

The Right to Education in Angola: Observations From Teachers in Bocoio – City in the Province of Benguela, Angola

Dalva de Oliveira, Federal University of Pará, Brazil

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Abstract

This study analyzes key aspects observed during a meeting with primary school teachers held in January 2019, in Bocoio, Benguela province, Angola. Organized by OMUNGA, a non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the rights of children and youth, the event sought to reflect on the difficulties reported by teachers, stimulate discussion, and support the development of effective educational actions. During the meeting, 47 teachers shared experiences and challenges related to the lack of continuing education, poor infrastructure, low salaries, food insecurity, and insufficient public policies to ensure school retention. Adopting a qualitative approach, the research draws on written records, teacher testimonies, and a critical analysis of public education policies. The theoretical framework is based on perspectives linking education and democracy, the notion of the subject as a holder of rights and knowledge, and the defense of education as a fundamental right. Although not conclusive, the findings reveal the urgency of implementing more effective and context-sensitive public policies that respond to teachers' realities. The study concludes that valuing teachers and actively listening to their lived experiences are essential to guaranteeing the right to education and promoting school continuity, especially in socially vulnerable contexts.

Keywords: education, public policy, school retention, teacher training, child rights

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Introduction

Education constitutes one of the fundamental pillars for the socioeconomic and cultural development of any country, with teacher training representing a central element in ensuring quality and equity within the educational process. In Angola, an African nation with vast territory and cultural diversity, education has faced historical challenges arising from long periods of colonization, war, and national reconstruction. Since independence in 1975, teacher training has become a strategic priority, given the decisive role of educators in promoting literacy, fundamental learning skills, and the preparation of critical and participatory citizens.

The Angolan education system currently serves a growing student population exceeding 9.6 million learners across all educational levels. This demographic expansion places constant pressure on the teaching workforce, which must be prepared to deal with large classes, diverse sociocultural contexts, and often limited pedagogical resources. Within this context, teacher training emerges not only as a process of acquiring technical and pedagogical knowledge but also as a tool for promoting educational equity—helping to reduce disparities between urban and rural regions, between more developed provinces and more peripheral municipalities.

Historically, teacher training in Angola has gone through distinct phases that reflect the country's political, economic, and social conditions. During the colonial period, access to formal education and teacher preparation was highly restricted, concentrated mainly in urban contexts and among specific social groups. Independence brought the urgent need to expand school coverage and to train a teaching body capable of serving a large and diverse student population. However, the effects of the civil war (1975–2002) posed significant obstacles, including the destruction of school infrastructure, scarcity of qualified teachers, and interruptions in the operation of teacher training institutions.

The reconstruction of the education system, initiated after the end of the armed conflict, involved the implementation of public policies and programs aimed at strengthening both initial and continuing teacher education. Among these measures, the creation and expansion of teacher training schools, technical and pedagogical training programs promoted by public and private universities, and international cooperation initiatives with organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, partner African countries, and various NGOs operating in Angola stand out. These efforts sought not only to increase the number of teachers but also to improve their qualifications, promote innovative teaching methodologies, and adapt curricula to local and national needs.

This analysis seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of teacher training in Angola, considering historical, structural, and statistical aspects, with particular emphasis on the province of Benguela and the municipality of Bocoio. These areas were selected because Benguela is a strategic province with a large student population and teacher training institutions, while Bocoio, an inland municipality, exemplifies the challenges faced in rural areas, including infrastructure limitations, reduced access to continuing education, and the scarcity of disaggregated official data.

The article adopts both qualitative and quantitative approaches, using recent national data on the teaching workforce, educational policies, and training programs, complemented by provincial and municipal information when available. The analysis includes indicators such as the number of teachers, student–teacher ratios, coverage of pedagogical training, in-service teacher development programs, as well as contextual factors affecting teaching quality. The

goal is to provide a solid foundation for public policy formulation, educational planning, and initiatives aimed at improving teacher education in Angola.

Furthermore, the paper emphasizes the importance of equity in teacher training, recognizing that teaching quality depends not only on the number of teachers but also on the adequacy of their preparation, the availability of pedagogical resources, and their capacity to work effectively in diverse contexts. Municipalities such as Bocoio exemplify the challenges faced in rural and inland areas, where school infrastructure is often insufficient, access to continuing training is limited, and teachers must cope with adverse socioeconomic conditions.

