

# Civil Society and democracy – The Case of Union activism in Luanda

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# Abstract

Based on fieldwork interviews from two different trade unions in Luanda, this study aims to reflect on the role of civil society for the consolidation of democracy in Angola, and in particular, the challenges of trade unionism and its effects on democracy. Using the method of inductive reasoning to process data, it first addresses themes derived from the interviews such as Financial struggles, Trade union resistance and Lack of a grassroots-perspective, themes which are then analyzed in relation to Larry Diamond's Conventional notion of civil society. Special emphasis is placed on Angola as a case of the African experience, where the state of human rights, and particularly political rights, are in many cases limited. Using the Conventional notion of civil society, it argues that democratic consolidation will continue to be a difficult task for trade unions to achieve if their autonomy is constantly under attack. However, it also argues that the Conventional notion of civil society, is inadequate for the reality in Luanda, since it is rather a depiction of desires of how civil society should act, than acknowledging the conditions that govern the actions of civil society.

*Key words: Civil Society, Trade Union, Unionism, Democracy, Angola, Africa, Human Rights, Political Rights.*

# Civilsamhället och demokrati - fackföreningsrörelsen i Luanda

## Abstrakt

Denna studie syftar till att reflektera över det civila samhällets roll för konsolideringen av demokrati i Angola, och i synnerhet fackföreningsrörelsens utmaningar och dess påverkan demokrati. Studien baseras på fältintervjuer från två olika fackföreningar samtliga utförda i Angolans huvudstad Luanda. Genom den induktiva metoden och i denna studie tillika teori, har hanteringen av datan resulterat i de tre teman finansiella problem, fackföreningsmotstånd och brist på gräsrotsperspektiv, som sedan analyserats utifrån Larry Diamonds perspektiv på civilsamhällets roll, "the conventional notion". Som ett exempel på den afrikanska erfarenheten, läggs särskild vikt på Angola där de mänskliga rättigheterna och särskilt de politiska rättigheterna, i många fall är begränsade. Som medlemmar av civilsamhället, konkluderar jag för att den demokratiska konsolideringen förblir en svår uppgift att uppnå för fackföreningsrörelse, så länge deras självständighet är ständigt under attack. Dock, hävdar jag också att Diamonds teori snarare är en skildring av önskningar av hur det civila samhället ska agera än ett erkännande av de villkor som styr civilsamhällets handlingar, vilket blir otillräckligt för den verklighet Luanda befinner sig i.

*Nyckelord: Civilsamhälle, Fackförening, fackföreningsrörelse, demokrati, Angola, Afrika, mänskliga rättigheter, politiska rättigheter,*

*I would like to express tremendous gratitude to all participants for not only partaking in this research, but also for speaking their mind. To Miguel who played the role as a driver, local connoisseur, guide, and all necessities one might need in the capital of Angola. And lastly my warmest thanks belong to the Swedish trade union Vision for making this study possible.*

# Table of contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION.....1**
- 1.1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM, PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....2
- 1.1.2 PRIMARY- AND SECONDARY SOURCES.....4
- 1.1.3 SOURCE CRITICISM.....6
  
- 2 RESEARCH METHOD AND THEORY.....7**
- 2.1 RESEARCH METHOD.....7
- 2.2 RESEARCH THEORY – A CONVENTIONAL APPROACH ON DATA AND A CONVENTIONAL NOTION ON CIVIL SOCIETY ..... 13
  
- 3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH..... 18**
  
- 4 RESEARCH/ANALYSIS ..... 20**
  
- BIBLIOGRAPHY.....41**
  
- APPENDIX A ..... 43**
  
- APPENDIX B ..... 44**

# 1 Introduction

While participating in a book club discussion, 17 members were arrested and later sentenced for crimes against the state in the capital of Angola, Luanda, in late June of 2015. The decision to organize a meeting for a discussion of the academic book *From Dictatorship to democracy, A conceptual framework for Liberation*<sup>1</sup>, by the American professor Gene Sharp, was considered to be one of the rebellious act planned to overthrow the state. This incident is one of among many in which members from Angolan civil society, while using their most fundamental rights, such as the right to protest and to assemble, have been accused and arrested for activities similar to those performed by the book club. This particular incident, which unlike many others, earned a world-wide media attention, revealed a very unstable situation in this southern African country when it came to the exercising of the most basic human rights. This alarming glimpse into Angolan civil society raises questions as to what extent citizens can act upon and exercise their rights and to the overall wellbeing of civil society in Angola.

As in the book read by the club in Luanda, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, here I will address the idea of civil society as of the main arena for democracy and its importance for whole society. This topic has been discussed from many angles by not only scholars, such as Gene Sharp, but also by governments and businesses, whom regularly use civil society to enhance democracy and promote human rights. Current discourse on human rights seemingly tends to view civil society as the foundation for all sorts of improvements that would count as “democratic”. Today, many aid organizations, such as the Swedish development aid governmental agency, Sida, recognize the importance of working with civil society actors. With this recognition comes an expectation for civil society to act as the realizers and protectors of the human rights. By using an example of trade unions in Luanda, I

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<sup>1</sup> Sharp, Gene, *From dictatorship to democracy: a conceptual framework for liberation*, Serpent’s Tail, London, 2012.

attempt to move away from the general way of speaking about the roles and assumptions related to democracy and civil society. Instead, the concept of civil society is discussed not just as an idea, but in connection to a specific context.

### 1.1.1 Research problem, purpose and research questions

As a concept, civil society carries a long history with a definition that has changed through time. The concept contains several meanings, but a modern and possibly the most common understanding of civil society describes it as a part of society where citizens organize in total separation from the state.<sup>2</sup> However, this was not always the case. Before the 18th century, a separation between civil society and the state did not exist.<sup>3</sup> In this section I intend to provide insight on the current discourse surrounding civil society.

Today, the popular notion of civil society often follows the standpoint of viewing civil society as one of the most important instruments for achieving democratization, a standpoint which is in line with scholar Larry Diamond's advocacy for civil society. Lately however, alternative notions and critics of this dominant view on civil society have grown. Scholars such as Simone Chambers, Jeffrey Kopstein and Alan Fowler all agree upon the impact that civil society plays on democracy as slightly exaggerated, since according to them, there is no guarantee for civil society to have a positive impact on democracy. For Chambers and Kopstein, there are social circumstances, such as economic factors, which play a significant role in how citizens act within civil society, hence social circumstances are what need to be focused on, rather than simply expecting civil society to make a positive impact.<sup>4</sup> To exemplify their argument, they present examples of organizations that are part of civil society yet preach hatred as their main

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<sup>3</sup> Bereketgab, Redie, Conceptualizing civil society in Africa: The Case of Eritrea. *Journal of Civil society*. Vol 22 no 6 (2006) : 1131- 1153.

<sup>4</sup> Chambers, Simone, Kopstein, Jeffrey, Bad civil society. *Political Theory*. Vol 29 no 6 (2001): 837-865.

tasks. That is to say, civil society can also do harm. In a similar way, Fowler<sup>5</sup>, argues that the assumption that civil society is a tool for democracy builds on expectations and normativity, which does not take reality into account.<sup>6</sup> He suggests that pro-civil society theories that dominate current discourse on civil society are derived from a Western view, resulting in a usage that is not adaptable to the African reality.<sup>7</sup> Instead, he is searching for a more Africa-centric perspective on civil society.

Nelson Kasfir and Redie Bereketeab specifically critique the conventional notion of civil society. For Kasfir, the conventional notion fails to understand the reality in Africa by disregarding what he deems to be actors who make up part of civil society, but instead are denounced to not qualify as ‘civic enough’. Bereketeab agrees that the conventional, Eurocentric notion and its demands on what should count as civil society automatically excludes many actors that do make up part of African civil society. Basically, all are saying that the study and measurement of civil society in Africa can only occur on Africa’s own terms, something that the conventional notion fails to do.

Using trade unionism in Luanda as an example, in this study I will analyze prevailing challenges for civil society in Angola, and to what extent the role of civil society functions for the consolidation of democracy. The latter shall be answered using the approach of the conventional notion of civil society whilst the first question I will discuss by deriving results from the interview data. For the analysis of data, I have used the method of the conventional approach. By doing so, I intend to understand the reality of civil society from people’s own perspectives and experiences, to later compare to the conventional notion of civil society. The purpose lies in the value of not merely understanding the concept of civil society that is so commonly used, but also the reality where the concept is used.

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<sup>5</sup> Fowler, Alan, Measuring Civil society- Perspectives on Afro-Centrism. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-profit Organizations*. Vol 23 no 1 (2012): 5-23.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.10.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 16.



**Following are the research questions I aim to answer in this study:**

1. What are the current challenges for trade unionism in Luanda?
2. As part of civil society, what are the possibilities for its contribution to democracy in Angola?

### 1.1.2 Primary- and secondary sources

The primary source for this research consists of four semi-structured interviews, all conducted in the capital of Angola, Luanda, whereupon the first interview took place on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and the remaining three on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Due to my decision to de-identify the informants who participated in this study and the unions they represent, I am inclined to exclude all specific information, such as the place of meeting or any sort of sensitive information, for the safety of the participants and remaining de-identified. It is important to emphasize that de-identification of informants merely exists of protection of informants, and as an ethical choice for how I choose to present the information shared by those who participated in my study. That is, the study in itself was not conducted anonymously. Instead, my analysis of their responses is inevitably understood from the trade unions, which they represent.

