



# The cultural and socio-economic role of raffia palm wine in Uíge Province, Angola

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## General Note



Article is recommended to print as color digital version in recycled paper. *Save trees, save nature*

## ABSTRACT

Angola's Northern Province Uíge, is characterized by a mosaic of different savannah types and rainforest formations, it is rich in useful plants among which are also raffia palms (*Raphia*). Raffia palm trees are a great provider of affordable forest wine, locally called *Matombe*, a very popular local product playing an important role in all parts of society. To understand the socio-economic

and cultural contributions of raffia wine production in Uíge, a total of 302 people were interviewed, including 41 producers, 58 dealers and 203 consumers. The results of the survey show that the gender variable is decisive in terms of the role of women and men and their opportunities in the type of work. The whole business is dominated by women and the raffia wine sale is lucrative and of vital importance. The raffia wine *Matombe* maintains the cohesion of the social network, usually consumed in the afternoon in locations called *barracas*, but also often used as essential part in traditional ceremonies. It soothes and brightens the afflicted souls, reconciles differences and seals the various contracts between the living and the ancestors.

**Keywords:** Cultural Socio-economic role, raffia wine, Uíge, Angola.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Kikongo Proverb*

*Nsongi sotokele ku bâ oluengese ba luazanga mu nkokele*

*English translation*

*The wine extractor falling from the palm tree at dawn he warns the other wine extractors of the afternoon.*

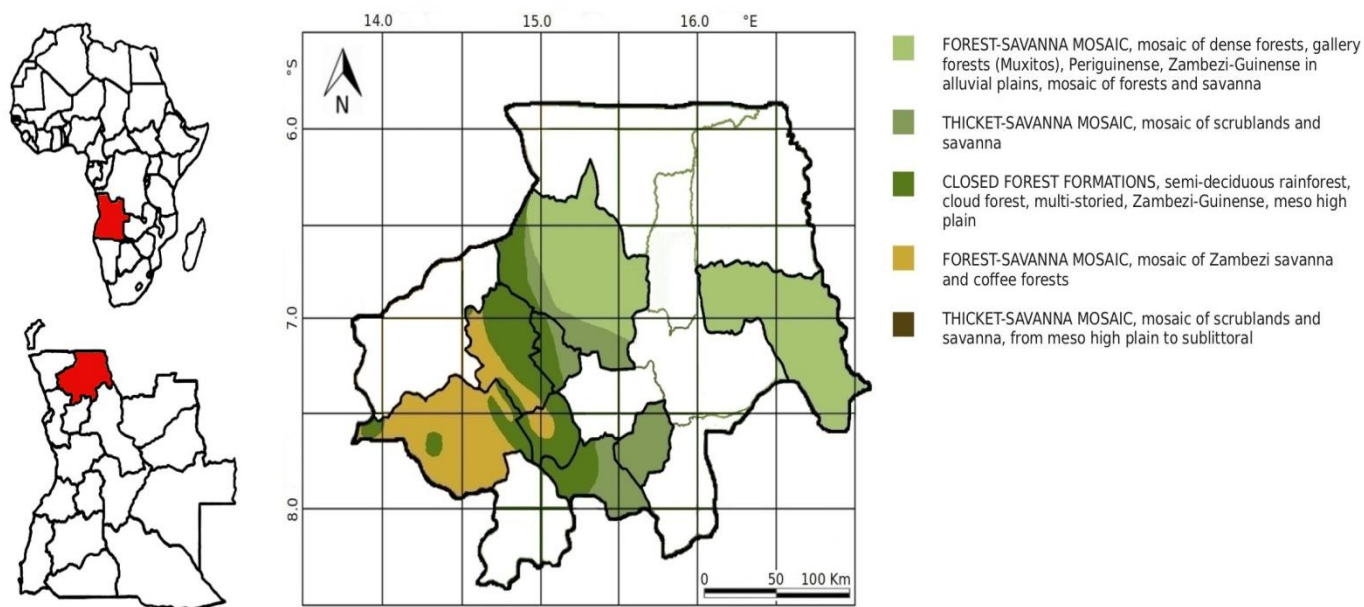
Since ancient times, palm trees offer an impressive assortment of products for food or construction of their homes but also for fiber and fuel to mankind. In terms of value by-products, the palm family (*Arecaceae*) ranks third in the world (after *Poaceae* and *Fabaceae*), and its role is even more striking when looking at the tropics only (Johnson, 2011). The province of Uíge in the north of Angola on national level ranks second following Cabinda, in terms of tropical forest resources (Governo Provincial do Uíge, 2012). Both are rich in several plant species of great economic importance but also in non-timber forest products (NTFPs) relevant for human medicine, food, building houses and forest wine production, as well as others (FAO, 1995; 1999). According to the definition of the NTFP-Exchange Programme ([www.ntfp.org](http://www.ntfp.org)), NTFPs are "all biological materials, other than timber, which are extracted from forest for human use". NTFPs therefore generate income for local people. As such, they are an effective way to fight against poverty, food insecurity (Debroux and Dethier, 1993; Akintade, 2017; Hoda Rahmati *et al.* 2017; Anita H Philip *et al.* 2018), malnutrition and lack of jobs. NTFPs help contributing to food self-sufficiency, food security (Konzi-Sarambo *et al.*, 2012; Loubelo, 2012) and nutrition, but also food diversity (Mawunu *et al.*, 2016; Peel *et al.*, 2007). Studies by Mawunu *et al.* (2016) described a high variety of wild plants used for maintaining the human survival in Ambuila, one of the 16 municipalities in the province of Uíge. The listed plants produce edible fruits, leafy vegetables, roots, tubers, seeds, nuts and very popular forest wine, in local Kikongo language called *Maruvo* or in Angolan Portuguese *Matombe*. Exploitation and marketing of these NTFPs generate a significant financial income for both rural and urban households involved in the sector, thus ensuring their daily livelihood. Tchata and Ndoye (2006) state that the exploitation and sale of NTFPs provide a significant income, especially for the most vulnerable rural and urban populations. The contribution of income from marketing NTFPs improve household budgets and hence, increase the number of operators, market intermediaries and new traders (7). According to Bergeret (1957), in suburban areas good road infrastructure helps to allow the supply of cities, so that palm wine becomes an interesting commercial product. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a country bordering the Province Uíge, forest wines are consumed by both men and women. This consumption takes place either at the place of production or at home with friends or family, or after the meal, or during or after work in a "*nganda*" in ancestral rituals, etc. The beverage contributes to the maintenance of the social cohesion as a whole. For example, during an exceptional event such as bereavement, marriage and other celebrations, palm wine is consumed in large quantities by everyone associated with the event, soothes and brightens the afflicted souls and allows the resolution dispute. Culturally, raffia wine seals various contracts between human's supernatural spirits. During a traditional ceremony in the village before swallowing a sip of wine, elders or family headshave to spray a few drops from the mouth to the ground with the intention of involving the spirits of the ancestors in their manifestation, (Loubelo, 2012; Mutambwe, 2010) and to appease the minds and spirits of the place (Van der Veen, 1999). In the province of Uíge, the scenario does not differ from that described in other regions of the world. The raffia forest wine consumption is popular in all parts of Uíge's society: from intellectuals to illiterate, from officials to unemployed, from young to old, from men to women, from bureaucrats to farmers etc. Following the financial crisis in Angola due to lower international oil prices (Mawunu *et al.*, 2016), a return to raffia wine as a local product could be observed, as it is affordable for every budget in the region, both by the unemployed, as well as by public or private officials. According to our observations in Uíge, it appears that the raffia

