



Assessment of Economic and Social Rights Fulfilment in Angola

Submission from the Human Rights Measurement Initiative
to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
for the 74th Pre-Sessional Working Group
Geneva, March 2024

I. Reporting Organisation

1. The Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI)¹ measures the human rights performance of countries, including Angola. HRMI is an independent, not-for-profit NGO with a primary base of operations in New Zealand, and a second base in the United States at the University of Georgia's Center for the Study of Global Issues (GLOBIS).²

II. Assessment Methodology

2. HRMI uses the award-winning and peer-reviewed SERF Index methodology to measure the fulfilment of economic and social rights (ESR).³ This methodology uses bellwether indicator data from international organisations—such as the World Health Organization and UNICEF—and compares each country's achievement to what other countries at the same level of income have achieved. In this way, HRMI measures progressive realisation of economic and social rights (ESRs) as defined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). A country's income-adjusted HRMI score is a measure of how well its government is converting its resources into good human rights outcomes for its people.
3. HRMI supplements these scores with qualitative information sourced by a confidential survey of on-the-ground human rights experts, such as NGO researchers, journalists, and human rights lawyers and advocates.⁴ For more details on HRMI's methodology, please refer to the resources on our website.⁵

¹ Visit HRMI's website to learn more about our mission and work, <https://humanrightsmasurement.org/>.

² This content represents the opinions of the Human Rights Measurements Initiative. It carries no endorsement of the University of Georgia.

³ See HRMI's methodology for measuring economic and social rights: <https://humanrightsmasurement.org/methodology> and <https://rightstracker.org/page/methodology>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

- All HRMI’s data are published annually on the Rights Tracker and are freely available for non-commercial use under a Creative Commons License.⁶ HRMI’s Rights Tracker is a certified Digital Public Good with the Digital Public Good Alliance.⁷

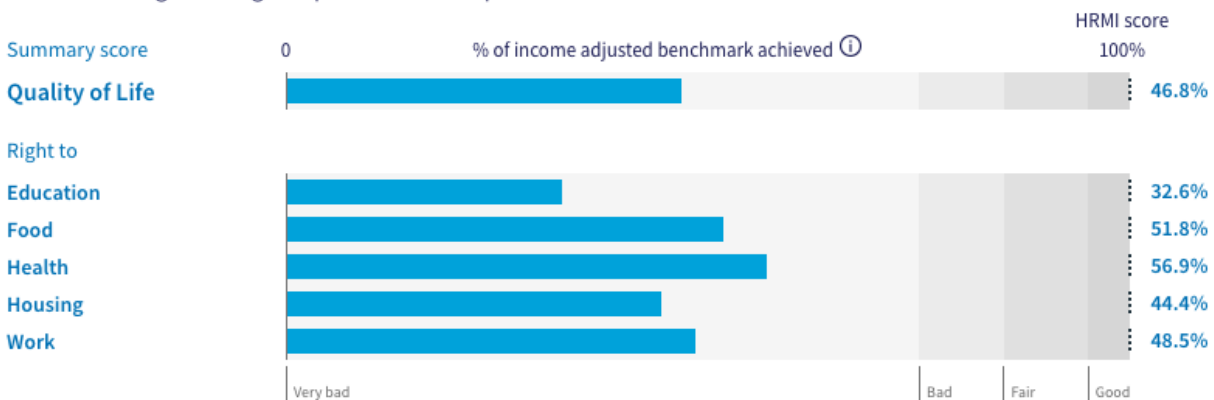
III. Overview of Economic and Social Rights Fulfilment in Angola

- HRMI’s most recent ESR scores for Angola measure its achievement as of 2020 and show significant room for improvement. They are shown in the graph below.

Quality of Life - overview

(2020)

How well is Angola doing compared to what is possible at its level of income?



Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

- Angola’s scores for 2020 are as follows:⁸
 - Overall Quality of Life score = 46.8%
 - Right to education = 32.6%
 - Right to food = 51.8%
 - Right to health = 56.9%
 - Right to housing = 44.4%
 - Right to work = 48.5%

- All of these scores fall in the ‘very bad’ range.⁹

⁶ HRMI Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/>.

⁷ See Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI) Digital Public Good Certificate, <https://app.digitalpublicgoods.net/a/10388?> The Digital Public Goods Alliance is endorsed by the UN Secretary General’s “Roadmap for Digital Cooperation,” https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf. It defines digital public goods as: “open source software, open data, open AI models, open standards and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable laws and best practices, do no harm, and help attain the SDGs,” <https://digitalpublicgoods.net/standard/>.