The secondary sources in this study have two main purposes. The first concerns the validation of data, since the interviews used in this study deals with actual questions and not feelings or interpretations. This mean secondary sources merely play a role to describe the reality of Luanda, but also to confirm what informants decide to share. Here, confirm does not necessarily mean to look for false statements, but rather to put the result from the research into a context for better comprehension of trade unionism in this Angolan city, but also in Africa as a broader context, a continent containing countries with similar experiences. The three sources I have

used for this task are *Trade Unions and Sustainable Democracy*<sup>8</sup> edited by Gérard Kester and Ousmane Oumarou Sidibé and Wogu Ananabas' overall description on the emergence of African trade unionism from *The Trade Union Movement in Africa*<sup>9</sup>, and *The Politics of African Trade unionism*<sup>10</sup>, which unlike the latter puts a greater focus on discussing African unionism by including the political situation. Apart from *The Trade Union Movement in Africa*, neither of these books specifically covered Angolan trade unionism. Therefore, I have considered it important to add articles that specifically deal with Angolan civil society as a complement for a thorough understanding of the chosen context for this study. Articles that have helped me in the process of writing are *The Poverty of the 'Middle classing' of Development: Key Problems in Southern Africa*<sup>11</sup>, *Human rights and Social Change in Angola*<sup>12</sup> and *Democratisation and the Consolidation of Political Authority in Post-War Angola*.<sup>13</sup>

The book "*Forskningshandboken: för småskaliga forskningsprojekt inom samhällsvetenskaperna*"<sup>14</sup> by Martyn Denscombe and the article *Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis Qualitative Health Research (2005)*<sup>15</sup> filled the purpose of guidance in processing interviews as a method.

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<sup>8</sup> Kester, Gerard & Oumarou Sidibé, Ousmane (red.), *Trade unions and sustainable democracy in Africa*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1997.

<sup>9</sup> Ananaba, Wogu, *The trade union movement in Africa: promise and performance*, Hurst, London, 1979.

<sup>10</sup> Lynd, G.E., *The politics of African trade unionism.*, Praeger, New York, 1968.

<sup>11</sup> Southall, Roger, The Poverty of the 'Middle classing' of Development: Key Problems in Southern Africa. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*. Vol. 39 no. 1 (2017): 211-235.

<sup>12</sup> Da Silveira, Maria Lúcia, Human Rights and Social Change in Angola. *International Journal on Human Rights*. Vol 11 no 20 (2014): 212-235.

<sup>13</sup> Schubert, Jon, Democratisation and the Consolidation of Political Authority In Post-War Angola. *Journal of Southern Africa Studies*. Vol 36 no 3 (2010): 657 – 672.

<sup>14</sup> Denscombe, Martyn, *Forskningshandboken: för småskaliga forskningsprojekt inom samhällsvetenskaperna*, 2. uppl., Studentlitteratur, Lund, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang & Sarah E. Shannon, Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*. Vol 15 no 9 (2005): 1227-1288.

### 1.1.3 Source criticism

Separately and in connection, the concepts of civil society and democracy are indeed a well-studied area. Yet in the case of literature on Angolan trade unionism, it was not as easy to find. For several reasons, one of them being its great success, it is research on South African trade unionism that highly dominates literature on African trade unionism. Whether it concerned civil society, democracy or trade unions, the lack of literature specifically devoted to Angolan trade unionism instead resulted in a selection of literature that is geographically relevant for this study, even in few cases where Angolan trade unionism was not specifically mentioned. Though, the literature that I use speaks more broadly on African trade unionism than dedicating entirely on specific countries, the literature provides a historical overview of African trade unionism that is useful when analyzing what informants share. Therefore, my conclusion is that the lack of literature on Angolan trade unionism has a smaller role in this study, since I am primarily using interview data as my main material.

## 2 Research method and theory

### 2.1 Research method

The data collection for this study is based on semi structured interviews through field work in Luanda, Angola. Interviews served as a useful research method due to their ability to access data and “privileged information”<sup>16</sup>. Privileged information simply refers to information which would otherwise have been difficult to obtain using another method. Nevertheless, when doing field work, and more specifically using interviews, existing purposes and wishes to result from one’s field work may not be fulfilled due to the unpredictable nature that field work might signify. For example, the chances of receiving privileged information might not merely be based on the specific chosen informants and the chosen context but might as well depend on an informant’s capability and willingness to share information that could be considered as privileged.

#### My field work experience

Since one of my attempts in this study is to analyze the challenges of civil society in Luanda, by using trade unionism as an example, I consider it important and relevant to include my field work experience of encountering civil society in Luanda. Just as much as with the information I received from the interviews, if not more, the actual encountering with members from civil society in Luanda and the process of it, was an important and privileged insight which I believe would be difficult to obtain without a personal experience. Therefore, for the relevance of the questions that I am to raise in this study, this section is not only dedicated to describing interview as a method but will first start with an insight of my process while doing field work.

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<sup>16</sup> Denscombe, 2009, s. 233.

While in the field, principles about whom I was allowed to interview existed which limited and affected my choice of the informants that make part of this study. These principles meant that only specific people from the trade unions had the assignment of representing the unions, and therefore only these people could participate in the interviews. Therefore, one can say that the chosen informants in this study rather chose me, than the opposite. Undoubtedly, this affects what type of information that is shared or not shared. However, since the questions in themselves were not personal or sensitive in a personal matter, who answer the questions are not of great importance for the purpose of this study, since I am not primarily interested in people's own emotions for the experiences that are shared during the interview, but rather the experiences of civil society and its role for democracy in itself. The fact that was I in situations where only specific people due to their positions in the unions were allowed to be interview by me is another example that illustrates "privileged information". As mentioned earlier, what this research gained as privileged information extended further outside to what the informants shared. The selective choices of informants and the process to be able to conduct the interviews revealed a lot about the environment for civil society in Luanda, than if I instead would have sent a questionnaire. What I am trying to say is, being in Luanda and using interview as a method is an important experience in itself.

As mentioned earlier, field work can result in some unexpected experiences, and during my two weeks in Angola I indeed encountered some difficulties. The first visits at the trade union offices were mostly encountered with suspicion about my work and purpose. Possessing the right papers and being sent back and forth until I was given the permission to speak either with the Vice President or the President of unions took its time, since most of the time the head of the union was out of office. Thinking that this could easily be resolved by calling the person in charge, was after all not easy at all. Asking for phone numbers was out of the questions, and instead I needed to await the phone calls.

In the beginning of my second week, I managed to speak with a man that could help me get in contact with a trade union activist based in Luanda. The man believed that this person could possibly provide valuable information for my research. At this time, when a week had past, I was still waiting for phone calls that could hopefully result in

booking interviews. Therefore, I started to become desperate for anyone that was willing to be interviewed. I exchanged my phone number with the man, thereon he ended our conversation which first started hopeful but ended differently when he added that the man from the union would only call me, as long as he has credit on his cell phone. Not having sufficient credit on your phone might seem as a small matter that could easily be resolved, but that is not always the case. In Angola, where balance on your phone depends on pre-pay, having a phone that always is constantly filled with balance is not a reality for a lot of people. And if you do have balance on your phone, it is not used for long calls, since mobile credits runs out fast. I am sharing this for two reasons. One being that it shows that I was in a situation where the information I was able to obtain could dependent on the right coincidences. The second involves showcasing that what I considered to be obstacles for my work, is just normality for many Angolans.

### ***Research Ethics***

Following is a brief presentation and discussion regarding the research ethics, which are primarily based on three important principles which are: to protect the participant's interest, to avoid false predictions and description, and informed consent<sup>17</sup>.

For security reasons when considering potential consequences for the participants in this research, I have made the decision to use fictional names. Regardless of the size of the risk it is important to not endanger their trust to participate in the research, and anonymization is a simple attempt to prevent consequences which can jeopardize their lives. Anonymizing the participants also has its reason on the belief that participants' personal identity is not crucial and necessary for this study, meaning it's purposes, since the aim stretches more to understand the concept of civil society through the lens and example of trade unionism than peoples own personal experiences. The importance of participants is as representatives of trade unions in Luanda, not per se their personal experiences. Yet again, it is not who says what, rather what has been said. However, it has to be emphasized that there is an understanding that what type of information that is

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<sup>17</sup> Denscombe, 2009, s. 195-198.

obtained obviously depends on who gets to be interviewed. But this is difficult to avoid when using interview as method.

With a Letter of Reference signed by Lund University and the Swedish Embassy in Luanda, an explanation and description of the study was made for the participants. The four participants gave informed consent to voluntarily be interviewed and allowing the interviews to be audio-taped recorded. Later, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. An explanation and description of the study included informing participants about the purpose of doing field work and that I may use part of the content from each interview in my study. They agreed and understood that I would use their quotations published for academic purposes. Some even expressed satisfaction on the fact that their quotations would be part of a published academic paper, since they saw this opportunity of sharing experiences of trade unionism in Angola, as a way to connect with another part of the world which in they considered has come a long way in development. Most of participants shared a positive image of Sweden, bringing up Olof Palme and his support for the liberation of Angola, and reminiscing on the relationship between Angola and the Nordic countries referring to a historical time when Angola still received Swedish aid.

Ending the interviews, we exchanged contacts, while I informed that they were welcome to contact me with any questions they may have in the future, and in my case, for any further clarification I would contact them. I also said that once finishing my study, each one would receive a copy. Unfortunately, only two persons had access to an email account.