wine is much consumed in traditional ceremonies (marriages, dowries, mourning, etc.) and rituals but also during moments of conviviality and solicitude. In urban or rural areas, consumption often takes place in the afternoon or evening, after the daily often arduous work. Consumption often takes place in the company of relatives and friends and acquaintances or colleagues or service drinkers 'teammates' in the fortunes of bars, locally called *Barracas*. Raffia wine is a whitish slightly sparkling drink. Freshly collected it has a sweet taste and low alcohol content, which increases up to 5°, spontaneously fermenting due to yeasts such as *Candida* species *Endomycopsis vini* or *Saccharomyces* spec. (Behit *et al.*, 2002; Bergeret, 1957; Levi and Oruche, 1957; Okafor, 1972). The objective of this study is to understand the economic and cultural contribution of raffia wine sector in the households in the province of Uíge and identify the various factors involved at different levels of the industry, including operators, retailers and consumers. On the other hand, the study also aims to clarify the profile of these actors and the underlying reasons for their involvement in this sector and finally analyze the socio-economic contribution of income from the sale of raffia wine and its impact in the baskets of household. Summing up, the main reasons for the interest that prompted us to initiate this study are the abundance of raffia palms in the region, considered as the main source of forest wine, while official statistics and scientific publications are virtually absent.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study area description

The study was conducted during the period from March to September of 2016, a period extending over the rainy and dry season. This study covers a total of eight municipalities of Uíge Province, including Ambuila, Damba, Milunga, Mucaba, Negage, Puri, Uíge and Songo, and in total 28 villages and additionally urban districts. In our study selected urban areas are those where raffia palm wine is sold, either in homes or *Barracas*. Moreover, the choice of villages (farmers) was based on the natural occurrence of *Raphia* spp. Uíge Province is located between 5°51' and 8°25' South latitude and 14°36' and 17°06' eastern longitude. It covers an area of 62,424 km<sup>2</sup> with a total of about 1.5 million inhabitants representing 5.75% of the national population of Angola. The inhabitants are evenly distributed in 16 municipalities, 61% of which live in rural areas, only 39% in urban areas (Governo Provincial do Uíge, 2012; INE, 2016).



