down to 70%. In a capital with 100 thousand inhabitants, barely a third of the buildings were in brick. The remainder were made from palm leaves or cardboard and tin. The public electricity supply had been down for more than two years: being one of the poorest countries in the world, there were no funds for a new electricity plant. Clodomir was sent on a second mission to Guinea Bissau at the invitation of the ILO in 1989 with the purpose of forming cadres for the fight against urban and rural unemployment.

Back to Brazil

By that time, however, the time had come to think of returning, at long last, to his home country, Brazil, to pick up where he had left off, back in 1964, when he was exiled by the Military Junta. The sequel of events as from 1988, when Christovam Buarque, Vice Chancellor of the University of Brasilia, who had been one of the principal sources of inspiration behind the elaboration of the 'Course'-type Workshops for the formation of the TPI's in Lisbon (ch 15 in this book), invited Clodomir Santos de Morais (then in Rostock) to come and work once more in Brazil, is recounted in chapters 16 and 17 of this book.



THE OW IN AFRICA 1985>

The prospective Geneva Course participants were all called back to Africa to their respective newly independent countries. This is the main reason why Santos de Morais left personally for **Africa** in 1985

where he did on the spot what he had been unable to do in Geneva. There followed Course and Centre OWs in:

- Guinea-Bissau,
- Angola,
- Mozambique,
- São Tome e Principe,



 Zimbabwe and other countries of southern Africa, all with the intention of setting up Trade Union Centra in the above countries, in all cases using, principally, the **Course** OW variant.