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Cine Zunga:

Conversation with Jorge Cohen about Angola's film consumption

Morgana Gama[1]

Abstract

In this interview, we spoke with producer Jorge Cohen, the creator and general director of Cine Zunga, a project linked to the production company Geração 80 that aims to revolutionize the relationship between the Angolan public and cinema. Cohen shares the project's operational dynamics, objectives, already achieved results, and curatorial criteria based on "proximity cinema." In a context where the Angolan public still has difficulty getting to know its own national cinema, the project demonstrates that strengthening the audiovisual field demands the engagement of production companies not only in projects that allow the creation of new works, but also in initiatives that promote the circulation of these productions, enabling audience development and encouraging a new generation of professionals for the audiovisual sector. In a conversation that goes beyond simply referencing the Angolan films shown, the starting point is the understanding that by investigating aspects of exhibition and the cinematic experience in different contexts – in this case, African countries like Angola – it becomes possible to discover broader patterns of film consumption in the Global South and to test possible explanatory hypotheses that, going beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the experience considered (Thissen, 2019), allow a review of the history of these cinemas.

Keywords

African cinemas; cinema audiences; Angola; generation 80; Cine Zunga.

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uma conversa com Jorge Cohen sobre consumo cinematográfico em Angola

Morgana Gama[1]

Resumo

Nesta entrevista conversamos com o produtor Jorge Cohen, idealizador e diretor geral do Cine Zunga, projeto ligado à produtora Geração 80 que pretende revolucionar a relação do público angolano com o cinema. Cohen compartilha dinâmicas de funcionamento do projeto, objetivos, resultados já alcançados e os critérios de curadoria baseados no "cinema de proximidade". Em um contexto no qual o público angolano ainda tem dificuldades para conhecer o próprio cinema nacional, o projeto é uma demonstração de que o fortalecimento do campo audiovisual demanda o engajamento das produtoras não somente em projetos que permitam a realização de novas obras, mas em iniciativas que promovam a circulação dessas produções, viabilizando a formação de público e incentivando uma nova geração de profissionais para o segmento audiovisual. Em uma conversa que vai além da referência aos filmes angolanos exibidos, parte-se da compreensão de que ao investigar aspectos da exibição e da experiência cinematográfica em diferentes contextos – neste caso, de países africanos como Angola – torna-se possível descobrir padrões mais amplos de consumo cinematográfico no cenário do Sul Global e testar hipóteses explicativas que, ultrapassando os limites temporais e espaciais da experiência considerada (Thissen, 2019), permitam uma revisão da história desses cinemas.

Palavras-chave

Cinemas africanos; públicos de cinema; Angola; geração 80; Cine Zunga.

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Cine Zunga:

una conversación con Jorge Cohen sobre consumo de películas en Angola

Morgana Gama[1]

Resumen

En esta entrevista, hablamos con el productor Jorge Cohen, creador y director general de Cine Zunga, un proyecto vinculado a la productora Geração 80 que busca revolucionar la relación entre el público angoleño y el cine. Cohen comparte la dinámica operativa del proyecto, sus objetivos, los resultados ya alcanzados y los criterios curatoriales basados en el "cine de proximidad". En un contexto donde el público angoleño aún tiene dificultades para conocer su propio cine nacional, el proyecto demuestra que fortalecer el sector audiovisual exige la participación de las productoras no solo en proyectos que permitan la creación de nuevas obras, sino también en iniciativas que promuevan la circulación de estas producciones, impulsando el desarrollo de audiencias y fomentando una nueva generación de profesionales para el sector audiovisual. En una conversación que va más allá de la referencia a las películas angoleñas mostradas, se entiende que al investigar aspectos de la exhibición y la experiencia cinematográfica en diferentes contextos –en este caso, países africanos como Angola– se hace posible descubrir patrones de consumo de películas más amplios en el Sur Global y poner a prueba hipótesis explicativas que, al ir más allá de los límites temporales y espaciales de la experiencia considerada (Thissen, 2019), permiten una revisión de la historia de estos cines.

Palabras clave

cines africanos; público cinematográfico; Angola; generación 80; Cine Zunga.