**Figure 1**

Study area: location of Angola in Africa, location of Uíge Province in Angola, municipalities involved in the study are highlighted according to the vegetation map by Barbosa (2009), Graphic: A. Kempe.

The vegetation of Uíge province is highly diverse. Fragments of rainforests and secondary coffee forests alternate with swampy areas and different savannah types, (Lautenschläger and Neinhuis, 2014). But under human action "mainly due to shifting cultivation

of subsistence (Göhre *et al.*, 2016)", the forests have been and still are replaced by savannas, characterized by the grass genus *Hyparrhenia* and pyrophytic, rhizomatic herbs such as *Pteridium centrali-africanum* and *Aframomum alboviolaceum* and small, fire resistant shrubs such as *Psorospermum febrifugum*, *Bridelia ferruginea* and *Hymenocardia acida* (Göhre *et al.*, 2016). According to Mawunu *et al.* (2016), under the antropic action the forests give way to certain species, such as: *Chromolaena odorata*, *Inga edulis*, *Trema orientalis*, *Triumfetta cordifolia*, *Imperata cylindrica* as well as other grasses. Due to Köppen-Geiger, the climate of the province of Uíge is classified as tropical wet and dry or savannah climate (Briggs and Smithson, 1986 ; Peel *et al.*, 2007) with two seasons; a dry season from mid-May or June until September. Moreover, the rainy season is long from 7 to 8 months, from September or October to mid-May (Monizi *et al.*, 2016), with a rainfall of 900 mm to 1500 mm (Lautenschläger and Neinhuis, 2014; Marquardsen, 1928). The population of the study area mainly represents the Bakongo ethnic group. The core business of people providing employment and income is shifting subsistence agriculture. Furthermore, beside agriculture, there are small businesses of marketing timber and non-timber forest products, charcoal, fishing, hunting etc. (Governo Provincial do Uíge, 2012; INE, 2014; 2016; Mawunuet *et al.*, 2016). *Raphia* palms, distributed in the swampy areas of the studied area, are an important part of the rural economy, not just in Angola (Obahiagbon, 2009).

### Field surveys

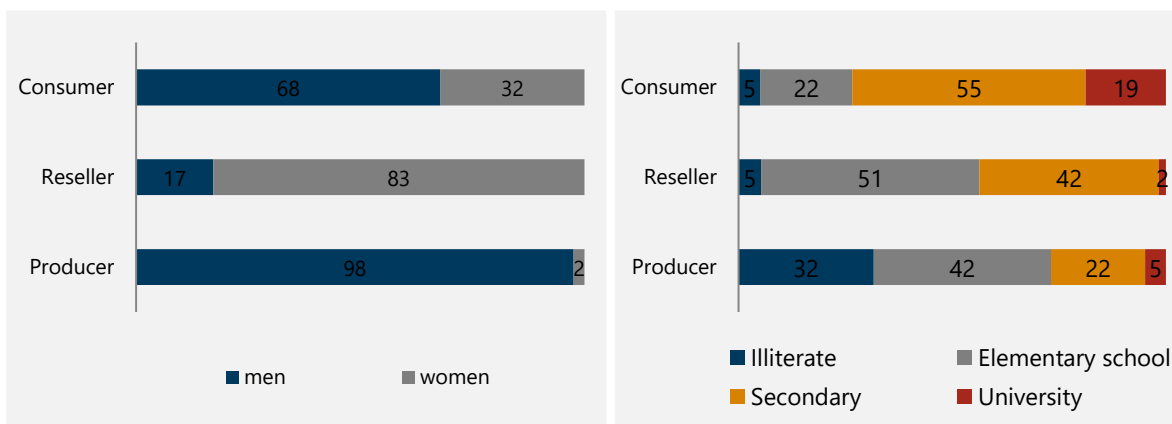
Random surveys supported by three types of semi-structured survey sheets (Martin, 1995) have been developed, tested and sent to the three groups of actors in the raffia wine sector, producers, resellers and consumers, respectively. The surveys were conducted in rural and urban areas and took place from March to September 2016, covering part of the rainy season (March to mid-May) and another of the dry season (mid-May to September), the latter is much more favorable to reach areas difficult to access in the province. A total of 302 people were interviewed, in which 41 have local know-how in operating, 58 in commercial development and 202 are raffia wine consumers. The data collected during these investigations involved the techniques used for extraction, the average daily yield of *Matombe* exploitation, the socio-economic profile of operators and resellers, their use of income, means of transport used to deliver the product as well as the consumer profile, the consumption areas, the main reasons for its consumption instead of industrial beverages and / or imported etc. The data were recorded in a database and then processed and analyzed statistically using SPSS 19 software and Microsoft Office "Excel" for the construction of graphics. Exchange rates of the Angolan Kwanza (AOA) in US dollars (USD) were based on the values taken by the Jornal de Economia & Finanças (Chitata and Cavumbo, 2016).