In summary, the introduction establishes the relevance of teacher education as a central element for educational development in Angola, situating the reader within the historical and current context of the national education system. The following analysis will address in detail the historical, structural, statistical, and territorial aspects of teacher training, offering a comprehensive overview that will serve as the basis for recommendations and policies aimed at improving educational quality across all regions of the country.

The inspiration for this study arose from a meeting with teachers organized by **OMUNGA**, a non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting and protecting the rights of children and youth. During the meeting, 47 teachers from the Province of Bocoio shared their experiences and challenges in teaching practice—such as the absence of continuing education, precarious school conditions, low salaries, food insecurity, and weak public policies to ensure student retention. The purpose of this reflection is to examine the difficulties reported during the meeting, foster further discussion, and contribute to the formulation of actions and solutions within the educational field.

Historical Overview of Teacher Training in Angola

The historical trajectory of teacher education in Angola reflects the profound social, political, and economic transformations experienced by the country throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. Understanding this process is essential for contextualizing current challenges, the territorial distribution of teachers, and public policies aimed at teacher training—particularly in regions such as the province of Benguela and inland municipalities like Bocoio.

During the colonial period (until 1975), Angola was under Portuguese administration, and formal education was deeply influenced by an elitist and exclusionary logic. Access to schooling was limited, concentrated mainly in urban areas and among social groups closely connected to the colonial administration. Teacher training at that time was scarce and primarily aimed at meeting the needs of primary education, with few opportunities for advanced pedagogical qualification.

Colonial teacher training schools, known as *escolas de instrução primária* (primary education schools), were designed to prepare teachers with basic literacy and numeracy skills, without emphasis on critical pedagogy or modern teaching methodologies. The number of locally trained teachers was insufficient, making it necessary to recruit educators from Portugal or other colonies. In many cases, teaching was carried out by individuals without adequate training.

Moreover, colonial education sought to reinforce political and cultural domination, emphasizing content that consolidated a European worldview while ignoring or marginalizing

Angolan history and culture. This historical context left a legacy of shortages in qualified teachers and deep inequalities in access to education—especially in rural and inland areas such as Bocoio.

It became necessary to envision an educational proposal aligned with the aspirations of a newly independent and democratic nation. As Saviani (2021) explains:

If members of the popular classes do not master cultural content, they cannot assert their interests, for they remain disarmed before the dominators, who use precisely such cultural content to legitimize and consolidate their domination [...] the dominated cannot free themselves unless they master what the dominators master. Therefore, mastering what the dominators master is a condition for liberation. (p. 45)

Angola's independence, proclaimed on November 11, 1975, brought the immediate challenge of creating a national education system capable of serving a heterogeneous population and addressing the shortage of qualified teachers. The country faced severe gaps in teacher preparation, with few professionals trained to teach at primary, secondary, or technical levels. As Saviani (2021) notes:

Systematized education, as a rule, is an activity directed toward the other: the other generation, the other social class, the other culture. It therefore presupposes a real heterogeneity and a possible homogeneity; an inequality at the starting point and an equality at the point of arrival. (p. 101)

The civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 2002, profoundly affected education and teacher training. School infrastructures were destroyed, teacher training institutions were disrupted, and the country experienced an exodus of qualified professionals, either through internal displacement or migration to neighboring countries. This scenario led to a severe shortage of teachers, especially in rural and peripheral areas, making it difficult to maintain educational quality and implement comprehensive teacher training policies.

During this period, the Angolan government undertook efforts to train new teachers, mainly through emergency short-term programs known as *reforço teachers* or *provisional teachers*, whose pedagogical qualification was limited. Although these measures allowed for the minimal functioning of the school system, they did not resolve the structural deficiencies of teacher training nor reduce regional disparities.