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Introduction

Cine Zunga is a community cinema movement bringing Angolan films to different locations across Angola. It broadens access to culture, strengthens people's connections to their own histories, and turns public spaces into meeting places where cinema engages with different audiences. This interview was conducted remotely on March 31, 2026, when we spoke with the project's founder, Jorge Cohen. The idea was to gain insight into the inner workings of this audiovisual dissemination initiative. Although the project was developed on African soil, it opens room for valuable insights into how film screening practices might be conceptualized in Global South countries [1].

Jorge Cohen is *Geração 80's* CEO and executive producer. *Geração 80* is a production company launched in 2010 in partnership with both Angolan filmmaker Mário Bastos, better known as 'Fradique', and Tchiloia Lara. In addition to produce most of the company's audiovisual projects, Cohen is the driving force behind two core initiatives for film outspreading in Angola, namely: *Cine Geração* and *Cine Zunga. Cine Geração* operates as a film-club like experience by holding weekly screenings at the production company's headquarters in Luanda. Cine Zunga, in turn, is a traveling cinema initiative screening films in different cities across the country.

The project name, '*Zunga*', derives from the *Kimbundu* word 'nzunga', which means 'street vending' in English [2]. *Cine Zunga* is a mobile cinema initiative seeking to bring audiovisual works to different locations across Angola and make cinema a cultural resource accessible to everyone. It draws on the '*zungueira*' image: a female street vendor does not wait for customers to come to her to purchase a product, but instead she goes out to meet them. The project's mission is to reach one million spectators within five years and hold at least one screening in each of the country's 326 municipalities in order to turn "Angola [into] a cinematic powerhouse on the continent." (Producer [...], 2025).

The screenings take place outdoors. Each edition is planned to accommodate an audience of 500 people, on average. The project is supported by the Angolan Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual (Instituto Angolano do Cinema e do Audiovisual, IACA) and the Provincial Government of Luanda (GPL). It uses an inflatable screen alongside image and sound projection equipment. In addition to its itinerant nature, ticket pricing is another aspect making the project accessible to different audiences. Tickets for paid screenings cost 1,000 Kzs (one thousand Angolan kwanzas), which is equivalent to approximately 1 US$. Therefore, they are 60% less expensive than those bought at conventional cinemas [3]. In total, 70% of the collected revenue goes to the film producers and 30% to Cine Zunga. Screenings sponsored by public administration bodies or private companies are entirely free of charge.

Outdoor film screenings are not entirely new to the Angolan context. In

their book "Angola *Cinemas – Uma Ficção da Liberdade* (2015), Fernandes and Hurst observed that several cinemas in Luanda were designed for open-air screenings. Thus, they featured terraces currently known as Angola's "tropical cinemas." Despite the considerable number of such venues, these early establishments still reflect the social hierarchies inherited from colonial rules. Back in 1956, there were only 19 cinemas in Luanda (Nascimento; Flores, 2017, p. 85). At that time, spatial segregation between Black and white audiences was a fact, and the cinema was propaganda for the colonial power (Fernandes; Hurst, 2015). Film screening only became more democratic after the country's independence, when one could witness the emergence of cinemas in peripheral neighborhoods, as well as the organization of traveling screenings in rural settlements, known as *sanzalas* (Nascimento; Flores, 2017, p. 83). Accordingly, projects like *Cine Zunga* are, to some extent, a revival of this historically interrupted experience.

Cohen discusses the project's operational dynamics, goals, achievements to date, and programming curation criteria throughout the interview. The program is not limited to Angolan productions, but is guided by what Jorge Cohen describes as a "cinema of proximity." Angolan audiences still face difficulties accessing their own national cinema, whether because of commercial theaters' programming choices or cinemas scarcity in areas farther from the capital. Therefore, *Cine Zunga* has proven that strengthening the audiovisual sector requires production companies to engage in initiatives to facilitate films circulation, rather than only in projects enabling the creation of new works. It means fostering audience development and encouraging a new generation of audiovisual professionals.

Documenting the *Cine Zunga* is also a way to show that the film history goes beyond analyzing or appreciating the produced films' content. It requires examining the material conditions under which these films are produced, distributed, and consumed. It is possible observing that local cinematic practices extend beyond the temporal and spatial boundaries of spectators' experience by taking into account aspects related to film works circulation. They are cultural exchange spaces situated within the social history dynamics, besides pointing to consumption patterns.