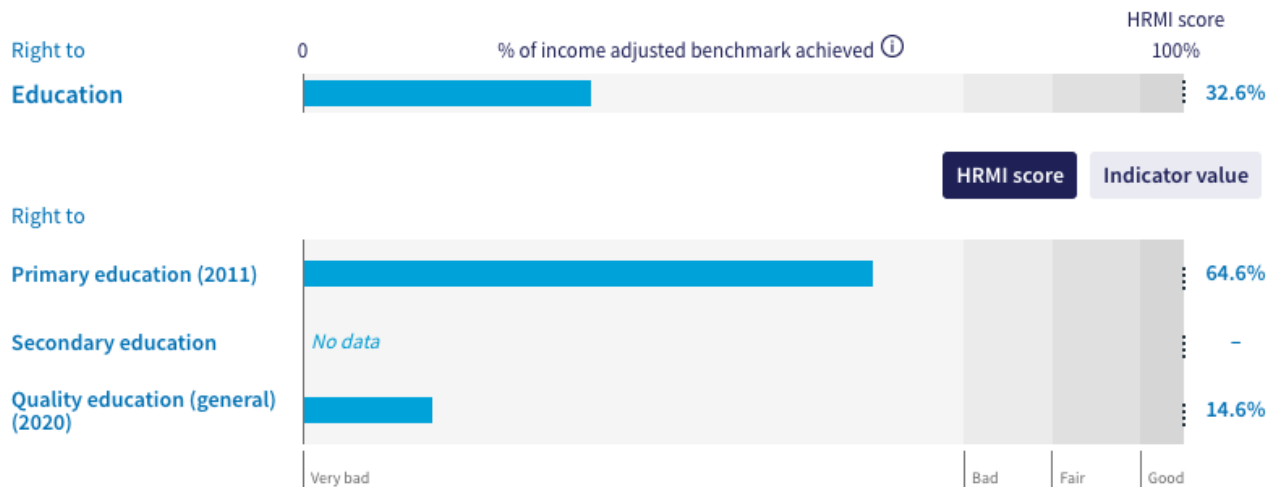
⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The labels on the country charts of good, fair, bad, and very bad are used to give a general indication of how to understand the scores. HRMI’s income adjusted Quality of Life scores can be broadly interpreted as showing the percentage of the country’s obligation it has met, compared to what the best performing countries have achieved at

8. Angola scores 46.8% on Quality of Life when scored against the 'Income adjusted' benchmark. This score takes into account Angola's resources and how well it is using them to make sure its people's Quality of Life rights are fulfilled.¹⁰
9. This score tells us that Angola is only doing 46.8% of what should be possible right now with the resources it has. Since anything less than 100% indicates that a country is not meeting its current duty under international human rights law, our assessment is that Angola has *a very long way to go* to meet its immediate economic and social rights duty.
10. Compared with the other countries in Africa, Angola is performing much worse than average on economic and social rights.¹¹

IV. Right to Education

11. HRMI defines the right to education in accordance with ICESCR Article 13 and CESCR General Comments 11 and 13. In the case of low- and middle-income countries, such as Angola, HRMI further breaks down the right to education into three areas of measurement: primary school enrolment, secondary school enrolment, and quality of education.¹² The indicator data for enrolment in Angola, from UNESCO, is patchy (see graph under para. 12), but the scores we are able to produce are very low and have shown no great improvement over the past decade. They are shown in the graph below.



Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

each income level. A country scoring below 75% with a label of “Very bad” is failing to put in place the kinds of structures and policies that help people claim the right concerned, but the structures and policies in place most likely prevent many people from claiming their rights. See HRMI’s methodology for measuring human rights, <https://rightstracker.org/page/methodology>.