Educational Reforms and Teacher Training Policies

With the end of the civil war in 2002, Angola embarked on an intensive process of national reconstruction in which education and teacher training received strategic attention. The government implemented structural reforms aimed at expanding access to education, improving teaching quality, and strengthening teacher qualification. Key measures included:

1. **Creation and Expansion of Teacher Training Schools:** These institutions began offering initial training courses for primary and secondary school teachers to meet the demand for qualified professionals. Teacher training schools were established in both urban and rural areas, although distribution remains uneven.
2. **Continuous Professional Development Programs:** Public universities, NGOs, and international partnerships established in-service training programs focused on modern

teaching methodologies, educational assessment, and the integration of technology in learning.

3. Curriculum Review and Standardization: Efforts were made to harmonize teacher education, defining minimum competencies, standardizing undergraduate programs in education, and introducing supervised teaching internships.
4. International Cooperation: Organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and several NGOs have played key roles by providing pedagogical resources, training teacher educators, and funding pilot programs in strategic regions.

Despite these advances, significant challenges persist, especially in rural and less urbanized regions. Municipalities such as Bocoio, in Benguela, still face limited school infrastructure, restricted access to continuous training, and a lack of reliable data on teachers and their qualifications. These challenges highlight the need for more targeted educational policies and sustained investment in teacher development and professional recognition.

Historical Legacy and Current Challenges

The historical path of teacher education in Angola leaves several key legacies for understanding the current situation:

- Regional Inequality: Teacher training is concentrated in urban and central provinces, while inland regions such as Bocoio face major barriers to professional development.
- Insufficient Qualification: A significant proportion of teachers—especially in rural schools—work without adequate pedagogical training, compromising teaching quality.
- Precarious Infrastructure: The destruction caused by the civil war and the slow reconstruction of schools continue to limit innovative pedagogical practices and the use of didactic resources.
- Need for Continuous Training: Curriculum reforms, demographic growth, and new educational demands require ongoing professional development programs, whose implementation remains uneven across the country.

In summary, teacher education in Angola results from a complex historical process marked by colonial constraints, the impacts of civil war, and recent reconstruction and qualification efforts. Understanding this panorama is essential for critically analyzing current challenges and opportunities in teacher training, especially in strategic provinces such as Benguela and in rural municipalities like Bocoio, which reflect the historical inequalities and limitations of the education system.

Current Structure of the Teacher Training System in Angola

Teacher education in Angola today is organized into different levels and modalities to meet the needs of the national education system. This structure reflects attempts to overcome historical gaps inherited from the colonial period and decades of civil conflict, as well as the need for ongoing qualification in response to demographic, technological, and pedagogical changes. Understanding this structure is key to assessing the adequacy of the teaching workforce, particularly in urban, provincial, and rural regions such as Benguela and Bocoio.

Initial teacher training in Angola is offered by various institutions, including teacher training schools (*escolas de magistério*), polytechnic institutes, and public and private universities. This stage prepares teachers for work at the primary, secondary, and technical-vocational levels.

Teacher training schools constitute the main pathway for preparing teachers for primary and lower secondary education. These institutions provide both pedagogical and disciplinary training, typically lasting from two to four years, depending on the desired qualification level. Curricula combine theoretical courses, pedagogical practice, and supervised internships in public schools, enabling future teachers to gain hands-on experience in real classroom contexts.

Geographically, most teacher training schools are concentrated in urban provinces and capitals such as Luanda and Benguela. Inland municipalities like Bocoio often depend on teachers trained in urban centers or on accelerated training programs, due to the scarcity of local higher education institutions.

Angolan universities, such as Agostinho Neto University, Katyavala Bwila University (Benguela), and several private institutions, offer undergraduate degrees in education designed to prepare teachers for secondary and higher education. These programs typically last four to five years and include pedagogical, methodological, and disciplinary components, enabling teachers to apply contemporary teaching methods in various subjects.

The expansion of higher education in Angola over the past two decades has increased the number of qualified teachers. However, challenges remain regarding training quality, university capacity to meet growing demand, and the adaptation of curricula to regional realities—particularly in inland municipalities.

Continuous teacher education is essential to maintaining teaching quality, allowing teachers to update their pedagogical skills, integrate new technologies, and improve their instructional methods. In Angola, continuing education is offered by universities, teacher training institutes, provincial education departments, and international organizations, targeting teachers already in service.