Morgana Gama (MG): Jorge, I'd like you to tell us a little about how the idea for Cine Zunga came about.

Jorge Cohen (JC): Well, let me go back a little bit [4]. *Geração 80* was a production company founded in 2010, and since then, we have produced short films, documentaries, and later, feature films. Some of these feature films, such as Air Conditioner (2022), Our Lady of the Chinese Shop (2023), and, more recently, Meu Semba (2026), have enjoyed very interesting international exposure. I'm explaining this to provide some background on how the problem first emerged. One thing we

realized when we started traveling and attending film festivals was that, back home in Angola, we weren't watching films. So how can you make films if you don't watch them? We realized that there was a small group of one or two people who had had this experience, either because they had lived in other countries or because their work had given them access to it. But we wouldn't be able to do this on a large scale and in a sustainable way if we weren't watching films. How can you create something you don't see or know? How can you write a book if you don't read? That's how the first film exhibition and distribution project, Cine Geração, came about.

Every Thursday since 2020—that is, we are now approaching our fifth year—we have screened an African film, and this immediately sparked the first question. People would ask, "Why are you screening African films?" or say, "This will only last two weeks, and then you'll run out of films." They assumed there were only four films available and that would be the end of it. We have been screening African cinema continuously for five years now, and that was the first obstacle. The next assumption was that nobody wanted to watch these films. We soon realized that, in fact, people did want to watch them. Sometimes, they initially came because of geographical affinities with places that felt closer to them, and then a third problem emerge.

But even before the question "Why African films?", there is another issue: how can I aspire to become a filmmaker if the films I watch have budgets of US$ 300 million? They seem to belong to another world—something inaccessible, unimaginable, and unattainable. But if, for example, I watch Félicité (2017), a beautiful film shot in Kinshasa by Alain Gomis, just next door, I can say to myself: "This is a film I could make. I have the resources to do it, and I can hear my own language on screen." In this way, a sense of proximity begins to emerge. Then a third problem arises: "All right, but these are the people who come to your office, a specific audience—a niche." That is also true, but it tells only half the story. So, we began to ask ourselves: "How can we reach a much larger, broader audience?" At that point, you realize that conventional cinemas—I'll refer to multiplexes and cinema chains—operate under commercial concessions and imperatives. In other words, they need to attract large audiences, so they focus on blockbusters that already benefit from extensive marketing campaigns. These venues also require a range of other conditions, such as concentrated audiences, high population density, and purchasing power. You simply cannot find all these conditions across large parts of the country.

Angola has a population of between 35 and 40 million, yet cinemas are located in only four cities: Luanda, Benguela, Huambo, and Huíla. Even within these cities, cinemas are found only in the city centers. How can we reach the vast majority of the population who live beyond these areas? If we want to make this sustainable in the long term, we have to build audiences. As we make films, we also have to demonstrate that people are watching them. Otherwise, it is easy to claim, "No, nobody watches them; nobody wants to watch them." So, essentially, we said: "No, people do want to

watch films; they simply lack access. The problem lies neither with the cinemas nor with the films themselves, but with access to films.".

Cinema and entertainment are about proximity. Our major cities, Luanda, for example, have 10 million inhabitants or more, and they face a major problem: accessibility and mobility. In other words, the problem does not always lie with the films or the cinemas themselves, but with proximity and convenience. Otherwise, entertainment ceases to be entertainment and becomes a challenge, a mission, or something of that sort. So, we drew some inspiration from the figure of the zungueira (Figure 1). What does a zungueira do? She does not sit and wait for people to come to her. She takes fruit, fish, and other goods, places them in a basin, balances it on her head, and goes out to meet people. For a long time, this was the solution, and to some extent, it still is. She managed to get products to consumers. Zungar means wandering through the city selling goods. It is a form of street vending, but an active one. So, for example, if a person moves, she goes to the next block or adapts accordingly.

Figure 1: The zungueira and her films



Source: Screenshot from the promotional video *Cine Zunga* 2023 (2023)

MG: We have plenty of that here in Brazil, too.