## 3. RESULTS

### Socio-economic and demographic profile of actors in the raffia wine sector

The average age of the actors in the raffia wine sector in Uíge is 39 years, with a maximum of 72 years, observed among operators and at least 11 years among consumers. Based on the three groups of actors in the raffia wine sector, the average age for producers is higher (47 years) than the other two actors, resellers (36 years) and consumers (34 years). Thereby, producers in average are clearly older than the other two categories of actors of raffia wine industry. The gender-specific standards sometimes dictate the roles of women and men and their opportunities in the type of work in both urban and rural areas. Fig. 2a shows the proportions of different kinds of actors involved in the raffia wine industry of Uíge. Men as well as women are involved in the raffia wine industry, although different proportions were detected. Forest raffia wine-producers are almost exclusively men (98%). In contrast, the raffia wine trade both wholesale and retail is dominated by women (83%). As for consumption, men represent the majority with 68%. From social point of view, the majority of producers (81%) and consumers (62%) are married, while the proportion among dealers is just 45%. Nearly half of the dealers (48%) are living in divorce but only less than one fifth among farmers (7%) and consumers (17%) respectively. As for celibacy, most are consumers (17%), but the proportion of farmers (2%) and dealers (3%) is very low. Widowhood occurs more often to producers (10%) than for dealers (3%) or consumers (3%).

While the majority of producers (42%) and resellers (51%) of raffia wine have just passed primary school, 32% and 5% respectively have never been to school and therefore are illiterate (Fig. 2b). Producers and resellers have completed secondary education with 22% and 43% while less than one tenth of them have a university education, with 5% and 2% respectively. In contrast, more than half of the raffia palm wine consumers in Uíge (55%) had a secondary school level and nearly one fifth (19%) are even academics whereas only 5% are not educated. The livelihood activities of the actors are differently pronounced whereby their function in raffia palm wine sector is clearly recognizable (Fig. 4a). While producers represent the largest group of farmers (69%), resellers are living mainly from trade (60%). By contrast, the two largest groups of consumers are working in the private or civil service (37%) or are unemployed (39%).



**Figure 2**

(a) Gender distribution of actors involved in the raffia wine sector [%], (b) Education levels of the actors [%]

### Ownership of raffia forest concessions

Almost all producers in Uíge Province (93%) are owners or legal heirs of the raffia forests from which raffia wine is produced. The remaining 7% are working under the sharecropping system, that is to say the operator shares the revenue generated from the sale of raffia wine with the owner of the forest.

### Collection of Raffia wine

The raffia wine is usually collected directly from the inflorescences of the plant. The collector climbs into the middle of the palm to extract the sap by cutting the stem at the base of the male inflorescence, which was previously severed at the base of the leaf sheath. The notch is renewed regularly after each transfer of the contents of the mounted container. Nowadays plastic containers are used to collect the sap. In former times dry gourds or jugs were utilized (Fig.3). The collected sap is whitish, with a milky consistence and a sweet and mild flavor which gradually undergoes fermentation with indigenous yeasts and bacteria so that the drink gradually becomes alcoholic. In Uíge province, *Matombe* is extracted throughout the year, during the rainy season as well as the dry season. Usually it is done twice a day, early morning and around evening. This profession requires a small introduction by the former collector but requires very little equipment for the operation, which are affordable for all social levels. The most commonly used instruments in raffia wine extraction are very simple such as machetes, knives, jugs, gourds, plastic pail of ½ or 5 liters or 20 liters.