Programs include short-term courses, workshops, seminars, and specialization programs in areas such as mathematics, science, languages, and educational technologies. Despite these efforts, participation remains uneven, with teachers in rural and peripheral municipalities—such as Bocoio—often having limited access.

Moreover, the lack of disaggregated data makes it difficult to accurately assess the impact of these programs, although regional studies indicate that participation in continuing education is positively associated with improved teaching practices and student outcomes.

Responsibility for teacher education in Angola is shared among several actors:

- Ministry of Education (MINED): Defines national policies, plans, and guidelines for teacher training, regulates curricula, and oversees the implementation of both initial and continuing education programs.
- Universities and Polytechnic Institutes: Offer undergraduate and postgraduate programs in education, training teachers for secondary and technical-vocational levels.
- Teacher Training Schools: Focus on preparing teachers for primary and lower secondary education, combining pedagogical instruction, supervised school practice, and disciplinary content.
- International Organizations and NGOs: Contribute to continuing education by providing pedagogical resources, training educators, and implementing innovative projects, often targeting rural and low-infrastructure municipalities such as Bocoio.

Although Angola's teacher training system has expanded considerably since the end of the civil war, several challenges persist:

1. **Territorial Inequality:** The concentration of training institutions in urban centers limits access for prospective teachers from inland municipalities.
2. **Quality versus Quantity:** Increasing the number of teachers does not automatically ensure improved teaching quality, particularly when many still work with insufficient or outdated training.
3. **Limited Infrastructure:** Teacher training schools and universities often face shortages of laboratories, libraries, and technological resources, affecting both theoretical and practical training.
4. **Insufficient Continuing Education:** In-service teachers, especially in peripheral regions, have limited access to pedagogical development programs, hindering the adoption of innovative methodologies and adaptation to modern curricula.

Recent Perspectives and Initiatives

In recent years, the Angolan government has sought to promote greater equity and quality in teacher education. Key initiatives include:

- Expanding teacher training schools to inland provinces, including Benguela, to reduce reliance on urban centers.
- Implementing digital and methodological training programs to integrate technology into teaching and learning.
- Establishing international partnerships with UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank to strengthen teacher education in priority areas, promote school inclusion, and enhance pedagogical capacity.

These actions reflect a growing recognition that teacher education is not merely an initial process but a continuous one—adaptable to curricular changes, student diversity, and regional specificities—serving as a cornerstone for improving educational quality across Angola.

Total Number of Teachers and Distribution by Education Level

According to data from MINED (2022), Angola has approximately 240,000 teachers across all educational levels. Their distribution is as follows:

- Primary Education: ~150,000 teachers (62.5%)
- Secondary Education: ~70,000 teachers (29%)
- Technical-Vocational and Higher Education: ~20,000 teachers (8.5%)

Primary education employs the majority of teachers, reflecting the national policy of universalizing basic education. However, this concentration also exposes challenges in pedagogical training, especially in rural and inland municipalities like Bocoio, where the number of qualified teachers per student remains lower than in urban centers.

Table 1*National and Regional Educational Indicators (Source: MINED, 2022)*

Indicator	Angola (National)	Benguela (Province)	Bocoio (Municipality)
Total number of teachers	240,000	18,500	1,200
Teachers with full pedagogical training	68%	75%	52%
Student–teacher ratio (primary)	38:1	32:1	45:1
Annual coverage of continuing education	35%	40%	28%
Number of teacher training schools	12	3	0
Schools with ICT laboratories	42%	50%	18%

Student–Teacher Ratio

The student–teacher ratio is a critical indicator of teaching quality and system capacity. According to INE (2021):

- Primary Education: 41 students per teacher
- Secondary Education: 32 students per teacher
- Technical-Vocational Education: 25 students per teacher

Although gradual improvements have been recorded, ratios remain high, particularly in primary education within populous provinces such as Benguela. Inland municipalities like Bocoio face additional difficulties due to teacher shortages, limited infrastructure, and scarce access to continuing education programs.