## My role as a researcher

In this section I will briefly touch upon my role and identity as a researcher and how it might affect the responses I received during the interview. Unlike many other methods, interview is a method where the researcher holds a quite central role, and hence might affect the content of the information that is obtained. Research shows that dependently on the identity of the interviewer, that is gender, age and ethical background,

respondents may answer differently.<sup>18</sup> Obviously, for any researcher, this is a reality that is difficult to avoid. Though undoubtedly it is the research and not the researcher that counts, considering the credibility of this study, I believe it to be important to speak upon my significance for the information gathering. The reason why I find this part important, does not depend on the fact that I consider my identity as a researcher to be of most value, rather its possible meaning for the content of my primary material. A discussion surrounding my identity and role as a researcher might not only explain the content during the interviews, but also what possibly did not made part of the information I received.

From my experience during field work, my overall conclusion is that my identity, for instance, being my ethnicity as a black Angolan, or gender, played a smaller impact. A conclusion I drew from the fact that I was not dealing with questions of sensitive character or questions that could be considered as private or personal. However, as I described earlier, it was clear, even before I was able to carry through with the interviews, that there was some suspicion to answer some of my questions. But I consider this to depend more on a culture with strong bureaucratic rules and hierarchy than on my particular identity. If in any ways my personal identity had any effects with the respondents, I believe these effects to be positive. Since being an “outsider” and wanting to ask questions would not be the easiest for anyone who would be put in that position, I see it as an advantage, both for me and the informants that I as an Angolan speak Portuguese and hence was not in need of a translator as an intermediary for interpretations. I was a Swedish student, but I was also a native Angolan.

Lastly, it is important to mention that my role as an interviewer and the questions that was asked but also the choice of interviewing, was not to test them, rather with a hope of providing a platform for them to speak their mind and the challenges they have to face when trying to make a difference within the civil society whom they make part of. I would like to think that by choosing interview as method and the approach that I used, I am not only doing a study about them, but just as much with them. Since one purpose conducting the interviews was to be able to understand the reality of trade unionism in

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<sup>18</sup> Denscombe, 2009, s. 244.



Angola, which in turn, is to understand the role of concepts of civil society and democracy put in a real context, not just as loose terms, it was necessary to possess an approach, that also matched the purpose of the study.

## Semi structured interviews

A semi structured interview is a method of research that allows open questions and flexibility. Prior to the interview, I had prepared some questions in advance but once again, this is a type of method where the interviewer and the respondent are enabled to explore on topics in a more open way. Since, it is the voices of informants and their experiences of trade unionism which are in focus, I consider this flexibility and openness, which characterizes a semi structured interview, suitable for the aim of this research. Since field work and interview is not just any method, but a method which puts high importance on people's own experience, one can understand this method with an already built in perspective, that is people's perspective. Thus, the use of the conventional notion on civil society in this study, is a theory that rather exists as a complement for this method. This means that my use of interview as a method is more than just a tool to obtain information, but as much as an approach throughout the entire study.

All of the conducted interviews were personal interviews, meaning that each respondent was interviewed at a time. Group interviews were never considered since it was nearly impossible to gather more than one at the same time, but this choice has more to do with the fact that I was only allowed to interview very few people from the trade unions. Clearly, an increased number of participants would allow a better representativeness.

Four interviews were made from two different trade unions Samba and Menina, and the interviews were held for about 30 minutes. Some of the questions that was asked during the interviews, are presented as an Index in this study. As with the interview answers, the listed questions are translated by me from Portuguese to English.

Fictional names of informants and of the two trade unions:

Fernando - Union Samba

Malamba – Union Samba

Maria – Union Menina

Lourenco – Union Menina

## 2.2 Research theory – A conventional approach on data and a conventional notion on civil society

### **A conventional approach on data**

As I explained in the previous section, the processing of data is handled through two approaches, which combined form a theory for my understanding of data, and at once, each filling its own purpose. Primarily I use a so called conventional approach on data, since the interviews were conducted without any theoretical pre-understanding of the subject. The conventional approach on data, where the result is derived from the themes that appear in the transcripts, meaning subjects that are understood to hold a central role from reading the transcripts and not from a predetermined theory<sup>19</sup>, is an appropriate approach that suits well with the purpose of this study, understanding first and foremost people's experience, by primarily being interested in what the data says and not a theory. Thus, the analysis is based on the themes that I have concluded to be central in data. For its continuity, I came to find three subjects as themes from reading the transcript. The themes are Struggling with funding, Trade union resistance and Lack of grassroots perspective. These are the recurring themes that was part of the conversations I had with the informants, which in turns determinates the direction of my following analysis. Therefore, the conventional approach does not only fill the purpose of processing the interview data but inevitably becomes of a part of my understanding of the questions that I raise, and hence the theory.

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<sup>19</sup> Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang, Shannon, Sarah E, Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis, *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol.15, s. 1279.

The conventional notion on civil society is instead used to navigate the themes from the interview data, with a broader theoretical understanding of civil society and democracy, but especially it is there to help answering my second research question.

Lastly, the fact that the interviews are not guided by a predetermined theory, is not to say that I had no understanding of civil society as a theoretical concept prior to conducting the interviews and analyzing the themes. Obvious, as with any study it requires a general understanding of key concepts meant to be used in the study. This means that it is impossible for the themes of the analysis to be completely unaffected from theoretical understandings on civil society. That is, I am aware that my understanding of civil society as a concept might have impacted the analysis more than I intended. A total blind understanding of such a key concept in this study is indeed not possible. And as noted in the previous sections, civil society as a concept is not merely a description, but also normativity concept. To escape the normativity is difficult, instead all existing relating to civil society is helpful for a throughout understating of this common concept.

### **A conventional notion on civil society**

This research holds a so called conventional view on civil society developed by Larry Diamond. For Diamond, civil society is “as the realm of organized social life that is open, voluntary, self-generating, at least partially self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.”<sup>20</sup> The theory speaks in favor for a civil society as a promotor for democracy and Humans rights. Here, I use the conventional notion on civil society to put what is shared from the informants in a broader theoretical understanding of civil society and democracy. I understand and analyze what is said through the lens of the conventional notion, but the themes that are brought are sprung from the interview data and not vice versa. A presentation of the result from the survey and themes are to be found in the survey chapter.

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<sup>20</sup> Diamond, Larry Jay, *Developing democracy: toward consolidation*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Md., 1999, p. 221.

Although my primary intentions were not to promote civil society as the only true sector for social change when asking my questions, the conventional notion on civil society, which speaks in favor of civil society role for democratic change, conforms informant's civilian commitment for a change. Thus, the conventional notion on civil society does not directly oppose informant's view on civil society as an important sector, hence allowing the data to exist without too much interference from my use of the conventional notion on civil society. What I am trying so say is that the idea of civil society as promoter for democracy that is in accordance with this theory, is not particularly controversial, but instead the current general understanding for the role of civil society, including those who are part of it, in this illustrated by the informants who make part of this study. In that sense, the theory allows the importance of this study to let date speak for itself, through a common view on the importance of civil society. Once again, it is worth emphasizing that my intentions are not to test the theory, which would be unfair since, as I mentioned earlier, the questions that was asked to informants are not particular based on Diamonds view on civil society, instead I compare Diamonds five most central parts of the conventional notion, based on the information from the interviewees.

Since I am primarily interested in civil society, and not trade unions, it was important to analyze data from a perspective that not only covered trade unions role for change, but spoke about civil society as a whole. It contributes to a greater understanding and discussion of civil society as a concept, and not merely on trade unionism. It is also a theory that can be used independently of what questions that has been asked during the interview and be used in several sectors that make part of what could be considered as part of civil society.

### **The five most important features of the conventional notion on civil society**

To fully grasp Larry Diamond's conventional notion on civil society, following I present a list containing some of the most central parts, which according to Diamond forms and encompasses the idea of a true civil society that can assure democracy.<sup>21</sup>

### **1. Self-government.**

Self-government as a necessary part of civil society simply implies that all associations that makes part of civil society must act accordingly to a democratic framework.

Patterns of governance must be based on democratic norms and not the opposite, where the organization instead is based on a hierarchical culture.

### **2. Goals and methods.**

What are the goals of civil society organizations? Yet again, here, goals and methods relate to whether the civic organizations work is based on undemocratic goals and methods. Organizations must be ready of compromising and not contain goals and methods, with the biggest aim of competing with the state or other actors from society. For Diamond, if organizations are carrying out their work in this manner, these types of organizations do not fulfill the requirements to count as civil society. Again, to be civil society is determined by the right democratic content, and not the existence in itself.

### **3. Organizational institutionalization.**

Here, Diamond seeks a coherence within organizations acting in civil society. To reach the goal of a democratically society, organizations must work in a sustainable manner, meaning organizations built for a throughout and prolonged purposes.

Institutionalization is measured through four criteria's, such as: autonomy, adaptability, coherence and complexity. Autonomy involves civic organizations operating without interference from either the state or any actor whose attempt is to achieve control over civil society. What the organizations are, and its will must be coherent and shared by its members. This requires transparency across all who makes part of the organization. The last criteria, complexity, speaks of the importance of organizing provincial and locally, but still reaching for and maintaining the same goals.

### **4. Pluralism**

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<sup>21</sup> Diamond, 1991, p. 228-233.