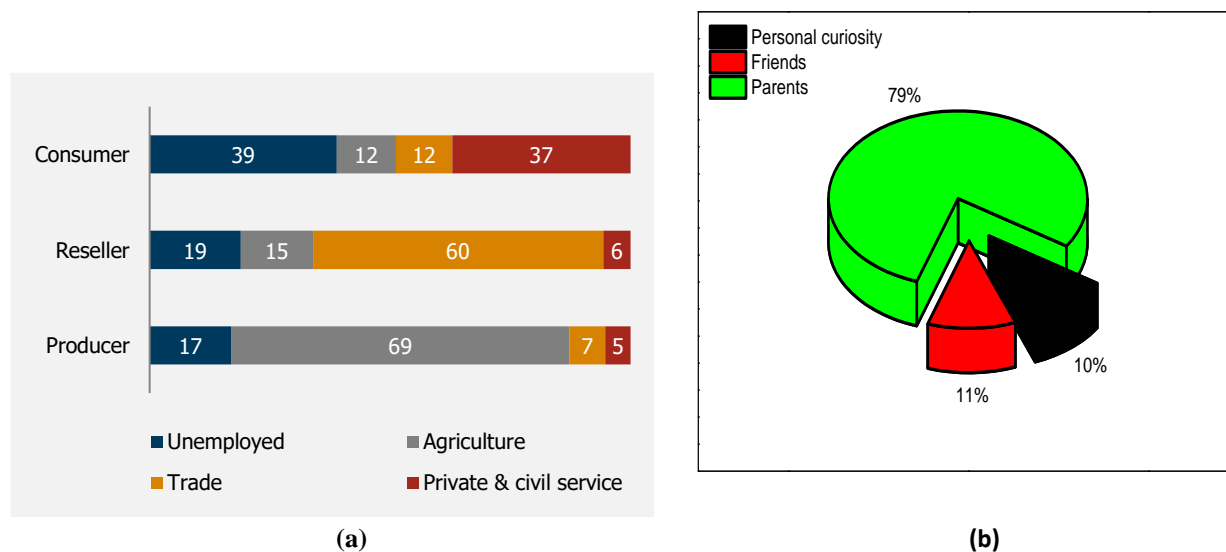


**Figure 3**

(a) dried and hollowed gourd used as traditional container to collect raffia sap (b) modern container of 20 liters, made of plastics



This practice of extracting raffia wine in the villages of Uíge province is not sustainable as it leads to exhaustion and death of the plant. The larvae of *Rhynchophorus phoenicis*, locally called Nsombe, and *Oryctes rhinoceros*, called Mafumbe, both edible insect larvae, use the dying palm as habitat and food source. Despite this phenomenon, most farmers have never thought of planting new raffia palms, they depend only on the natural generating capacity of the rainforest. According consulted operators, raffia produce better during the rainy season than in dry season. In contrast, raffia wine produced during dry season has a better flavor than the one from the rainy season. The sap exploitation of raffia palms depends on several factors, including experience (80%) and the state of mind of the operator (13%), season (5%) but also of the distance of the dwelling to the forest (3%). Due to the statements of the producers the average exploitation time of a raffia palm is about three months but varying from one to 12 months. On average 5 raffia palms per producer are exploited daily, ranging from one to twenty raffia palms. The quantity of wine produced daily varies from palm to palm, depending on its production phase and season.



**Figure 4**

(a) Livelihood activities [%]; (b) Transfer of know-how among operators of raffia wine [%]

The transfer of know-how on sap extraction and wine production is done generally through an apprenticeship or job initiation. The results of the survey show that more than three quarters of the operators (79%) were trained by their parents and only 11% received training through friends (Fig. 4b). About 10% of people have not been taught by any person, just by personal curiosity. Several reasons for exploiting raffia wine have been given by producers (Fig. 5a). Here, the most important reasons are listed in decreasing order: self-sufficiency (44%), the search for additional income (37%), lack of employment in the public service (15%) and other reasons (4%).

#### Constraints in the exploitation and marketing of Raffia wine

All trades have constraints – exploitation and marketing of *Matombe* is not an exception to the rule. The most frequently encountered constraints in Uíge Province are the lack of transport, poor roads, lack of agricultural credit and technical assistance, bush fires, theft, contamination of raffia wine during the rainy season, the lack of programs to support the development of appropriate technologies for storage, processing and packaging etc. Moreover, traders and dealers have their share of problems, including lack of agricultural bank loan, lack of personal transportation, insolence and insolvency of some customers, etc.

#### Storage and preservation raffia wine

Due to the lack of improved technology and conservation facilities capable of stabilizing the wine, storage and conservation are conducted still in the traditional way. To keep the sweet taste of the extracted product, some operators and resellers add shelled dry peanuts to delay the fermentation of wine. By contrast, some producers add roasted oil palm fruits (*Eleais guineensis*) helping to