JC: Yes, for a long time. Here, people say that 70% of the economy is informal. In other words, there were very few formal alternatives, and this was one of the main ways of distributing goods. Obviously, this changes in certain cities as they develop. Luanda, for instance, now has an increasing number of brick-and-mortar shops and fewer street vendors. Ideally, in five or ten years, there will be much less *Cine Zunga* and more actual cinemas. When we look at zunga, it is not about romanticizing the image of "a woman with a child on her back and a basin on her head" as something beautiful. Rather, it is about recognizing that this is what I have to do to meet an immediate need. So, we have this need to activate and showcase cinema—to start making people aware that these films exist, to test the waters, and to build audiences.

We also need to see how these films are received in different places. So, in 2024, two years ago, we officially launched the project with a very clear objective: we want to reach one million people watching Angolan films and hold at least one screening in each of the country's 326 municipalities.

MG: An ambitious goal...

JC: Yes, it was indeed ambitious. One thing I found interesting was that—well, you'll talk to me again. Let's talk again in three years, okay? In 2028, we'll speak again.

MG: Okay, yes. All right, so we're still within the timeframe, so to speak...

JC: We are still within the timeframe. And when we began holding screenings, the experience was truly revealing. We face many challenges, primarily logistical ones, but the project generates positive momentum. First, people start watching films and become aware that they exist. Then, on some occasions, we can bring actors along, and audiences get to meet the directors. Films that had been sitting on the shelf begin to circulate, and we realize that a film can be experienced in many different ways: because of the place where it was shot, because someone from the local community took part in it, and so on. It was wonderful, for instance, to screen O Miradouro da Lua (1992) at Miradouro da Lua itself, and to organize screenings in peri-urban areas. While a traditional cinema requires population density, purchasing power, and other such conditions, I can reach an enormous audience—the majority of the population, in fact—who do not have that kind of purchasing power.

Because when you talk about traditional cinema, you are competing with Netflix, Amazon Prime, DStv, ZAP [5], and soap operas—you are competing with the whole world! You take cinema and bring it to a neighborhood such as Cazenga or to a more remote municipality, such as Cacuaco or Kilamba. Sometimes, it becomes the event of the month, if not the year, and it attracts considerable attention from everyone, from local administrators to passersby and ordinary citizens. Once the project comes to an end, you will undoubtedly discover new paths, and it may evolve into something else. In other words, we are committed to pursuing this course over the next five years. This is a project designed to spark interest in cinema, promote it, and demonstrate that "there is an enormous audience here that wants to watch films. Let's do it! How are we going to make that happen?".

I think the conversation has changed considerably since *Cine Zunga* came into existence. I am not saying that *Cine Zunga* is responsible for everything, but it has accelerated discussions about the rehabilitation of cinema theaters and the nature of the content being produced. Suddenly, we arrive at a screening and realize that 70% of the audience is under 16, which is consistent with the census data. As filmmakers, we are now producing content with greater attention to the language we use and the audiences we are addressing. When you start zungar, you may arrive with a particular

idea, only to discover that, in the end, people do not want grapes but apples; they do not want apples but mangoes; they do not want mangoes but bananas... Each zunga becomes an ongoing process of discovery, not only for those distributing films but also for those consuming them—for the audience itself. You begin to realize that all these different products exist, and gradually learn to understand your audience and adapt your approach accordingly.

Just one more point: people are paying to attend. One of the first things you notice is that the project adds value to the community, to the local administration—in other words, to the community's institutions. If I organize a screening for, say, a thousand people, that amounts to a thousand dollars, or one million kwanzas. This is feasible in some areas, but not in others. We have tested both paid and free screenings. For a company, a thousand dollars is not that much. I may have companies willing to pay for 20, 30, or even 100 screenings. So, as I like to say, it is a model similar to YouTube: you see advertising along the way, which also allows companies to benefit. We therefore have three partners: public institutions, which provide a degree of security; private companies, which advertise; and filmmakers, because for every screening I organize, I pay for the short and feature films shown—equivalent to 100,000 kwanzas for each short film and 100,000 kwanzas for each feature film.