Reaching and maintaining the same goals, does not mean not allowing pluralism. Instead, pluralism is considered to be an important feature of civil society. This is due to the impossibility for an organization to represent all the issues that can be part of member's life. But Diamond also speaks of a so called extreme pluralism, meaning that there is a possibility where pluralism reaches a point that in ways opposes the goal of democratically society. When a civil society contains of an unnecessary high number of organizations, all representing the same narrow interest, it is considered to develop a culture of competition that is likely to weaken civil society, by organizations working against each other and not coherently which is the goal. However, no competition at all is not considered to be satisfactory for a civil society. In a case where competition exist, the desirable outcome is making a way for a positive healthy environment, where organizations feel the pressure to answers people's need and represent them well, in order to not lose members to other organizations.

### **5. Density**

Lastly, for a civil society to succeed its goal of a democratic society, having a vivid associational life, is considered to be a core feature. Since it is impossible for organizations to represent all problems that members can encounter in their daily life, pluralism, meaning having many associations representing and responding to a diversity of issues, is essential for enabling associations to be specialized in specific questions, but also, density may help to increase the amount of memberships among citizens, providing them with a space which covers several societal interests and therefore building a trust towards the civil society.

In sum, the conventional notion on civil society holds that promotion of democracy through civil society is first and foremost an internal case. Civil society organizations must constantly look and work inward, working democratically and building a democratic culture as a foundation for the promotion of democracy for whole society. Thus, a conventional notion on civil society, is a view which puts its primarily demands on the actions of civil society in itself, before working external when seeking to work for a more democratically society.

### 3 Literature review and previous research

Literature concerning civil society and its role for democratization in Africa is certainly a well-known studied area. The popular notion when researching this theme, often follows the standpoint about viewing civil society as one of the most important instruments for achieving democratization, a standpoint which is in line with Larry Diamond's advocacy for civil society. This is the exact emphasis that one finds in *Trade Unions and Sustainable Democracy in Africa*.<sup>22</sup> The authors of the book speak on the importance that trade union movement has had for democratization in the African context, but above all, how these civil society actors must continue to be considered as key players for participative democratization. That is, there is a strong belief on civil society as crucial for positive changes in Africa. As with other researches that I will present in this section, it is either a historical overview or a vision of what positive roles civil society might have for democracy that is discussed. Certainly, a historical overview of civil society and the history of trade union in Africa and Angola, is important since it helps me understand and analyze the data within the specific context, but it does not directly answer my research questions. But once again, it is worth mention that the research that is used in this study exist with a secondary role, since the answers to my research questions in the interviews.

In "*The Politics of African Trade unionism*"<sup>23</sup> Lynd recognizes typical features which he considers to be part of African Trade unionism. The center of interest is on the characters the author understands to be part of African trade unionism. It includes union- party relationships and international influence on African trade unionism through time.

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<sup>22</sup> Kester, Gerard & Oumarou Sidibé, Ousmane (red.), 1997.

<sup>23</sup> Lynd, 1968.

*The impact of Political Action on Labour Movement Strength – Trade Union Revitalisation in Africa*<sup>24</sup> by Michael A. Oyelere is a book that neither speaks specifically about trade unionism as a civil society actor, at least not primarily. Despite a somewhat misleading title, the discussion is not a throughout cover of the African continent, but solely on Nigeria. Oyelere's discussion on the political and economic activity that played part for the establishment of Nigerian trade unionism, in my opinion, as with other research that are used in this study, are relevant for my case, even in cases where Angola is not explicitly discussed, since it addresses states within a continent that share similar experiences as “new democracies”. Again, the function is to provide a description of the context to guide me when analyzing the data.

Nelson Kasfir's analysis on the use of civil society as a concept, and also Chambers and Kopstein have contributed to my understanding of civil society that extends beyond the conventional notion on civil society. Kasfir, Chambers, and Kopstein consider that the common view of civil society as an important promoter for democracy, as exaggerated and problematic, since it excludes many parts of civil society based on organizations not following the democratic values. These previous research that nearly only focuses on civil society as a concept and the use of it, and not directly on specific contexts, has inevitably given alternative perspectives on civil society. Though they do not make a part of the analysis, they make an important part of my previous research to the extent that the perspective of the conventional notion which I use in the analysis, but above all, its result from this study, is understood with these perspectives in mind, something that will be noted in the conclusion section.

Shubert's research “Democratisation and the Consolidation of Political Authority in Post-War Angola”, resembles my study by being based on interviews with representative's Angolan civil society. Though his focus and questions are different, by analyzing the Angolan civil society based on people's experiences, it has affirmed insights that have been shared by the representatives in my study. And to follow Shubert's research, I hope to contribute with another specific example where civil society is not only discussed as a theory and how it should act, but simply on how it is.

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<sup>24</sup> Oyelere, Michael A., *The impact of political action on labour movement Strength: trade Union revitalisation in Africa*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2014.



## 4 Research/analysis

Divided into three different themes, such as *Struggling with funding*, *Trade union resistance* and *Lack of grassroots activity*, this section presents the result from the interviews, with every section followed up with an analysis. The selection of these three themes depends on the simple fact that all of these themes were raised in one way or another during the interviews. That is, this presentation consists what is understood to be the key features of trade unionism in Luanda, that resulted from the information that was given when conducting the interviews. All presented themes will be followed up with an analysis based on Diamond's theory on civil society, which as previously introduced, are based on five key features such as *self-government*, *goals and methods*, *organizational institutionalization*, *pluralism and density*. All quotes are translated from Portuguese to English by me.

### ***Struggling with funding***

One of the question that was raised during the interviews, concerned their funding. During my very first interview it soon became clear, that membership fee to unions constituted a very small part, or occasionally pretty much nonexistence to unions financing. When asked about their finance the union's activity, this is what the informant Fernando from the independent union Samba shared in the interview, "It is a big difficulty. Since the subsidy. How can I say this? The contribution from the state is only for central organizations, not for other trade unions, and we do not make part of that"<sup>25</sup>

One can seemingly understand the word "contribution" as a subsidy, that is, money that is granted by the government or any public body to assist, for instance associations such as unions. But after asking what he considers to be the biggest challenges for Angolan

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<sup>25</sup> Fernando, 2017-11-01.

trade unionism, it becomes uncertain whether he is speaking of contribution from the state as in public allowance, or contribution as a corrupted money, when he speaks about the state's relationship to central organizations, in this case, a particular central organization:

One of the biggest challenges is party-ization and lack of liberty, freedom of association. Hm, I am not sure, but it is up to you to either include this or not. Regardless, I am at ease and it is fine by me if you decide to use it. My idea about the union U, and everything that is connected to them, is that union U has a bond to the ruling party.<sup>26</sup>

Clearly, receiving subsidy from the state is not per se having a bond to whichever party that is ruling, but from Fernando's showed caution, he seemingly speaks about a so called bond between some unions and the ruling party, that goes beyond government subsidies. He also uses the word "party-ization", a common word used in the context of Angola, a term that is used to explain the structure of Angolan society, where it is difficult to separate civil society, the state and the ruling party. Here Fernando is insinuating that there is unwelcome interfering from the state within trade unionism. He later goes on to explain further about interfering and obstacles, which hinders them from receiving the memberships fees, when he continues to speak about their current finance situation:

[...] Occasionally we receive a little bit of help based on our friendship from several partnership corporations. We have some friends, but overall, there is no finance, we all live and provides ourselves from our daily jobs. Financing is a huge problem for us [...] the salary is paid through the bank and the system of invoice for membership fees is being deactivated. Therefore, currently, it is more practical for workers to voluntary pay their fees. [...] Having the state as the employer causes major difficulties, [...] you know, in some workplaces, everything is working well and all of that. But suddenly, they freeze our memberships fee. In general, this tend to happen when we are in the middle of fighting for an important matter, to send us a message. [...] <sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Fernando, 2017-11-01.

Fernando mentions that a majority working for the union that he is part of, does so voluntary and without any financial compensation. It is an unstable financing situation he expresses, where one is dependent on contacts to receive financing help. He goes on to explain a reason for the lack of money, and says that “they”, as a way for punishing their unions activities, makes sure to stop the memberships fee, which should be transferred straight to the unions bank account. Here, “they” seems to be the bank and the state, which in his way of speaking seems to be the same thing.

When speaking to Maria, from the central union Menina, I asked her if being a central union in Angola means receiving government grants, a question with neither no pre-understanding or intention of its sensitivity from my side, she sighed heavily before answering:

Well, I cannot really speak about this, since this is not within my working area. I think, if there is any backing from the state, it then must be information that I do not have. But I do not know, it is possible that there is. After all, this is a central organization, but what do I know? My colleagues probably have better subsidy than me. But I cannot give you an answer to that question.<sup>28</sup>

From the sigh and her answer, Maria shows an uncertainty to what to answer and what to tell. But while at the same time implying that she does not know and that this is outside her area, she still assumes that her colleagues receive better “subsidy” than her, and there seems to be an underlying fear and/or uncertainty to speak. Since she expresses that there could be a chance that her colleagues receive a better subsidy than her, she does not seem to talk about subsidy as in public state allowance, rather as some form of corruption.

From the interview with Lourenco from the union Menina, he does not really express any dissatisfaction regarding the financing situation, but gives a short answer when I ask about the financing situation, saying shortly that “[...]all affiliated workers to the

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<sup>28</sup> Maria, 2017-11-01.

union pay a membership fee” [...].<sup>29</sup> When I later asked of what he would count as the biggest challenges for Angolan trade unionism, instead he mentions finding understanding within the unions and the difficult reality of worker’s social condition.