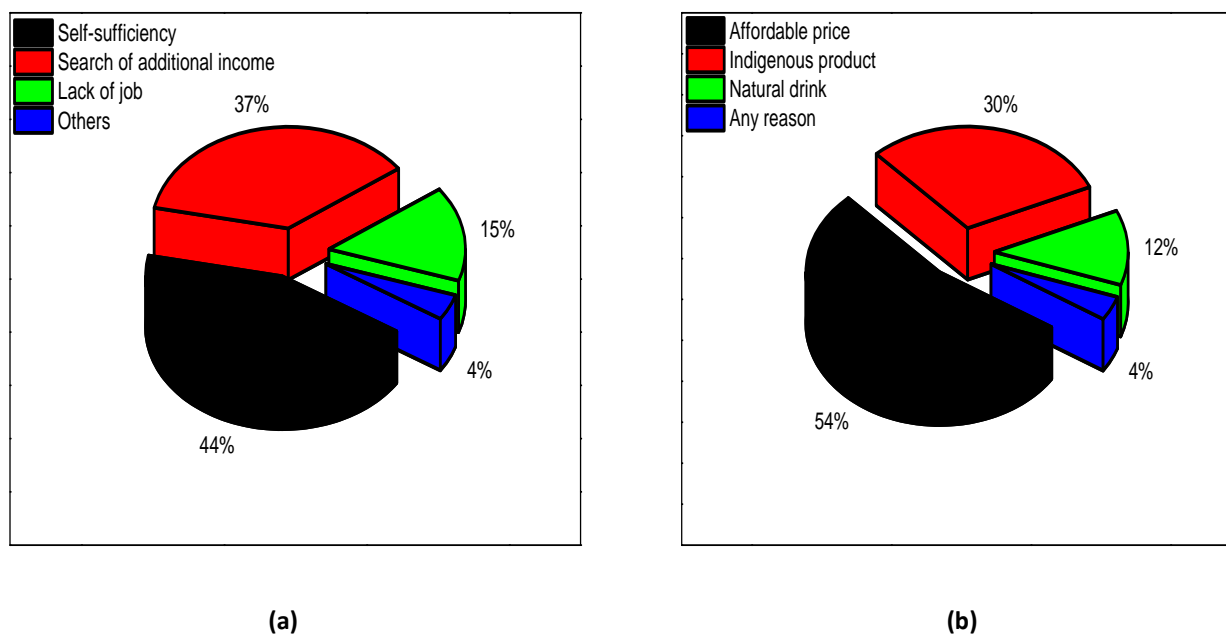
speed up the transformation of the collected soft and low alcoholic beverage. To avoid the formation of foam, fresh peeled oil palm fruits are added. To delay the fermentation process some operators retain the raffia wine container in cold water.

### Marketing channels and raffia wine market

Resellers (wholesale or retail) are supplied from the production site located in the forest, called *Kandu* in Kikongo. *Kandu* is just a hut or shed in the forest, covered and made mostly from plant material (straw, palm leaves). It serves for storage, first tasting and sales to dealers or third parties. The transport of raffia wine is provided almost in its entirety by men (99.7%). The latter use several means of transport for the flow from *Kandu* to the public market places, which are the villages or urban neighborhoods. More than half of the transport (50%) is realized by car while one third of the resellers use motorcycle taxi (35%), 10% transport on the head, and 5% is transported by bicycles. The average quantity of raffia wine sold per day and dealer rounds at 74 liters, which corresponds to 3.7 cans of 20 liters, whereas sales volume varies from 1 to 15 cans. The price of one liter of *Matombe* in the province of Uíge oscillates between 100 and 150 AOA, making an average of 125 AOA both in rainy and dry season. Sales are economically more important during the dry season both for producers and for resellers because in the dry season the forest wine has a better taste quality than in rainy season. Moreover, during the rainy season roads are becoming impassable complicating discharging of the goods. According to reseller's information, the average gross income per 20-liter is 635 AOA (3.85 USD). Thus, the income per liter raffia wine is 31.75 AOA (0.19 USD). Since the average amount of sold wine is 3.8 USD per 20-liter per dealer, their daily average profit is 14.06 USD and monthly the average profit per dealer rounds about 421.8 USD.

### Consumption of raffia wine

The field surveys from 203 raffia wine consumers revealed that the raffia wine is popular among all social groups. On average, daily consumption per consumer in Uíge is 9 liters, varying from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 12 liters, depending on the circumstances.



**Figure 5**

(a) Reasons for the villagers to exploit the forest wine [%]; (b) Reasons of the population to consume *Matombe* [%]

As shown in Figure 5b, more than half of the consumers (54%) are drinking raffia wine due to its affordability. Furthermore, 30% use it because it is a local product of Uíge and 12% of consumers like to drink *Matombe* because it is a natural drink without chemical additives.

The majority of raffia wine consumers (67%) prefer to have a glass of *Matombe* in *Barracas*, rather than at home. Hence, only 15% of consumers drink at home and less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  (17%) has no place of preferable use (ubiquitous). Several reasons may explain the choice of place of palm wine consumption. Those who choose the *Barracas*, say that there is an atmosphere distinct from that at home, especially when taking his glass together with his teammates. So in case someone does not have any money, the teammates