It is through this approach that we are building a positive cycle of film viewing. Where do we stand at the moment? We have already visited nine of Angola's 21 provinces and 50 of its 326 municipalities, and have reached at least 120,000 people directly. We are also doing other valuable things. We are taking this same program—since we have licensed the films—and making it available in municipal, neighborhood, and community cinemas, as well as in venues currently undergoing rehabilitation. What I envision, then, is a zunga that moves through the streets but also reaches the marketplace. It is cinema in your own neighborhood, right where you are. This is how we are exploring new possibilities and expanding access to film. We are halfway there, with a long road still ahead of us. The positive aspect, however, is that the model has already been thoroughly tested; what remains now is to consolidate it and accelerate its expansion.

Figure 2: Part of the Cine Zunga team in Luanda, on June 24, 2025



Source: *Cine Zunga* (2025a)

MG: I found the zunga idea fantastic. It is the metaphor of someone who moves around and goes out to meet their audience in order to distribute their products. This comparison strikes me as particularly meaningful when it comes to new ways of thinking about cinema audiences. At the same time, I have also been wondering how the screening programs are organized. For example, at one point you mentioned that engaging with audiences enables filmmakers themselves to learn about people's preferences. How, then, are films curated and local audiences mobilized for each edition of *Cine Zunga*?

JC: Well, it depends on the location. Organizing an event in a city is different from organizing one in a rural or peri-urban area. We generally try to make the program as locally relevant as possible and always work in partnership with a sponsor or an institution. In most cases, however, they do not know how to choose the films and trust our programming decisions. We have not yet encountered situations in which someone has said, "I want this particular film." Cinema is not yet widely familiar, so sometimes people have a clearer idea of what they do not want than of what they do want.

Our curatorial approach has a great deal to do with where we are going and how much time we have. If I am going to spend five days in a place, I can experiment much more; if I am going to spend just one day there, I want you to have the best possible experience. So, if I screen a comedy or an action film, something entertaining, I will try to pair it with a short film that is more reflective or addresses a cultural subject. We always try to strike a balance among our curatorial choices and, above all, keep one thing in mind: I want to create an experience for the audience. You watch Miradouro da Lua at Miradouro da Lua itself; then you watch a surfing film in Caboledo, where there is a surfing community. These are documentaries that might be screened at a

surfing festival or some other festival, but the experience is different when you watch them right there. You begin to see the potential of the region: arriving somewhere and watching a film made in the Namibe Desert, the oldest desert in the world, or bringing the story of Queen Njinga to the screen, or showing a film in Kwanza Norte that was shot there.

All those people and local administrations begin to see what is possible: that a film can be made right next door. Sometimes it is just a scene or a small acting role, but in reality, you are planting seeds without knowing which trees will grow from them or what you might be able to harvest further down the road. When we designed the project, we expected an average of 300 people per screening. Our largest audience was 3,000 people, and our current average is 750. So we are consistently bringing together large crowds, with a high concentration of people—larger audiences than those of many cinemas, in fact.

So, as we began holding these screenings, we started to realize that there are very few family-friendly films—films that the whole family can watch together. This is a major challenge because, over the past 20 years, production has been independent and largely unconcerned with audiences—not irresponsible in the literal sense, but rather disconnected from the public. I cannot go to Cazenga with an audience of 3,000 people who have certain expectations of what cinema is and screen Our Lady of the Chinese Shop—a film I like, but one that is slow-paced and fragmented. A film requires this kind of dialogue, like the relationship between the zungueira and her customers. There is also something the zungueira offers called esquebra: you might approach her and say, "I want a bunch of bananas," and she tells you, "That costs a thousand kwanzas," then adds, "Take this passion fruit as an esquebra." Sometimes, when she gives you that esquebra, the next time you buy something from her, you will want passion fruit. In the same way, we gradually introduce people to new things. It is a relationship.

MG: Another aspect I would like to understand better is how you engage with key stakeholders. How have these relationships developed?

JC: It depends on the company, because it involves a dialogue among stakeholders who are essential to making the initiative happen but who also have very different perspectives. It depends on the value you bring to each of them. For a public institution, the initial response is often one of apprehension: what kind of content are you going to screen, and how much of it? These institutions are not necessarily very familiar with national cinema and sometimes perceive it as "bad" or "violent." From an institutional standpoint, then, there is a certain degree of natural distrust, which stems from a lack of familiarity. But what value do you bring? You offer entertainment, enjoyment, and a sense of the community's own history and memory. As a result, we almost always receive positive feedback after the screenings.