Another aspect concerning the financing, that was mentioned in the interviews, was the problem of corruption. Only Lourenco from the union Menina specifically uses the word corruption, when speaking of current problems with the trade unionism, but without specifically using the word corruption, though it is very clear that it is what he is talking about, Malamba from the union Samba goes a bit further when he shares an illustration of how state officials might think and act to affect the work of trade unions, and says: They will think like this “You are talking too much, and I do not have a better possibility to solve this problem, well, here is a check, you can go to this company and get a car.” In this situation, what are you supposed to do?”<sup>30</sup>, he asks without expecting a response from me. He continues:

They are buying your conscious, which makes it difficult for you to continue to do your work and be independent. And when the state officials later will tell you that you cannot speak on certain issues, because you received this and that, it destroys people’s ability to properly do their work. This is the big problem. Unfortunately, this still exists within the Angolan trade unionism. It is a big challenge.<sup>31</sup>

Like Fernando, here Malamba also talks about state authorities and officials interfering in the work of trade unions. While the type of interfering that Fernando was speaking about had more to do with threatening and punishment, Malamba shines a light on government interfering which rather intends to influence how unionists works.

Lourenco representing the union Menina also acknowledges corruption as one of the challenges with the Angolan trade unionism, but sees hope with the new government

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<sup>29</sup> Lourenco, 2017- 11-01.

<sup>30</sup> Malamba, 2017-10-31.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

when he says that “ [...] The problem with corruption affect all sectors, but luckily we have a new government who recognizes the problems [...]”.<sup>32</sup>

Maria from the same union as Lourenco, does not mention problems with corruption during our interview, but instead she says that the biggest current problem with the Angolan trade unionism is not receiving a sufficient amount of membership fees, and also gives a reason for what it might depend on, when she says:

In my opinion the biggest difficulty is that membership fees are not being paid as it should be. This weakens the trade unions. Because a union might have an x number of affiliated members, but the system of discounting fees to unions from members salary does not always work. Sometimes there are employers who deny unions from visiting workplaces. And the second aspect is, after the economic crisis many companies were forced to close down. And unions can only be strong when workers are working.<sup>33</sup>

## **Analysis**

To shortly summarize Larry Diamond’s view on civil society and its chances to consolidate democracy, to be considered a civil society, all actors belonging to this sector must first and foremost act democratically. Now to summarize the Angolan civil society as a whole two words are important to be raised, which are corruption and party-isation. It is a precarious financial situation the informants express, but the Angolan society has for a long time been characterized by corruption and party-isation, a reality matter that seemingly is impossible for trade unions to escape from. Therefore, in many ways what is being described not only reflects challenges of the trade unionism in Luanda, but as well the Angolan reality.

Though, regardless of its reason shared by the informants, that is, whether we are speaking about members not paying dues, the state purposely intervening or any form of economic crisis, when it comes to African trade unionism financial weakness has for a very long time been a reality matter. For Wogu Ananaba, the financial instability that

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<sup>32</sup> Lourenco, 2017- 11-01.

<sup>33</sup> Maria, 2017-11-01.

has been a part of African trade unionism is a result of several factors. Three factors she raises is level of wages, industrial activity in the country (or rather the lack of) and the number of people in wage earning employment.<sup>34</sup> For Angola specifically, this is a country where a majority of the population derives its subsistence from mainly informal jobs. And having sufficiently good wage, is not only a luxury for those belonging to the informal sector, but even for the Angolan middle class.<sup>35</sup> Having a majority of its population belonging to the informal sector obviously results in a large number of people possible not enabled to join trade unions. And for Angola's industrial activity, since independence it has been dominated of the three letters spelled Oil. Now although oil has made Angola a resource- rich country, only a very small percentage has benefited from the wealth of this industry.<sup>36</sup>

The term party-isation, raised by one informant is a common term that lately has been used to describe how the ruling party seeks to infiltrate different sectors of society, including civil society as an attempt to maintain control.<sup>37</sup> Though only one informant actually used the term, I considered it to be an important term to discuss, since in many ways it summarizes many of the topics that was raised by all. But above all, in order to understand how corruption works in the Angolan civil society, one must put this term into account for proper understanding. Not only when concerning the Angolan civil society, but the whole society, one common mean for party-isation is through corruption. As Malamba put it speaking about state officials "They are buying your conscious, which makes it difficult for you to continue to do your work and be independent".<sup>38</sup> Buying off the civil society is a reality and a huge part of party-isation that occurs in Angola<sup>39</sup>, also understood from the information shared in this study. Therefore, in the view of Diamond's notion on civil society, seemingly, the aspect of *self-government* within the presented trade unions in this study do not show the potential to foster democracy. When speaking of *self-government*, he asks:

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<sup>34</sup> Ananaba, 1979, p. 149.

<sup>35</sup> Southall, Roger, 2017, p. 226.

<sup>36</sup> Leon Garcia, Rodriguez, Jose Garcia, Rodriguez, Francisco J, Castilla-Gutierrez & Silvero Carlos Adriano Major, Oil, Power and Poverty in Angola. *African Studies Review*. Vol 58 no 1 (2015): 159-176, p.168.

<sup>37</sup> Schubert, 2010, p. 659.

<sup>38</sup> Malamba, 2017-10-31.

<sup>39</sup> Schubert, 2010, p. 665-666.

To what extent does it practice democratic principles of constitutionalism, transparency, accountability, participation, deliberation, representation, and rotation of leaders in the way it makes decisions and allocates its own power and resources?<sup>40</sup>

The notion of *self-government* and particular the idea of civil society organizations practicing democratic principles for the potential of fostering democracy, almost seems to depict civil society as a secluded sector from the rest of society, by disregarding organizations within civil society who do not fulfill ideas of democracy.<sup>41</sup> It is certainly one thing to separate different sectors of society, but another to conclude this division as totally separated sectors, without considering the possible impacts between sectors. But through this study, instead the informants depict a civil society that can not only cope with democratic principles, but rather a civil society with poor circumstances unable to act democratically. Indeed, if the extent of the practice of democratic principles is limited, as it seems to be in this case, it will not succeed “to function as “large free schools” for democracy”.<sup>42</sup> With this view it almost seems as if there is presumption of civil society as inherently good (democratic). But for those interviewed, the challenge to navigate through the Angolan civil society, is not only a matter of having the right democratic will, but just as much a matter of having the right conditions. The same goes to say about the feature of *goals and methods*. Here, the premise lies instead on civil society organizations acting in a state that is democratic. Civil society actors/organizations must not compete with the state, if so, those are not to be regarded as part of civil society at all. Is it possible that excluding components who do not fit democratic norms, an easy way out? It is impossible to not consider the whole society for the understanding of how civil society behaves, democratic or not. Looking at *self-government* and *goals and method*, we can now conclude that trade unions chances to consolidate democracy are seemingly small, but the following question will be how trade unions actors find the reason to first of all act democratically? Now this might be

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<sup>40</sup> Diamond, 1991, p. 228.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 228.

an ideological question in what order civil society and the state has its place in society, but it is an important question to raise to understand many of the existing norms existing in the concept of civil society, regardless of ideology.

### ***Trade union resistance***

So far, it may already be noted, that the relationship between the unions and the state dominates many of the topics that are touched upon. To shortly summarize, the representatives from the union who identifies itself as independent talked to a greater extent about the role of the state/and any other authorities, which can be linked to the state power, than the representatives from the central organization. Speaking to Malamba from the union Samba about what he thought about the current state of Angolan trade unionism and what the possibilities look like for working independently, he sees a problem that mostly is to be found within the leadership:

The independence is not totally complete. It is not complete because situations of threats have emerged, they will simply not let you work in peace. [...] Lately, our leaders have been imprisoned, displaced, threaten. What this does, is taking the character of the meaning of independence. So, this is an aspect that still exists today. If a leader is filled with fear, eventually the leader will resign. That is something that often happens in unions, and we also have the problem of some unions being watched by the government, through some bribes. That is why I will tell you that the problem is in the leadership.<sup>43</sup>

Simply put, leaders who do not hold back the temptation of receiving offers from government diminish the chances of what could otherwise be an independent association, meaning that the problem rather lies in isolated individuals, and not necessarily on the whole union. He goes on to explain the situation between the government and unions and the struggle he has experienced when there is a need to negotiate:

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<sup>43</sup> Malamba, 2017-10-31.



The government treats all independent unions as if they were opposition. Like a stone in government's shoes. So, what happen is, that they will give you the freedom to establish a trade union, but they will not let you exercise the freedom to negotiate. So, you can create a trade union, but not negotiate, and this creates a problem.<sup>44</sup>

Malambas' metaphorical expression saying that independent unions are "a stone in government's shoes", strongly suggest that independents unions are treated by the government as if they have no place in the Angolan society, and his understanding of them being treated as opposition also implies that the meaning of being a "stone" in the government's "shoes", is competition to the ruling power. Fernando tells a similar story when he gives an example of an incident, about professionals who were working in a different region in Angola, represented by his union, who according to him, lost their job not long ago for operating in an area that once were strongly associated with the opposition party UNITA:

The professionals who lost their job, lost it because they were working at UNITA: s area. But this is an area that belonged to UNITA before the war. So, this is a baggage deriving from the history of this country before 2002. Another aspect of party-isation is that they usually call the workers and force them to, they will basically make notes on those who do not attend committee meetings for the ruling party. But the workers are not obligated to attend these meetings. They even want the workers to bring small children and other young people. Some of these young people are not even old enough to vote... They really force people to this. They are even documents proving this.<sup>45</sup>

In line with Malamba, Fernando goes on to explain that there is also an attempt to influence those who hold steering positions, and says:

To hold a steering position, or whoever wants to candidate for a steering position in their workplace, must present a list of documents, and among all these documents,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Fernando, 2017-11-01.

it contains a political party documentation, [...] this is against the law, but it happened. It happened in another region and the document was spreading all over social media. You see, this is a strategy looking for victims. [...] Freedom is to go to work and not having to do and being involved in party politics. This is clearly violated. And they are violating human rights as well, we want the citizens to be free.<sup>46</sup>

One sense the gravity of this incident, by Fernando's' using of words such as "freedom" and violation of the human rights. Malamba paints a situation where workers sometimes are in powerless situation, and through demands, they are forced to be affiliated to the government/government officials, as the only option to obtain a position. Whoever opposes the demands or does not allies with the ruling power is considered to be a "victim", or as in Malambas' metaphor "A stone in a shoe".