Student–Teacher Ratio (Primary Education)

Figure 1*Number of Students per Teacher*

Pedagogical Training Coverage

Pedagogical qualification remains one of the most important indicators of teacher quality. According to MINED (2022):

- Teachers with complete pedagogical training: 68%
- Teachers with partial or insufficient training: 20%
- Teachers without pedagogical training: 12%, concentrated mainly in rural or remote municipalities

These figures show significant progress since independence, when most teachers lacked formal qualifications. However, the challenge remains critical in inland municipalities such as Bocoio,

where many teachers still rely on emergency or accelerated training programs offered by teacher training schools and NGOs.

Regional Distribution and Inequalities

Teacher distribution in Angola reveals pronounced disparities between urban and rural areas and between central and peripheral provinces:

- Urban Provinces (e.g., Luanda, Benguela, Huambo): Concentrate around 60% of the total teaching workforce, with higher qualification levels.
- Rural and Inland Provinces (e.g., Bocoio, Cubal, Catumbela): Show lower teacher-to-student ratios and higher rates of underqualified teachers.

Figure 2

Percentage of Teachers With Complete Training (%)



Teacher Training in Benguela and Bocoio

In Benguela, the province is estimated to have approximately 18,000 teachers, with an average student–teacher ratio of 35 in primary education, slightly below the national average. In the municipality of Bocoio, however, the number of teachers is proportionally lower, with larger class sizes and additional challenges in continuous professional development.

According to data from the Ministry of Education (MINED) and reports from international organizations such as UNESCO (2021), approximately 35% of in-service teachers regularly participate in continuous professional development programs, including pedagogical updating, teaching methodologies, and the integration of educational technologies. However, this participation is concentrated in urban areas and central provinces, with much lower coverage in rural municipalities such as Bocoio.

Moreover, the availability of specializations and postgraduate programs for teachers remains limited, particularly outside provincial capitals, which restricts the possibilities for continuous professional growth in peripheral regions.

The following Table 2, based on data from MINED (2022), illustrates the main differences between Benguela and Bocoio:

Table 2*Comparative Overview of Educational Conditions in Benguela and Bocoio (2022)*

Aspect	Benguela	Bocoio
Access to initial teacher training	Good (3 teacher training schools)	Limited (no local school)
Continuous training	Moderate (40% of teachers)	Low (28% of teachers)
School infrastructure	Good	Poor
Teacher retention	Medium	Low
Pedagogical methodologies	More modern	Traditional
Use of ICT	Medium–high	Low

Complementary Indicators

Other relevant indicators include:

- Average teacher age: 38 years, with most teachers between 30 and 45 years old.
- Gender distribution: 52% women and 48% men, showing a relatively balanced proportion, though disparities persist at technical and higher education levels.
- Teacher turnover: An estimated annual rate of 7%, due to retirements, transfers, and migration to the private or urban sectors.

These indicators complement the analysis of the teaching workforce, highlighting both the advances achieved and the structural challenges that affect teacher preparation and pedagogical performance.

In summary, statistical data indicate that Angola has made significant progress in expanding its teaching workforce and improving pedagogical training since the end of the civil war. Nevertheless, regional inequalities persist, especially in inland municipalities such as Bocoio, where the share of qualified teachers is lower and access to continuous training programs is limited. These disparities directly affect the quality of education and underscore the need for educational policies that prioritize teacher training, the expansion of teacher training schools in peripheral areas, and the use of educational technologies to overcome geographic and logistical barriers.

Teacher Training in Benguela and Bocoio

Analyzing teacher education at provincial and municipal levels allows for a more precise understanding of educational inequalities and the effectiveness of public policies. In this context, the province of Benguela and the municipality of Bocoio present distinct characteristics that reflect both historical progress and structural challenges. A detailed understanding of local conditions is essential for designing strategies for capacity building, teacher distribution, and continuous professional development.

Demographic and Educational Context of Benguela

Benguela is a strategic province in southern Angola, with an estimated population of 2.2 million inhabitants (INE, 2022). The educational sector of the province is relatively developed compared with other regions of the country, encompassing both urban and rural schools, universities, and teacher training institutions. The urban population density—particularly in Benguela City—facilitates the allocation of resources and access to both initial and continuing teacher education.