MG: Are you familiar with other initiatives similar to the one you are carrying out?

JC: Mobile cinema is not entirely new. In fact, there is not just one initiative, but many—hundreds, even dozens of initiatives across different geographical contexts. However, there is no single specific project that we can point to as a direct model. What we are doing draws on all the lessons we have learned and the approaches we have selected in our efforts to distribute films. Street vending is not new either, but what the zungueira sells in each area, and whether a particular product is useful in one context or another, is what varies. Some contexts need this more than others, don't they? In Europe, for example, mobile cinema is more of a spring-and-summer activity. The climate there is relatively mild, whereas our climate is favorable for most of the year, with rainfall being somewhat unpredictable.

We still lack the necessary infrastructure. For instance, I support having cinema facilities in every municipality, but how much would that cost, and how long would it take? I could invest a million dollars in building a cinema, or perhaps half a million dollars in a screening venue, which would only be ready two years from now. And I would have no idea whether it would attract an audience or even what films I would show. What I am offering here is a much simpler, faster solution, one that can pave the way for, or accelerate, more permanent initiatives in the future.

Another thing we are trying to avoid is establishing a cinema project based solely on "donations." Instead, we want to build an audience and achieve economic sustainability, whether through the private sector, the public sector, or the end consumer. This is an approach we do not want to abandon, and we continue to seek multiple sources of support. The goal is to create a more sustainable model. As *Geração 80*, I cannot simply stand by without having at least helped raise awareness of the need to rehabilitate cinema theaters, demonstrated that cinema is alive, shown that there is an audience for it, and established that there is valuable content to be screened. I want an Angolan to reach the age of 18 having read a book by an Angolan author and watched an Angolan film. Not the other way around, having already completed their education and formed their worldview before discovering what can be created locally. When you hold a screening attended by one, two, or three thousand people, you know that among them there may be a future director, three technicians, or two actors. I believe this is how it should be done, because some countries produce music, while others only listen to it. One of our greatest strengths is our cultural capacity for expression, which has much to do with the fact that we live in multicultural societies and possess such rich human and historical resources. This is something we must encourage, build upon, and continue to develop and explore.

Brazil is also a country with considerable cultural power. Not every country has that, and I think we have been somewhat negligent in how we approach this potential

and what we want to do with it. I do not intend to keep zungar when I am 50 or 60 years old, nor do I expect to continue doing it in the same way. But I hope that this will not be the fate of every zungueira. I would like them to eventually be able to move into the marketplace or continue zungar for as long as they have the strength to do so, but with access to social security and legal protections. For now, however, I think it is important that we continue developing this project.

There are many other initiatives here, but they tend to be NGOs operating on the premise that "I am going to bring you information" or "I am going to educate you." One of the great strengths of *Cine Zunga*, and a defining aspect of its approach, is that we bring all these elements together. We provide entertainment: I want people to have a good time. At the same time, however, they can also receive institutional, civic, and educational information, such as messages about not littering. There is nothing wrong with that. Nor is there anything wrong with including corporate advertising, although we have been careful to avoid working with companies that sell alcoholic beverages or offer sports betting, for example. There is a vast range of possibilities, and part of our purpose is to act responsibly and embrace that responsibility.

MG: When we look at the information available about *Cine Zunga*, the project appears to focus on Angolan cinema. Is this focus maintained throughout the film selection process? How does it work in practice?

JC: That is a really great question, because although I am not a purist, I do not think the program needs to consist exclusively of Angolan films. What I want, rather, is a cinema of proximity. What place does *Cine Zunga* occupy? It does not seek to fill the space occupied by Hollywood films such as Spider-Man. That kind of cinema exists, and I hope it continues to exist, but it will reach you on television and through many other channels.

What *Cine Zunga* is doing is providing an additional platform for content that people would not normally have access to. It is much like living in an African country, being African, and never having the opportunity to watch a film from the Congo. Why? Because our own television channels do not broadcast these films. I want to contribute to changing that. I am not going to compete with a film that has a US$300 million budget for promotion alone. That simply makes no sense. I really want to start from a place of cinema of proximity and meaning. Of course, films reach us from Germany, the United States, and even Brazil—which, from an industrial standpoint, has a much more developed film industry and is much better equipped to take this conversation forward. However, proximity does not necessarily mean national proximity. It can be thematic, linguistic, or based on any number of other affinities. There is also little point in screening a film in English, or in English with subtitles, if people cannot read the subtitles. For example, when I screen a film from Ghana or Brazil set in a favela, and the reality depicted resembles that of a neighborhood with similar conditions

and characteristics, the experience can be deeply inspiring and create a strong sense of proximity. I am talking here about the concept of curation: a curatorial approach grounded in proximity.