Another form of resistance, which they share, is resistance that comes in the form of rivalry, rivalry between unions. For Malamba, having multiply unions operating in the same sector has only caused damaged. Here he elaborates what he considers to be a problem when there exist several unions working in the same field:

In some sectors, you will find more than three unions. It is not good. But here, this is quite normal. [...] Unfortunately, this is the reality in Angola. [...] I will tell you something now... Not long ago, we as a union in this sector presented a solution for the benefit of all, but there was one new union without any members, that was working against us.<sup>47</sup>

Fernando tells a similar story, lamenting about unions that intend to intervene in their work:

There is nothing strange with different ideas and vision between different unions. Besides us, it exists two more unions operating in our sector. But we believe that trade union pluralism is normal, but occasionally, when we are in the middle of a battle, fighting for a specific issue for our workers, especially

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Malamba, 2017-10-31.

during our recent battle, we were very combated. We were fighting for better salary, improvement of our workplaces... we have some workplaces that are pure misery, without access to water, the equipment is terrible. Here in Angola, poor working conditions is a reality.<sup>48</sup>

Fernando clearly does not see a problem with pluralism, and therefore neither does he seem to correlate trade union pluralism with the existence of opponents. Instead, once again he points his finger at “partidirizacao” and towards the union Menina. He shares the story of the beginning of his union and how this beginning already from the start, resulted in rivalry:

When we started, the new union law was new, and the union was created in a time with tremendous social crises. We had workers receiving less than 10 dollars per month, so a new union was created, and we started to fight, and initially the fight for improvement was more concentrated in the provinces. A lot of workers signed up to be our members, and a majority of these workers had previously been members at the union Menina, many of them probably were members due to compulsion. It was like a tradition to become a member of this union. Since everyone started to come to us, this union became almost empty, although later it managed to reconstruct itself. In some cases, you will find local government officials persecuting our union workers. But you know, sometimes it is not the government who is doing this, it is the union Menina. People from union Menina tried to stop us from visiting several workplaces. But we have seen positive things take place as well. We together with other unions, including the Menina, all working in the same sector attended a discussion meeting where we together discussed a set of proposals. But in the old days, when we attend these meetings together, Menina made our work very difficult. When we say independent union, we have to say this because there is not lot of them. At least they do not act like it, in one way or another, they are always following the boss, because boss is equal the state, boss is equal the government. And they always end up saying that our motives are political...<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Fernando, 2017-11-01.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

Here, the impression is that the creation of the union Samba was inevitable due to the state that the country was going through. But for Fernando, this new union could offer something what union Menina could not. What also does not seem inevitable is not merely competition between unions or unions versus the state, but the fact that existence of competition against the union is a reality, irrespective of its origin. The examples of competition against the unions (in this case the union Samba) was widely derived from the state and unions, but already presented in this section, A mentioned briefly that “sometimes there are employers who deny unions from visiting workplaces”, meaning that not only unions, state but also employers could possible work against trade unionism. But overall, and perhaps for natural reasons, this was a topic that was more a concern for the representatives from the independent unions. But a common topic with a shared agreement from all the interviewees, was the lack of knowledge about the function of trade unions among the Angolan people. Following will be the final theme to present in this section.

## **Analysis**

As corruption, resistance against the union is also an example of how party-isation can be expressed in Angola. And naturally, those most severely affected by this has been actors speaking against the state power. It is a country that has long been accused of governmental control of trade unions and limiting the right to strike, acting after a common thought among some African leaders, who see trade union action as synonymous with the opposition.<sup>50</sup> And in recent times, it its precisely violations of political rights that has drawn attention to this southern African country.<sup>51</sup> In the latest Human Rights Watch country report on Angola, it clearly shows that dissidents are the main targeted group, and especially the civil society.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Sidibé Oumarou, Ousmane & Venturi, Brigitte, “Trade unions and the Process of democratization”, in: Kester, Gérard & Sidibé Oumarou, Ousmane (ed): *Trade unions and sustainable democracy in Africa*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997, p. 39.

<sup>51</sup> One example The Guardian, “Angola jails 17 activists for rebellion after public reading of political book”, access: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/28/angola-jails-17-activists-rebellion-public-book-reading> , 2016, (obtained 2017-11-05).

<sup>52</sup> Human Rights Watch, World report Angola, access: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/angola>, 2016, (obtained 2017-12-04).

Naturally, the relation between the state and trade union, and especially independent unions in the context of Angola, has been characterized by the country's political history. Like in many other African countries, independent unions became a symbol for a new movement, a movement going against the main central organization who had a strong connection with the ruling party.<sup>53</sup> And as noted, the responses from the informants representing the independent union differed from the responses given by the informants representing the central union, by the former to a much greater extent showing a critical attitude against the state. This showcases a common African challenge, where you are constantly commuting between either a trade union characterized by autonomy or political affiliation. As said, the emergence of independent trade unions in Angola, was to cut the tradition of a close union-party relation, but with this new movement it meant that the country was now divided between remains of independence (the party and the tied central union) and now existing independent unions liberating themselves from the party and the tied union. Therefore, the existing rivalry between the unions that is expressed in these interviews, is not necessarily the positive type of rivalry, which Diamond speaks about when he talks about the importance of the feature of *pluralism* for civil society, since the pluralism that appears from the interview survey seems to depict a type of pluralism that is more bound to whether one is political affiliated or not. It does not seem to be diversity for the sake of representing the interests of members, as Diamond speaks about, rather to push back the dissidents within trade unions who for several reasons may go against the party.

For both unions that are part of this study, they deal with sectors who have the state as the employer, since most existing formal jobs in Angola is provided by the state, and indeed this puts the state in a very vulnerable situation. And generally, this is country where the power is concentrated around the state, the natural consequence is that any complaints that exist is considered to be a direct attack against the state. If the previous section addressed the limitation that exists for trade unions possibilities to strengthen democracy in Luanda, the question to be asked here, is if there is any possibilities for trade unions, and especially independent trade unions in this particular context to be

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<sup>53</sup> Sidibé Oumarou & Venturi, 1997, p. 31.

apolitical, and not directly address the ruling party, as it is suggested to not do with the feature of *goals and method*? Yet again, it is important to emphasize on the actual reality of the Angolan society, where not only trade unions are struggling for political rights, but not less for civil rights. Rights such as right to health and housing rights is examples of fundamental rights that the government has not succeed to provide for the Angolan population. Though trade unions in Luanda might not seek conquering the state, and hence following the suggestions concerning the feature of *goals and method*, in this context inevitably they at least become some form of competitors against the state, since, unlike Diamond's notion when speaking of the necessary features of civil society, we are not dealing with a democratic state (as democratic a state might be), rather a state with major democratic deficiencies.

So far, we understand that Diamond's theory on civil society is not completely compatible with the real challenges unionists as part of civil society face in Luanda, however he acknowledges the reality of civil societies who are part of weak democracies, or as he calls "third-wave democracies", democracies who are more designed to encompass abuses of human rights and corruption.<sup>54</sup> But his acknowledgment of the existing weakness making it difficult for civil society to consolidate democracy, and stating that in such cases "governing elites must be held accountable to one another and to the people, not only in theory but in fact",<sup>55</sup> raises a few a questions. For Diamond "only the mass public can generate the political pressure and power necessary to bring about reform", and an existing politically active public is not sufficiently for a possible change, unless the public mass is democratically organized within a vibrant civil society. But demanding a vibrant civil society, which is an ingredient of the feature concerning *density*, even in very difficult circumstances for countries such as Angola returns to the requirements of civil society that is bound to the assumption that it is a civil society acting within a democratic state, which already understood is not the case here.

Though it is difficult for me to make assumptions of the overall associational life that exist in Luanda only based on what is shared by representatives of these trade unions,

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<sup>54</sup> Diamond, 1991, p. 220.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

facts still showcase a limited associational life in Angola, meaning that regardless of a vibrant associational life, from the experience of the trade unions, still the content might not be grounded on democratic values. Nor does it contain a total complete of *organizational institutionalization*. Two of the criteria for this feature relevant to raise concerning this context is autonomy and coherence. The latter criteria is obviously challenged since existed *pluralism* finds its ground more on competing out each other, than unifying for a vibrant associational life ought to cover as many interest as possible. And we can also conclude that union's autonomy is jeopardized by external actors seeking to control the trade unions.