According to MINED (2022), Benguela has approximately 18,000 teachers, distributed by level of education as follows:

- Primary education: 11,500 teachers
- Secondary education: 5,500 teachers
- Technical, vocational, and higher education: 1,000 teachers

The average student–teacher ratio in the province is 35 at the primary level and 28 at the secondary level, both slightly below national averages. This indicates a relatively stronger presence of teachers compared with rural municipalities.

The province has teacher training schools and university campuses offering undergraduate degrees in education, preparing teachers for both primary and secondary levels. The main institutions include:

- Benguela Teacher Training School: Offers initial training programs for primary school teachers lasting two to three years, including supervised internships in both urban and rural schools.
- Katyavala Bwila University: Offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in education, with emphasis on pedagogy, school administration, and subject-specific specializations.

Despite these opportunities, demand for initial training exceeds institutional capacity, especially in inland municipalities such as Bocoio, where many teachers must travel to Benguela City to complete their studies.

Educational Situation and Teacher Training in Bocoio

Bocoio is an inland municipality in Benguela province with an estimated population of 80,000 inhabitants (INE, 2022). Compared with Benguela City, Bocoio faces substantial challenges in teacher education:

- Number of teachers: Around 1,200 across all education levels, mostly in primary education.
- Student–teacher ratio: Approximately 45 students per teacher in primary education—higher than both provincial and national averages.
- Pedagogical qualification coverage: About 60% of teachers have full pedagogical training, 25% partial, and 15% none.

This situation highlights regional inequalities and the need for targeted policies to strengthen teacher education in inland municipalities. The lack of local teacher training schools and the need to travel to urban centers make access to both initial and continuing training difficult, perpetuating traditional and less innovative pedagogical practices.

Continuous professional development in Bocoio faces logistical and structural barriers. Programs offered by universities, NGOs, and the Ministry of Education have limited reach due to distance, inadequate technological resources, and transport difficulties. Regional data show that fewer than 30% of teachers regularly participate in pedagogical updating courses, compared to 40–50% in urban areas of the province.

Main challenges include:

1. Limited access to training programs: Teachers must travel long distances to attend courses, increasing costs and reducing participation.
2. Insufficient pedagogical resources: Schools lack laboratories, libraries, and educational technologies, making the adoption of modern methodologies difficult.
3. Shortage of qualified trainers: Few specialized trainers are available to work in rural areas, limiting the effectiveness of professional development programs.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to strengthen teacher training in Benguela and Bocoio:

- Expansion of teacher training schools and local training centers: Creating training hubs in municipalities like Bocoio would reduce dependence on larger cities and expand access to initial training.
- Integration of educational technologies: Online and distance learning programs can extend access to continuous professional development without requiring frequent travel.
- Incentive and teacher appreciation programs: Financial incentives, scholarships, and professional recognition can help attract and retain qualified teachers in rural areas.
- Partnerships with NGOs and international institutions: Cooperative projects can provide resources, trainer capacity building, and technical support for local professional development initiatives.

Challenges and Prospects for Teacher Training in Angola

Teacher education in Angola is central to building a high-quality education system. Although the country has made significant progress since independence and the post-civil war period, structural, regional, and pedagogical challenges continue to impact the effectiveness of both initial and continuing teacher training. Based on national data and analyses of provinces such as Benguela and municipalities like Bocoio, the main constraints and future strategies can be identified.

Territorial inequality remains one of the most critical challenges. While urban centers such as Benguela City concentrate teacher training schools, universities, and continuing education programs, inland municipalities like Bocoio face serious gaps:

1. Limited access to initial training: The absence of local teacher training institutions forces candidates to travel long distances, increasing personal costs and reducing the number of qualified teachers available for rural schools.
2. High student–teacher ratios: Inland municipalities face overcrowded classrooms—such as Bocoio’s 45:1 ratio in primary education—reducing teaching quality and limiting individualized instruction.
3. Uneven distribution of qualified teachers: The concentration of fully trained teachers in urban areas deepens educational disparities and undermines equity in access to quality education.

