HARNESSING ANGOLA'S DEMOGRAPHIC POTENTIAL TO ACHIEVE THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

Extended abstract

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction The possibilities for Sub-Saharan Africa to take advantage of the demographic dividend have generated enormous interest, particularly due to the fact that this region lags far behind in demographic transition compared to the rest of the world, and evidence that many of its countries have already begun the transition (Bloom & Williamson, 1998).

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2017), the demographic dividend is the future economic, political, and social gain resulting from investments made today for the youth, in health, education, employment, and effective participation in the country's public policies.

The current demographic configuration of the Angolan population has been experiencing a very rapid growth rate over the last half-century. The latest population census conducted in 2014 recorded a population of 25.8 million inhabitants, and according to data from projections by the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2016), the population in 2050 could reach 67.9 million inhabitants, accompanied by one of the highest fertility rates in sub-Saharan Africa, which, according to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, is estimated at 6.2 children per woman, contributing to rapid population growth (IIMS, 2015-2016).

The objective of this article is to analyse Angola's demographic potential for achieving a demographic dividend. The study was essentially based on a review of available literature on the subject, mainly through consultation of case studies already conducted in countries such as Brazil, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Thailand, etc. Various statistical data on demographic dynamics were also used, allowing for the production of "indispensable" graphical representations for the analysis of the phenomenon in question.

2. METHODOLOGY

Through bibliographical and documentary research, we were able to access statistical data from various sources. We especially highlight those provided by the National Institute of Statistics, including the General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) of 2014, Population Projection for the period 2014 to 2050, the Health and Multiple Indicators Survey of 2015-2016, and Population Projection for the period 2009 to 2015. Additionally, we used United Nations (UN DESA) estimates on population distribution by sex and age, with revisions in 2022, as well as data from the UN Population Division's World Population Prospects, with revisions in 1998, 2002, 2019, and 2022, along with the PRB World Population Data Sheet of 2003, and other sources from the U.S. Bureau of the Census and international data.

3. PERSPECTIVES OF A DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND IN ANGOLA

The demographic transition in Angola is in its initial phase, characterized by high fertility rates and declining, albeit still high, mortality rates. This is indicated by the declining trend in the mortality rate compared to the birth rate over the decades, suggesting the beginning of the demographic transition in the country (Afonso, 2013).

Rapid population growth is evident in the total growth rates, with projections indicating a significant increase in the population by 2054. This population growth is influenced by the high fertility rate, which is undergoing a gradual transition, as indicated by the projection of the Total Fertility Rate (UN-DESA, 2022). Angola's youthful demographic structure, with half of the population below 15 years old, is the result of high fertility rates over decades. This scenario reflects challenges and opportunities in terms of human capital and workforce.

On the other hand, the country faces significant challenges in achieving the demographic dividend. The education sector is underdeveloped, with low enrolment rates in primary and secondary education, especially among girls and in rural areas. Lack of investment in education results in an unskilled and uncompetitive workforce (INE-IBEP, 2008-2009; MED, 2016).

In the health sector, Angola faces high rates of infant mortality and child growth retardation, attributable to malnutrition and childhood diseases. Additionally, the unmet need for family planning among adolescents contributes to high teenage fertility rates (UNDP, 2015; IIMS, 2015-2016). The country's economic situation also poses a challenge, with unstable economic growth due to falling oil prices and high levels of inequality.

Poor governance and corruption also undermine efforts to improve governance and economic development (MEP, 2019; World Bank, 2015; Transparency International, 2018). Angola is currently in the process of demographic transition, a crucial moment in its evolution. However, the country faces substantial challenges in key areas such as education, health, the economy, and governance. It is imperative to address these challenges effectively so that Angola can fully harness its demographic potential and achieve a favourable demographic dividend.

4. CONCLUSION

The Angolan population will continue to increase at a considerable rate, at least in the near future. Even with the most optimistic scenario regarding fertility reduction, a significant population increase is expected, from the current approximately 25 million to 54 million in 2040 and 85 million in 2054 (United Nations, 2022). In 2014, the population growth rate was 2.7%, and it is likely to remain above 2% until 2050.

With this population projection for Angola in the coming years, the proportion of the population of working age will increase from 50% in 2014 to approximately 59% in 2040. The positive impact of this increase on the economy and social well-being will largely depend on the implementation of appropriate policies in the areas of education, health, and employment. Such policies are essential to ensure adequate workforce training and its integration into the country's productive process.

Angola needs to advance in the demographic transition process. This requires the creation of a political and institutional framework that promotes the improvement of the population's health conditions, especially the reduction of infant mortality. Consistently reducing mortality, with the strengthening of family planning, to ensure access to

reproductive rights, will accelerate fertility reduction, decreasing unwanted pregnancies and early motherhood.

Therefore, for Angola to benefit from the demographic dividend in the future, action must begin now! And if action is not taken now? If action is not taken now! There will be a large mass of young people without academic education, without training, without jobs, and disillusioned, which can foster social instability and facilitate mass crime.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

AFONSO, L. (2013) "A teoria da transição demográfica. Um ensaio para o caso de Angola", in, Mulemba-Revista Angolana de Ciências Sociais, Luanda, Vol. II, Nº 5, Maio, 2013.

BANCO MUNDIAL, 2015. Country Data Report for Angola, 1996- 2014. Consultado em http://documents.worldbank. org/curated/en/842581468185957471/Country datareport-for-Angola-1996-2014.

INE, "Inquérito de Indicadores Multiplos e de Saúde" (2015-2016), Luanda, Angola. Instituto Nacional de Estatística

PNUD. (2016), Visão Geral Relatório sobre o Desenvolvimento Humano, "Desenvolvimento Humano para todos", Disponivel em: HDR2016 2016 PT ANGOLA.pdf, acessado em: 20/02/22

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, 2018. Índice de Percepção da Corrupção 2017. Consultado em https://www. transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_ perceptions_ index_2017

UN DESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs), Population Division, 2022. World Population Prospects 2022: Summary of Results. Website: un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/wpp2022_summary_of_re sults.pdf, accessed 22 December 2022.

BLOOM, & WILLIAMSON. (1998). Demographic Transitions and Economic Miracles in Emerging Asia.World Bank Economic Review, 419–455.

INE (2011). Inquérito Integrado sobre o Bem-Estar da População, IBEP. Relatório de Tabelas, Vol. II. Luanda: Instituto Nacional de Estatística.