MG: Have any Brazilian films been screened?

JC: Not yet. We have screened a film from Ghana, which was very well received, but that will come in a later phase. Our biggest challenge is still operational: for example, how do we get to Muxi [a municipality in southern Angola]? How do we reach the eastern part of the country? These are operational challenges, and as we expand into new areas, we also need to offer audiences new and different films. Another consideration is securing screening rights. We would also like to generate value for people producing films locally.

MG: Regarding the screening locations, does the *Cine Zunga* team partner with a local group?

JC: We always try to work with people who are as local as possible. Last year, we went to Huambo, Benguela, Namibe, and Kwanza Norte, and we generally work with a local production company in each province. You find local production companies—sometimes ones you have never heard of—and, once you start looking, you discover something very interesting about the *Cine Zunga* format: as soon as the screen begins to rise, people start gathering. If you know that there is a filmmaker in the area, you can call them and say, "Look, something is happening in your neighborhood." It all happens very organically. I think it is a very interesting kind of "bonding agent." It is as if you were applying mortar between bricks to hold everything together, because I myself have often not seen other Angolan films. So this becomes the starting point for a dialogue. Some screenings work better than others, but we always make an effort to involve local people.

MG: Given everything *Cine Zunga* has accomplished so far, what does *Geração 80* hope to achieve once this planned cycle of activities has been completed?

JC: I can answer that, because it is our plan: *Cine Zunga* is becoming, and is already evolving into, a distribution company. However, it is a distributor that operates across different formats and focuses on content that has not received the attention it deserves. It can distribute films through mobile cinema, cultural venues, or an app, but it will always prioritize content that is local or closely connected to your own reality. This is what we want, and it is the vision we have embraced from the very beginning. I have already seen films from *Cine Zunga* being shown on TAP, the airline. We have also seen films that had been sitting on the shelf and that, today, because we are demonstrating that there is an audience for them, are prompting television broadcasters to revive their weekly national cinema programs.

We have also begun holding the first *Cine Zunga* screenings in cultural venues,

which is very interesting because it allows us to explore additional exhibition windows. The idea, then, is to build a film distribution company whose goal is to bring cinema to as many people as possible through different formats, taking into account not only the content itself but also the actual conditions under which films can be exhibited. Rather than dismissing certain forms of exhibition by saying, "This is informal, this has no value, there is no audience for it," our approach is the opposite: "We will find the audience, and we will also discover what that audience wants." That is what *Cine Zunga* is today, although the model is still taking shape.

Notas

[1] An example of how the project has inspired plans for film outspread in other contexts can be seen in the joint initiative between Cine Zunga (Angola) and MiradaMundi SP (Brazil), which, in June 2026, issued an open call offering cultural practitioners from Brazil the opportunity to undertake a training program in Angola. The call was organized in partnership with APAN (Association of Black Audiovisual Professionals), with support from PNAB (Aldir Blanc National Cultural Promotion Policy), implemented through the Federal Government and the Ministry of Culture, in partnership with the Municipal Secretariat for Culture and Creative Economy of the City of São Paulo and São Paulo Film Commission (SpCine)

[2] The definition of zunga is provided in the description of the project's promotional video (Cine Zunga, 2023) and in other sources, such as the article Comércio informal, identidade e direito: o caso das zungueiras de Luanda (Luz; André, 2021).

[3] Ticket prices at one of Angola's main cinema chains, ZAP Cinemas, range from 2,200 to 5,500 Kzs. Available at: https://www.zap.co.ao/zap-cinemas/precario. Accessed September 4, 2026.

[4] Some expressions specific to Angolan Portuguese have been retained in the transcript to reflect the diversity of Portuguese as spoken across the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries).

[5] Refers to ZAP Cinemas, a commercial cinema chain operating in Angola, particularly in Luanda.

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