In addition to structural inequalities, teacher education faces pedagogical challenges related to quality and skills updating:

1. Insufficient continuous training: Fewer than 35% of teachers regularly participate in professional development; the rate is even lower in inland municipalities (< 30%).
2. Traditional methodologies: The absence of ongoing training and limited access to modern resources perpetuate content-centered, teacher-led practices, rather than active or inclusive approaches.
3. Scarcity of specialization opportunities: Limited postgraduate and specialization courses outside provincial capitals restrict the development of advanced competencies in areas such as inclusive education, ICT, and technical-vocational teaching.

Institutional and governance issues also affect teacher training:

1. Limited institutional capacity: Universities and teacher training schools face infrastructure shortages, inadequate libraries, and limited technological equipment, constraining the quality of theoretical and practical instruction.
2. Ineffective teacher distribution planning: The lack of mechanisms to reallocate qualified teachers to underserved areas reinforces regional inequality.
3. Insufficient integration of national and local policies: Although national continuous training programs exist, their implementation in rural municipalities faces logistical, financial, and administrative barriers.

Despite these challenges, several opportunities can strengthen teacher education in Angola:

1. Expansion of initial training in inland regions: Establishing new teacher training centers and university campuses in municipalities such as Bocoio would reduce territorial inequality and increase the local availability of qualified teachers.
2. Promotion of distance and hybrid continuous education: Online courses, virtual tutoring, and digital learning materials can expand access to pedagogical updates and mitigate logistical barriers.
3. Pedagogical innovation: Investing in active learning methodologies, educational technologies, and inclusive education is key to modernizing teaching practices and improving student outcomes.
4. Incentives for rural teacher retention: Differentiated salaries, scholarships, and professional development opportunities can attract and retain qualified educators in rural and peripheral areas.
5. National and international partnerships: Collaborations with NGOs, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank can provide funding, trainer development, and innovative project implementation.
6. Monitoring and evaluation: Developing systems to track teacher performance and training outcomes ensures evidence-based adjustments and effective educational investment.

Regional Perspectives: Benguela and Bocoio

Within Benguela Province, teacher training reflects contrasting realities:

- Benguela City: Benefits from a concentration of institutions, training programs, and qualified teachers, allowing more effective implementation of pedagogical policies and educational innovation.
- Bocoio Municipality: Requires differentiated policies focused on expanding initial and continuing teacher training, improving school infrastructure, and promoting teacher

retention. Distance learning strategies and decentralized professional development can help reduce inequalities and strengthen local education quality.

Synthesis of Main Findings

1. National teacher training: Angola has approximately 240,000 teachers, mostly at the primary level. The student–teacher ratio remains high, and only 68% have full pedagogical training. Less than 35% participate regularly in continuous education programs.
2. Regional inequalities: Urban centers and provincial capitals concentrate qualified teachers, while inland municipalities such as Bocoio suffer shortages and limited training access.
3. Benguela context: The province enjoys relatively favorable conditions, with teacher training schools, universities, and better-qualified teachers.
4. Bocoio context: The municipality faces serious challenges—large classes, limited pedagogical qualification, and poor access to training.
5. Structural and pedagogical barriers: Territorial inequality, resource shortages, traditional methodologies, and lack of specialization remain major obstacles to improving teaching quality.

Recommendations

For Benguela:

- Expand postgraduate and specialization programs to strengthen advanced pedagogical competencies.
- Broaden continuing education in innovative methodologies, inclusive education, and digital integration.
- Encourage educational research and collaboration between schools and universities.

For Bocoio:

- Establish local initial training centers to reduce access barriers.
- Implement distance-based continuous education with mentoring and regular follow-up.
- Improve school infrastructure and teaching resources.
- Develop incentive programs for teacher retention, including financial support and professional recognition.

Conclusion

Teacher education is a cornerstone of an equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education system in Angola. Although significant progress has been achieved—especially in urban centers and more developed provinces—regional inequalities and structural challenges persist. Expanding teacher education to inland regions, modernizing pedagogical practices, and enhancing professional recognition are strategic priorities for bridging these gaps.

Ultimately, strengthening teacher education in Angola requires integrated policies, consistent investment, and continuous innovation, tailored to regional specificities and historical challenges. Improving teacher preparation in Benguela, Bocoio, and other inland municipalities will directly contribute to reducing educational inequalities, enhancing teaching quality, and promoting the sustainable development of the country.

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