## **Lack of grassroots activity**

What and who are Angolan unions working for? Malamba, representing the independent trade union Samba, gives an answer to this question that is far reach from a member's perspective, when he says:

Here, unionism is not directly towards workers. The work mostly circulates around the elites, if one creates a union, it is more for your personal status, it is unionism with a lack of grassroots perspective, unionism that does not target workers. This is a big problem for Angolan trade unionism. So, instead of being a bottom up movement, Angolan trade unionism is the exact opposite, [...] we are talking about leaders of Angolan trade union mainly appearing for personal interest. I am sure about this, but of course, not all are like this, but there are some.<sup>56</sup>

When claiming that Angolan trade unionism is a top down movement, Malambas' answer to what and who Angolans unions are working for is simple, it is a movement that is working for the elites, a movement where workers are not the priority. For him, workers are invisible, a reality that is shown by the lack of union representatives across the country, he means. He continues to share some thoughts regarding this question and says:

Union Menina is not represented out in the provinces. If you visit all these places, there is no representatives. They do not visit the workplaces to say "Hey, we exist, and I am here to protect you". You know, if you go in to a restaurant and ask, "Who represents you?" The workers will not know what to answer.<sup>57</sup>

Giving an example of the problem, he speaks specifically of one trade union, but for him, this is a problem that extends beyond this union, a thought also being supported by

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<sup>56</sup> Malamba, 2017-10-31.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.



Fernando from the union Samba who says that “The people who work have a very vague idea what unions are able to do when facing work related issues”<sup>58</sup>

Maria from union Menina contradicts Malambas’ idea that the work of unions is not concentrated on the workers. She as well, recognizes the lack of trade union knowledge among workers, but according to her, this is due to resistance from employers when unions are trying to educate workers. When asked about workers participation in Angolan trade unionism, she shared experiences of struggle from working in her union to reach workers, and said this:

Ok, so this is how it is, the mission of the union is to educate the workers. So, therefore, what you do, is set up some trade union commissions inside the workplaces, so in the end, workers will know their rights, to be able to fight. [...] Since 2016, we have been working with a campaign to improve workers knowledge of the union law. [...] These campaigns have been directed towards their workplaces. But some employees have faced problems because of employers closing the door. And sometimes it is difficult to gather these people for a meeting, so therefore we started to be active out in the streets and struggling to distribute flyers.<sup>59</sup>

So far, the understanding is that union is either not represented among workers due to lack of interest, or they are represented but constantly being worked against. Two different reality descriptions, but with the same consequence, meaning both resulting in poor knowledge about rights and union’s work. In any case, from what has been expressed here, it is possible to conclude that the relationship and communication between the unions and workers, is dominated by the unions. It does not only seem to be a lack of knowledge among the workers, but also a lack of mutuality between the workers and the unions. Here, an important question to ask, is not merely what and who Angolans unions are working for, but also what Angolan workers mean and benefit from involving themselves in the unions?

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<sup>58</sup> Fernando, 2017-11-01.

<sup>59</sup> Maria, 2017-11-01.

## Analysis

From what has been described so far, including the two previous themes that has been analyzed, we see that there is limited space for unionism that is primarily concerned with workers' perspective. Though both unions occasionally mentioned the reality of workers, clearly the conversation was dominated by either internal disputes or external factors which prevent them from properly performing their work. Unionism that is not approached towards workers and its members is described as another actuality that is not uncommon in the African context.<sup>60</sup> Scholars Ousmane Oumarou and Sidibé and Brigitte Venturi put emphasis on trade union pluralism as one of the reasons for why trade unionism in Africa does not seem to succeed to unify, but instead merely acting as competing unions. Also, as Diamond they too emphasize the importance of internal democracy for greater chances of a unionism where workers' problems determine trade unions activities.<sup>61</sup>

Indeed, it is unfortunate that trade unions become more occupied with internal disputes, then its members but the types of disputes that are showcased in this study are none less important. To what extent workers' perspective make apart of trade unionism in Luanda is not only determined by greedy elitist leaders but also actual obstacles for instance as employers' attitude.<sup>62</sup> Whether we are dealing with disputes between employers and unions, or between the state and the unions, the unfavorably prevailing disputes within trade unionism in Luanda, does not necessarily expose a lack of interest for a grass-roots -activity. Seemingly, the interests of workers for a trade union are of paramount importance, and this must be recognized, but more importantly in this context is to recognize the causes of this lack, which extends beyond the power of trade unions.

As with previous presented themes, the features that ought to encompass a democratic civil society remains difficult to apply in this specific context. Demanding an organized

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<sup>60</sup> Sidibé Oumarou & Venturi, 1997, p. 41.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ananaba, Wogu, 1979, p. 198.

and democratic civil society within a state that governs with opposite values, is surely an important demand, but most importantly a grand one for a weak trade union acting within a weak civil society. Mentioned has already been made of what characterizes the trade union *pluralism* in Luanda, and no, workers' interests were not a primary matter. And of course, the absence of workers' perspective in this type of organization diminishes the functions and purposes of civil society organization containing of *self-government* and *goals and method*.

# Conclusion

From this study, several main findings emerged. First, my first research question concerning the existing challenges for the trade union movement in Luanda depict a reality with limited space for activists to act democratically, whether we are speaking of lack of internal democracy in trade unions or externally, lack in promoting democratic values. The challenges which in turn is divided into the three themes such as Struggling with funding, Trade union resistance and Lack of Grassroots perspective, all seem to connect to poverty and inequality.

Second, according to the conventional notion on civil society, the presented trade union's potential for a positive impact on democracy are very small, and in cases non-existence, since it fails to show and maintain internal democracy, which is conceived as fundamental for the existence of a civil society. Here, the conventional notion was certainly helpful addressing democratic problems within civil society for my second research question, however it does not provide answers regarding causes, and neither on solutions. Though my questions did not cover answers for roots and causes, still the idea of how civil society should act for a positive impact on democracy and human rights should include just as much basic work for the desired outcomes, and not only on desired outcomes.

Showing from the data, we might conclude that the trade union movement does not manage to properly fulfil many of the features that encompass civil society, from the perspective of the conventional notion, but then, one question remains, what does this say? Therefore, the challenges and difficulties shared by the participants is not simply a matter of refusing to act democratically, but rather being in a context, which makes it difficult for unionists to act democratically, even if they wanted to. The difference between these two might sound banal, but depending on which position we decide to put our focus on, or just as much on both, understanding the function of civil society might get a more complete understanding, based on circumstances and not merely fixed theories. Diamond as many scholars is aware that not all societies have the opportunity to have a vivid democratic civil society, but unlike scholars such as Chambers, Kopstein and Fowler, his exclusion of actors from civil society due of not acting democratically results in not only disregarding many actors but deciding on who gets to be part of it.

Third, by disregarding organization's that do not show internal democracy as a part of civil society, the definition of civil society used by the conventional notion, only show interest in parts of civil society that follow the desired criteria for civil society. To clarify, this idea of civil society is not a problem in itself, but there is a danger in speaking of civil society as it separated from the rest of society. We must not only consider of civil society as a mean for change, as an actor of free will or with an inherent goodness. Questions about what makes people, or civil society do "good", whether it is promoting democracy or something else are far more interesting. The challenges that are raised in the analysis for the trade union clearly shows underlying problem for civil society in Luanda. It is not necessarily a question of civil society or not civil society, but what means is there for civil society to exist and perform on its own will?

Lastly, my conclusion is therefore in line with research of Chambers and Kopstein, who rather raises discussion about economic factors and social circumstances. In my opinion this is clearly what matters in the context of Luanda, and not being counted out for not achieving goals which in turn are part of economic factors and social circumstances.

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# Appendix A

Selection of questions asked during the interview:

- How long have you been active?
- What is your current role?
- How is the interest/knowledge among the population about the trade unions?
- What are the major difficulties that occurs when working in this union?
- How are the working processes for collective bargaining?
- Is striking a common method that to use?
- How is the unions' work financed?



## Appendix B

10 - : com muita dificuldade.. por tanto o subsidio, como é que vou dizer. a contribucao do estado é para central sindicais.. nao é para os outros sindicatos... e nos nao estamos nenhuma central

11 - : uma das dificuldades é partidizacao e falta de liberdade que isso pode tar.. a liberdade sindical.. nao sei, podes usar isso, ou nao podes usar isso, para mim eu estou a vontade... a ideia que eu tenho da UNTa e tudo que esta ligado com UNta, é que a UNTA mantem a ligacao partidaria..

12. ate agora nos nao conseguimos constiar neste lado.. uma vez ou outra vez uma ajuda na base de amizade da cooperacao parceiria.. temos alguns .. nao ha financiamento.. nos vivemos da escola.. é um grande problema os servicos de financias... estar a desactivar, este sistema de desconto das cotas.. o salario sao pago todos nos banco.. entao actualmente é mas pratico o trabalhador voluntariamente pagar a sua cota, mas descontando tambem no banco. Ele faz uma claracao.. esta na lei, ha muita dificuldade com o estado como patronado.. com este processo.. em alguns.. em algumas escola esta tudo bem tudo correcto, de repente deixam de.. congelaom as nossas cotas, de uma maneira geral isso acontece mais quando nos temos asuns de luta, como forma de relaxismo. Uma boa parte dos nossos filhados, noss membros, nao...

*Maria*

13 - Bem.. eu nao posso falar sobre isso porque nao é minha area.. Acho que se .. se daa apoio .. nao tenho este conhecimento.. mas é possivel assim tem esse feito.. é possivel é uma central trabalhadores ao nivel da Angola.. e acredito que sei la.. os meus colegas terem subsidio melhor que eu.. nao posso te dar uma resposta..