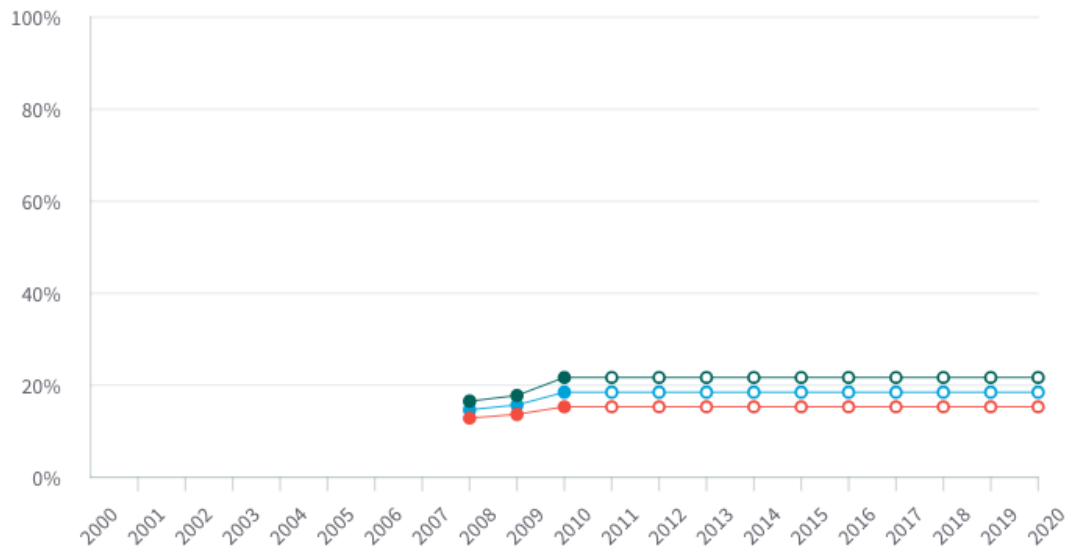
¹⁰ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr>

¹¹ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr>

¹² HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/education>.

12. Angola’s score for primary school enrolment (adjusted for income) is the ninth lowest in Africa and 16th lowest in the world.¹³ The score draws on indicator data from UNESCO showing that only 81.6% of primary school-aged children were enrolled in school.¹⁴

How does Angola perform over time for Secondary education ▾ ?



Score based on data from specified year ● Score based on data from earlier year ○

Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

Groups

13. The quality of education score is also very low indeed. Angola is achieving only 14.6% of what we calculate ought to be possible in terms of quality of education. Among all countries in Africa, Angola’s score is sixth from the bottom.¹⁵

14. The 2022 qualitative information supplied by human rights experts in Angola through HRMI’s annual survey reveals who is particularly at risk of not enjoying their right to education (see the data visualization below).¹⁶ Strikingly, the most common answer was ‘all people’, suggesting that the education system is not functioning properly. Other groups of people highlighted by many of HRMI’s respondents include people with disabilities, girls, children experiencing homelessness, and internally displaced people.

¹³ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/tot-net-primary>

¹⁴ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr&qolFdScore=indicator>

¹⁵ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/educqual>.

¹⁶ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=atrisk&pb=adjusted>.

Children with Albinism were specifically mentioned, along with those from coastal and rural regions, and those outside the city centres.

People at risk

(2022)

Which people in Angola were identified by human rights experts to be particularly at risk of having their

Right to education  violated?

Interpretation: Larger text = more human rights experts identified this group as being at risk.



Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

V. Right to Food

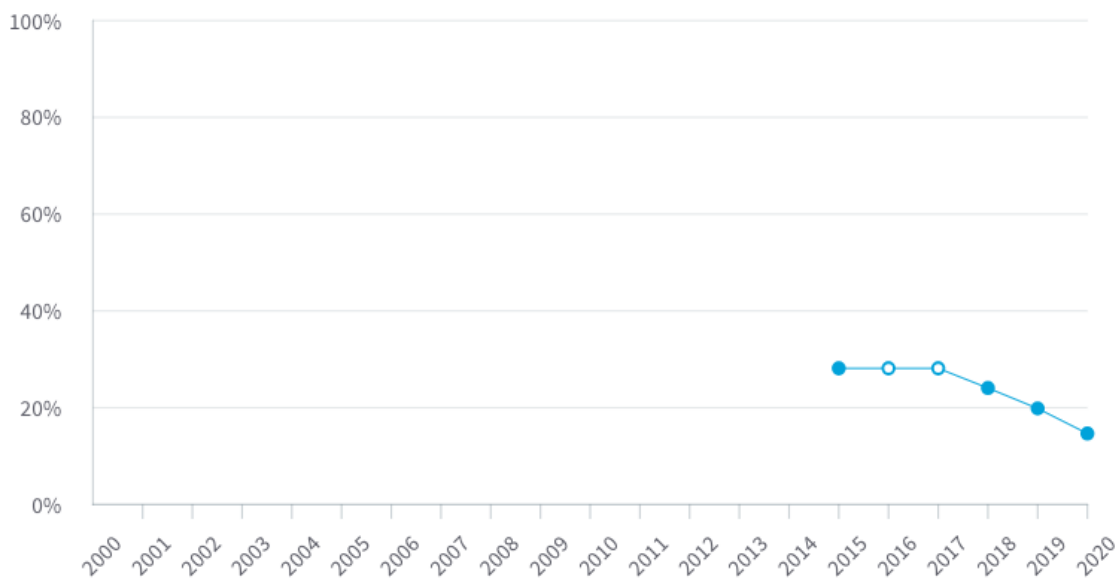
15. HRMI defines the right to food in accordance with ICESCR Article 11 and CESCR General Comment 12. For low- and middle-income countries, such as Angola, HRMI first uses a bellwether indicator of how many children are growing well (are not stunted). Angola's score for the right to food is 51.8% and falls in the 'very bad' range.¹⁷ This means that Angola is only doing 51.8% of what ought to be possible to ensure the right to food for its people. This score draws on indicator data on child stunting rates published by the UNICEF-WHO-World Bank: Joint child malnutrition (JME) database.¹⁸