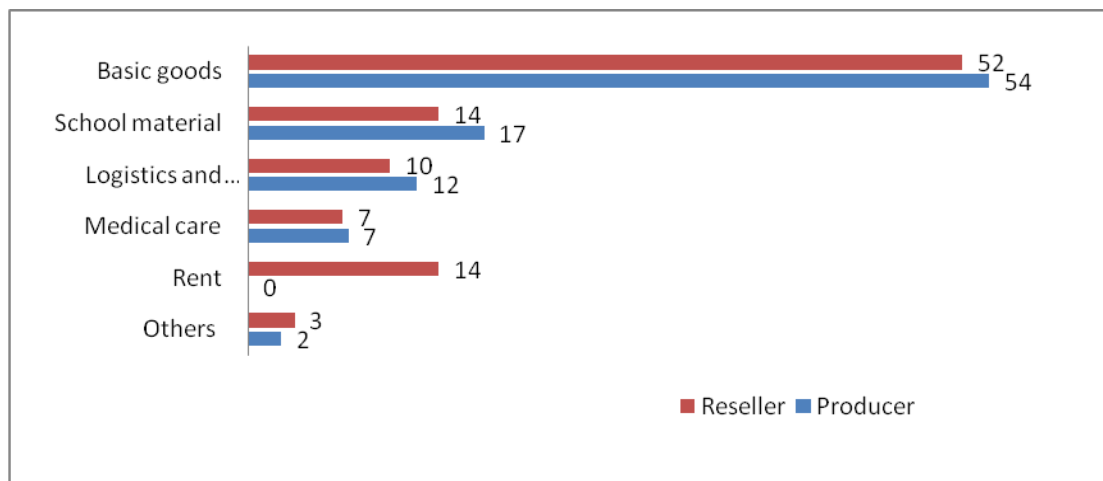
invite him, because of great solidarity among them, hoping to be supported at another occasion in case of financial failure. Note also that it is easy to make new friends with a glass of *Matombe*. Furthermore, *Barracas* are places of information exchange and news. Some young consumers prefer to drink in *Barracas* secretly, because parents prohibit the consumption of alcoholic beverages while other consumers prefer to drink *Matombe* at home due to several reasons such as to avoid being poisoned by potential enemies, or to defend their class or ethnical identity refusing to mingle with others in public places.

Finally, the choice of place for consumption also depends on other factors, including the quality of the drink, good hygienic conditions of the place and the dealer, respect for clients, welcome, etc. Although the raffia wine is consumed at any time and any place in Uíge, there are peak hours of consumption. More than half of the consumers (64%) prefer to consume raffia wine in the afternoon, about one third in the evening (32%) and only less than one in ten (3%) consumes already in the morning. This could be explained by the fact that the afternoon and evening match the advanced stage of fermentation of raffia wine and the end of the daily work that is often laborious.

Nowadays, a rise of raffia wine consumption by the local population is noted based on several factors. One is the economic and financial crisis that affects Angola including devaluation of the local currency (kwanza AOA) compared to foreign currencies, and thus, the increase of prices for imported products such as industrial alcohols. Raffia wine remains financially affordable to all social levels. Second, the consumption of raffia wine still is an important part of the Bakongo culture. Special attention must be given to the socio-cultural role of raffia wine in the province of Uíge, part of the former territory of the Kongo Kingdom in which *Matombe* is part of irreplaceable cultural heritage. Until today, no traditional ceremony such as customary marriage, pre-dowry, dowry, etc. is organized without drinking this sacred drink often in combination with Cola nuts. Especially during funerals the bereaved take care of the visitors coming to console by offering them food and a glass of *Matombe* or *Nsamba* (palm wine made of *Elaeis guineensis*) accompanied by *Makazu* (*Cola acuminata* seeds) during the visit or at the end of the funeral ceremonies. Raffia wine is also used by traditional judges as deposit to pay in the event of litigation or dispute resolution that may arise within a family, clan, or village. Finally, *Matombe* serves as element in reconciliation between the living and the ancestors. With the advent of the white man, establishing a so-called assimilated or modernized class, the latter started to replace forest wine by regular industrialized alcoholic beverage during traditional or public events. So, before starting any public or private construction or inaugurate any building of great importance, Angolan authorities (Bakongo) still pour a few drops of alcoholic beverages onto the earth to receive the blessings of ancestors. Otherwise, there will be no success.

### Income allocation generated by production and sale

Income generated by the sale of raffia has a considerable impact on the daily lives, even allowing financial savings. In this way, resellers and producers are able to meet the basic needs, shown in Fig.6. Major part of the income is spent for purchasing basic necessities such as food, salt, fuel, etc. As resellers are located in cities but sometimes without home ownership, they do have to rent an apartment. These costs are the only difference between resellers and producers.



**Figure 6**

Income allocation of resellers and producers [%]