Jorge

14- : exacto. todos trabalhadores filhados pagam conta- sindical.. todas associaoes sindical sao.. a UNTA tem que ser um subsidio.... mas a UNTA

Euegenio

15 - Tu estas a falar muito, entao e nao tenho possibilidade resolver este problema melhoramente, mas epa toma um check, vai no empresa x vas buscar um carro.. O que que estar a fazer

16 - Estar a te comprar a consciencia. trava o trabalho e deixar de ser independer.. .. depois quando o governo diz voce nao pode falar porque voce recebeu... estraga. esta é o grande problema.. enfelizmente ainda existe no sindicalismo angolano... È um grande desafio..

Lourenco

17 - quando ha problema de corrupcao afeita quaze todos sectores.. ainda bem a nova gorvenacao que reconhece esses problemas.. e penso que a uma certa vontade que a as pessoas.....

*Maria*

18 - : Na minna opniao a difuldade que temos é a cota sindical. a cota sindical nao esta ser paga como nos queriamos. insto tem fraquecido os sindicatos. porque o sindicato as vezes tem um x trabalhadores e .... si tem dez desconta cinco, porque as vezes a.... empregadora nega o sindicato dentro da empresa...O segundo aspecto temos muitos ... depois de esta crise fecharem-se muitas empresas e este trabalhadores eram afilhados sindicatos em alguns rambos de actividades, ... porque o sindicato so é forte quando tem os trabalhadores a trabalhar...

*Malamba*

19 - .. mas a ha indenpencia nao é total, nao é total porque porque surgem situacoes de ameacas, nao te deixam trabalhar como tal, o sindicato de Sinprof nesses duas greves que fez, teve muitas.... dirigentes foram presos, dirigentes foram desperdido.... dirigentes foram ameacadoes, .. e fim isto tira to carete de indenpencia.. é um bocadinho de este aspecto existe ainda.. se voce encontra um lider recioso com medo ele dexe.. é que mutias de vezes acontece com os nossos sindicatos e tambem temos de o problemas de alguns sindicatos serem observado pelo os governos, numas simples oferta

20

Manuel

21 - um dos aspectos é esse, o lado dos proffesores que perderam emprego.. por que estiveram numa area que era ponto do lado da UNITA, isto antes da paz... quer dizer é uma historia que vem de 2002. outro aspecto da partirizacao chamam muito os proffesores e obrigam, maltan fartas a quem nao foi nos comissoes do partido de poderr.. o proffesore funcionario nao é obrigario.. e querem que ele va e que levas as crianças que sao menores ou os jovens.. alguns deles nem tem idade eleitor.. e obrigam a isso.. ha documentos que provam.

22 - para lugar de direcao, quem que quizer canditar a lugar de direcao de cordenaco na escola, deve apresenta uma lista de documentos.. dentro do processo esta documentacao partidaria.. isto é contra a lei.. isto acoenteu.. encontramos isso no quanza sul.. isto anda na redes sociais o documento.. por tanto.. este a specto acaba precurar vitimas.. porque.. a oportudidade de promocao, de nomeacao para cargos de direcao, o propio emprego.. a liberdade ir a servico e trabalhar nao fazendo politica partidaria.. isto esta a ser violado.. e ofoendem os direitos humanos tambem.. queremos que o cidadoes estevam livres

Malamba

23 - ...num sector existe mas de tres sindicatos.. nao é bem.. e isto aqui é normal e acontece.. acontece porque nao ha poisao ao nivel de lideranca. por tanto, a liderancas, ums vao mas por questoes pessoas, ... no otra que vem para os trabalhadores.. quando isto nao acontece.... o estatuto disse isso: devemos presentar os trabalhadores, e voce disfrutua este principio agera interno.. havendo gera interno ums podem saiar.. ao nivel do sindicatos do sinprof... o sinprof é unico sindicato nacional.. por haver estes problemas interno ums sairaom e informarao os outros.. formarao um outro sindicato.. e este disfulta o propio governo porque si existi apenas so um sindicato as questao eram direcionadas de todos que estamos a defender os trabalhadores. Quanto aprecem varios.... o governo saber que resposta dar. Infizmento em Angola vivemos em esta realidade, havendo muitos sindicatos em mesmo sector que era nivel da educao, que era nivel da saude. sao principal esses dos sectores que existem mas de um sindicato.. estes sectores .... entao para alguns interesos pessoas de alguns dirigentes fazzem que os membros dos sindicatos.. e quem perde com isso é o propia trabalhadores.. uma realidade que eu vou contar agora. come esta greve que o sindicato com Sinprof fez agora, o que se esta .. é uma solucao para todos, vai ibragir todos.. o nove sindicato que se urgio nao tem quaze afilhados, nao tem membros..

M

24

M

25 quando a SINprof se crior, a nova lei sindical tinha cuatro anos mas ou menos, mas o sinprof criorse quando a crise social torne-se mas profundas. havia professores recebendo menos de dez dolors por mes, entao foi se criando sindicato, foi se criando luta, e primeriro ao nivel das provincias, houve fuzao.. e educao, a volta do sinprof eram fazio, todos proffeosres foram escever-se no sinprof, aquele que estavao ligadas na UNTA, as vezes estava ligada por obrigatoriamente, era já uma tradicao... e UNTA ficou muito fazia.. a penas conseguiram reconstrituirse um pouco, dentro de a Benguela e HUamboia, nos prosigimos os outros sindicatos.. por vezes a sitio que nos chegamos, e o nosso sindicato temos 20 anos.. esta lializado... encontrara barreiras das direcoes das escolas.. encontra barreiras do governo local.. que cuntinuar dizer que querem saber de nossa realidade.. por vezes nao é o governo a fazer isso, é propa UNTA por os cometes a circular, en como nao devemos poder entrar nas escolas.. ultimamente teve

vindo uma luz positiva, por que para discutir com o ministro, estavam todos na mesma mesa, e começamos junto com a UNTA e outro sindicato a federação da UNTA e outro sindicato de educação começamos a discutir a apresentar proposta.. este foi o primeiro presidente de cooperação que existiu.. porque no passado iam às vezes alguns cursos internacionais de sindicalismo.. discutíamos, conversamos.. e eles fizeram a vida negra a sindical, ao sinprof.. quando se disse sindicato independente, e por que tem pouco.. a alto não se mostra independente, do maneira ou outra fica atrás do patrão, porque o patrão é do estado, é governo.. e acabam sempre a dizer que nosso motivo é políticos,

E

26 Tem toda razão por afirmar isso. por tanto.. o sindicalismo é muito etéreo? O sindicalismo não está diretamente ao professor/ao trabalhador, não toca diretamente ao trabalhador.. por tanto está nas elites, por tanto você criar um sindicato, é mas para o teu estado pessoal.. não chegas a baixo, não chegas aos trabalhadores.. este aqui é um grande problema do sindicalismo angolano. por tanto o sindicalismo angolano, de ver de ser criado da base para o top, é o contrário.. então é por isso no visto no sindicalismo angolano muitas ... porque os líderes sindicais angolanos parece mais por interesse... tenho certeza, alguns não são assim, mas outros.. tenho a certeza porque existe muita privagem interna ao nível de sindicatos.. entre os diferentes sindicatos.. porque internamente é por isso que hoje em Angola num sector que não é muito

Malamba

27 este mesmo sindicato.. se tu vais ao nível de províncias, não encontras representantes .. que se ficarem a dizer que ele não foi aos trabalhadores e dizer que eu existe, eu estou aqui para te proteger.. o sindicato que não chega na província.. por exemplo.. se entras num restaurante e perguntas sabes quem te apresenta? este trabalhador não vai saber o que responder

Fernando

28

os trabalhadores das diversas profissões que estão no emprego.. o que estão em empregos tem uma ideia vaga o que se tem problema o que que o sindicato pode resolver.. mas sobre as leis .. sobre as suas.. sabem pouco sobre as leis.. ainda ... por vezes o medo

das represalias por parte do empregador.. mesmo sabendo que a lei diz uma coisa, dá a ideia que a prática é diferente

Maria

29

: É assim.. o sindicato tem a missão de educar os trabalhadores.. então.. como tem que para educar.. ele monta algumas comissões sindicais dentro da empresa para este fim, então o trabalhador tem de ver, tem de saber seus direitos para poder conquistá-los... então ele tem que conquistar o seu direito.. ao nosso nível nós temos feito com a relação dos trabalhadores domésticos que sabem, conhecem seus direitos, esta lei saiu em 2006.. a partir de 2016, nós estamos a fazer campanhas de .... de lei.. então já vamos a promover, .. estamos a promover campanha de divulgação para eles conhecer quais são os direitos.. então essas campanhas estão a ser a partir de facto... algumas trabalhadores domésticos que têm um problema porque há empregadores que fecham as portas sabes como é que é. trabalham no ..... e é difícil às vezes tirar essas pessoas para poder fazer um encontro... então nós lutamos por passar a fazer colagem de panfletos nas ruas.. montamos barracas para chamar elas para sindicalização... porque nós já temos um sindicato de trabalhadores domésticos constituído em 2012. então através de este sindicato, então conseguimos associar os trabalhadores domésticos. Por isso é que nós deu até a permissão de consórcio já junto no governo... para formalização de trabalho de estes trabalhadores.. como sabes dentro de este sector de trabalhadores, não tem só mulheres, também tem homens .. então é um sector abrangente... não vamos só falar de mulheres.. por há homens também que trabalham dentro dos .... motoristas.. essas coisas.. então todos nós.. quando há um encontro nós trabalhamos com eles e eles. então nós fizemos.. nós fizemos seminários sobre o sindicalismo base para o que o sindicalismo é, quais são os propósitos para eles.. fizemos algumas palestras para saber quais são os direitos.. e inclusive já temos um projecto para curso de estes trabalhadores