¹⁷ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr&pb=adjusted>.

¹⁸ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/not-stunted>.

16. We have a supplemental HRMI score of 14.7% on the right to food security, based on data from the Food and Agriculture Organisation, FAOSTAT, showing that only 22.3% of individuals in the population in Angola have *not* experienced food insecurity at moderate or severe levels during the reference period.¹⁹
17. There has been no improvement in the right to sufficient healthy food, measured by lack of child stunting, since 2006. For food security, the score has gone down, not up, over the period for which we have data. For both these rights, Angola has the fifth lowest score in the world.²⁰

How does Angola perform over time for Food security ▾ ?



Score based on data from specified year ● Score based on data from earlier year ○

Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

18. Commenting on the 2022 human rights landscape, human rights experts in Angola identified a large range of people as being at extra risk of not enjoying their right to food, including older people, people with disabilities, women and girls, and those affected by the climate crisis. Specific examples supplied include people in Benguela, Huíla, Cunene, Namibe, and the south of Angola; people with low social or economic status, particularly people with precarious housing in large urban centres; and people living in places affected by the climate crisis, the death of cattle, or droughts, especially in Huambo, Benguela, Namibe, Huíla, and Cunene.²¹

¹⁹ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr&qolFdScore=indicator>.

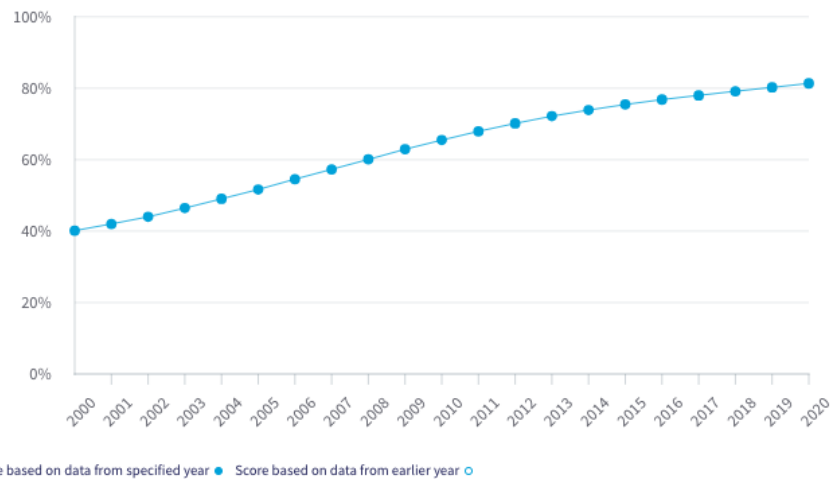
²⁰ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/not-stunted>, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/food-security>.

²¹ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=atrisk>.