## 4. DISCUSSION

The presented results of the survey including 302 actors in the raffia wine sector of Uíge province showed that the local population of the region knows and appreciates the raffia wine locally called *Matombe*. Although Angola is becoming an increasingly modern society, gender aspects still are an important issue: Traditional work areas taken over by men are exploitation and transport while women dominate the trade. This can be explained by the physically demanding transport and extraction of raffia wine. Although men consume most of the wine the share of women at least counts for one third. While in Uíge, the raffia wine consumers represent all the social levels the majority of producers and retailers only has a low level of education, or is generally illiterate. This is mainly explained by the fact that farmers live in villages without access to higher education. On the other hand, resellers are mainly women with a significantly higher illiteracy rate than men. Our findings corroborate those of INE (2014; 2016) and UNESCO (ISU, 2015) who asserts that globally more than two-thirds of the world's 796 million non-literate people are women and in Angola among those 34 percent of illiterate people two third are women. Apart from a low local availability of schools and other educational opportunities reasons may be found in the socio-economic and cultural living conditions. Interestingly, *Matombe* is consumed by everyone, children and adults, men and women. These observations correspond to those of other authors (Loubelo, 2012; Mutambwe, 2010). With more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the surveyed farmers; parents transfer their know-how on the extraction of raffia wine in order to ensure the maintenance of their knowledge. Only less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  have been instructed by friends or trained themselves. According to Konzi-Sarambo *et al.* (2012), the exploitation of NWFPs, especially raffia wine, has also a cultural dimension: traditional knowledge and know-how are passed from one generation to the other. Our study showed that in Uíge province *Matombe* is consumed at the place of extraction, at home, and often in the *Barraca*, alone or in company with friends, or during ceremonies. These results are consistent with earlier observations in other African countries. In the DRC as well consumption occurs either at the place of production or at home with friends and family members, after work in a bar, or in ancestral rituals, respectively (Loubelo, 2012; Mutambwe, 2010). Forest wines are products that maintain the social network as a whole and are preferentially consumed during events such as marriage, bereavement, New Year celebrations, etc. They appease and grieve sorrowful souls and sometimes reconcile disputes. On the cultural level, they seal different contracts binding humans to the supernatural spirits or those of ancestors. *Grass fields people* from Cameroon use raffia wine to seal the alliance between the families on the occasion of marriages, or for reinforcing the ties between the members of a meeting, as well as to make a pact or to end a dispute (Gautier and Fadani, 1994). For people in Nigeria, Levi and Oruche (1957) detected the great importance of the raffia wine during the ceremonies such as funerals, marriages and entertainment in general. According to Seignobos (2002), a bottle of raffia wine unites traditionalists and modernists, etc., is served at a regular table for chatting and changing news. These observations apply for Uíge, as well. The income resulting from raffia wine marketing has a considerable impact on the budget and savings of households for both rural farmers and urban resellers. Due to that income, the latter are able to meet not just their basic needs but are able to cope with the same concerns as regularly paid civil servants. Loubelo (2012) states that the sale of NWFPs in general enables local populations, or even those in urban areas, to obtain the necessary income to meet various social obligations such as the education of their children, clothing, wedding financing, birth, baptism, bereavement, payment of rent, or acquisition of certain valuable goods (inter alia radio, shotgun, dugout, bicycle). In Uíge, the sales price of *Matombe* varies according to the area of exploitation, supply and demand, and also differs from one reseller to another or even from one selling point to another. Some authors (Loubelo, 2012; Mutambwe, 2010) argue that the estimation of the selling price of NWFPs depends on the availability of these NTFPs as well as on places of sale. Our results proved that the sale of *Matombe* in Uíge is an income-generating activity with an average profit of 14.06 USD per reseller per day, which is more than the average income in Angola of 11.45 USD per capita (World Bank, 2016). The detected factors that influence *Matombe's* consumption are: financial accessibility, the valorization of regional products and the lack of chemical additives making it a nutritious biological drink. Our results corroborate the observations of Kaffo and Djeuta (2013) that local raffia wine is consumed due to the price rise of modern drinks. Several constraints hamper the development of the raffia wine sector in the province of Uíge: the lack of programs to support the development of appropriate technologies for the storage, processing and packaging of NWFPs in general, the lack of an institutional framework to support the sustainable management of NWFPs, the poor condition of agricultural access roads, and the lack of agricultural bank loan and technical assistance. As for Loubelo (2012), the first constraint on the marketing of NWFPs is the difference in quality of NWFPs, depending on harvesting sites as well as harvesting and conservation techniques. The absence of appropriate technologies for storage, packaging and processing results in the loss of large amounts of food NTFPs. because large production areas are often very remote. The deficiency in road infrastructure often delays the arrival of products on the market and significantly increases marketing costs.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to assess the socio-economic and cultural contribution of raffia wine industry in households in rural and urban populations in Uíge province. Indeed, the results clearly show that the exploitation and marketing of raffia wine represents a considerable profit for households. In addition, several reasons encourage the local population to prefer the consumption of regional products rather than industrial and imported products. The raffia wine is not just an alcoholic beverage, but acts as a product of undisputed economic and cultural importance. Our results also showed that the *Matombe* is popular with all social strata of the local population. In the raffia wine sector, men and women, young and old, in short everyone benefits. On the one hand, these results can serve as a starting point for future scientific research on the development of wild edible foods from Angolan forests to boost innovation in processing traditional alcoholic beverages, contributing to the diversification of the economy and the fight against hunger and poverty. On the other hand, this study fits into the overall theme of our ongoing research focusing on wild edible NWFP in Angola and particularly those in the province of Uíge. The results of our research will contribute to the creation of a database on forest wines of Angola. This study underlines the urgent need of strategies to implement and promote the natural regeneration of local *Raphia* palms. But also the need to start research focused on raffia wine qualities as well as conservation methods for stabilizing this product to facilitate the marketing.

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