VI. Right to Health

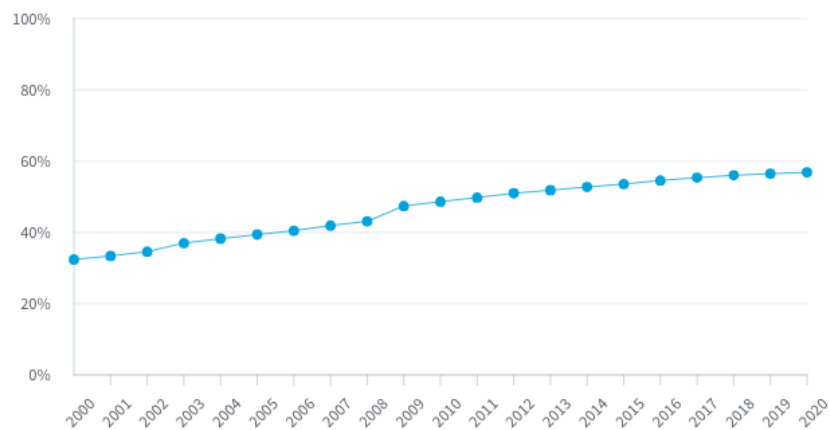
19. HRMI defines the right to health in accordance with ICESCR Article 12.1 and CESCR General Comment 14. In the case of low- and middle-income countries, such as Angola, HRMI's uses three indicators to measure the country's achievement in child health, adult health, and reproductive health. While Angola's health scores are concerningly low, there has been significant improvement in them over the past 20 years (see the graph below), especially around child health (as measured by survival to age five).²²

How does Angola perform over time for Child health ▾ ?



Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

How does Angola perform over time for Right to health ▾ ?



Source: HRMI 2023 rightstracker.org

²² HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr>.

20. Local experts identified the same groups as being at risk as for the right to food (above), highlighting, older people, people with disabilities, and women and girls, among many other groups.²³
21. Despite the steady progress over time, Angola's score for child health is the ninth worst in the world, pointing to the need for urgent improvements.²⁴ When it comes to reproductive health, Angola's very low score of 16.2% is also ninth lowest in the world.²⁵
22. Since HRMI's scores measure against what ought to be possible, right now, with Angola's current level of resources, it is clear that significant improvements could be made immediately to reach 100%.

VII. Right to Housing

23. HRMI defines the right to housing in accordance with ICESCR Article 11.1 and CESCR General Comment 4. In the case of low- and middle-income countries, such as Angola, HRMI uses an assessment standard that measures the right to water on premises and 'basic' sanitation (each household having its own improved toilet facilities).²⁶ For both of these measures, Angola has 'very bad' scores.²⁷
24. Only 39.1% of households in Angola have water on premises, and 51.7% have access to basic sanitation.²⁸ Given what other countries with the same level of income have shown to be possible, these statistics lead to HRMI scores of 41.2% for the right to water,²⁹ and 47.5% for the right to sanitation.³⁰ Many more people in Angola would have access to these basic necessities if Angola were using its maximum available resources towards progressive realisation of these rights.
25. There have been steady improvements in both areas over the past 20 years, but HRMI data show that there is a very long way to go to meet Angola's immediate human rights obligations under the ICESCR.
26. Local human rights experts identified a wide range of people not enjoying their right to housing in Angola. People with disabilities (including specific mention of people with Albinism), people with low social or economic status, and Indigenous people were all prominent in respondents' answers.³¹
27. Of note, the data shows that political activity is associated with poor housing outcomes (and also with the right to work; see Section VIII below). Other groups identified include

²³ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=atrisk>.

²⁴ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/under-5-survival>.

²⁵ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/metric/contraception>.

²⁶ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=atrisk>

human rights advocates, protestors, and members of labour unions. Respondents commented that anyone who is not aligned with the government is at risk of not enjoying their right to housing due to habitation policies that only benefit public employees and members of the political party in power.³²

VIII. Right to Work and Social Security

28. HRMI measures the right to work in accordance with ICESCR Articles 6 and 7. For low- and middle-income countries, such as Angola, HRMI measures the right to work and social security using a subsistence income indicator. According to the World Bank PovcalNet, in Angola, the percentage of people who are *not* absolutely poor is only 47.1%, leading to a HRMI score of 48.5%.³³

29. Human rights experts in Angola identified a wide range of people at risk of missing out on their right to work and social security, headed by people with disabilities.³⁴ They are shown in the data visualization below.



³² Ibid.

³³ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=report-esr>

³⁴ HRMI 2023 Rights Tracker, <https://rightstracker.org/country/AGO?tab=atrisk>.

IX. Concluding Remarks

HRMI respectfully submits its data and findings on the fulfilment of economic and social rights in Angola. We hope that this Submission will serve as a useful resource to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for drafting specific and meaningful questions to Angola during the CESCR's 74th Pre-Sessional Working Group.