



City Profile

Luanda

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Luanda, the capital city of Angola, faces extreme urban development challenges, due to the turbulent history of the country, the city's peripheral role in the global economy, and the resulting extremely high urban growth rates and widespread poverty. This profile reviews the historical and current political and economic basis for the city in three main periods, and the actual physical, demographic and socio-economic situation, as the background for understanding the successes and failures of urban development activities in recent years. It highlights the potential for scaling up pilot projects which engage the poor majority of urban dwellers pro-actively in urban development, with assistance from NGOs and international agencies, although it indicates the need to create a firm political base for secure social and economic urban development. © 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

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Historical development

Early history

Luanda is the capital of the Republic of Angola, a large country in tropical west central Africa that was previously a Portuguese colony. Although there are marked differences from other Lusophone African countries, there are also important similarities. Angola had been discovered in the early wave of Portuguese exploration in the late 15th century, when the principal objective was to develop the spice trade with the East Indies. Luanda was initially called São Paulo de Assunção³ and was founded

in 1576. It is therefore one of the older sub-Saharan cities, though its development remained limited until the end of the 19th century when Portugal began to colonise the interior. Paulo Dias De Novais founded the city after he had been awarded the territory of Angola to govern by the Portuguese crown in 1571. The terms of the award required the building of three stone and lime forts to guard Portuguese shipping interests, including the natural harbour around which Luanda was built.⁴ The

founding of Luanda is contemporary with that of trading outposts in Brazil (Salvador da Bahia 1549 and Rio de Janeiro 1565).

The settlement that was established in the late 16th century was destined to remain a small military, administrative and commercial outpost for the next three centuries. Rumours of rich silver deposits in the interior (paralleling Spanish findings in South America) were unfounded. However human labour was a resource that could be exploited through slave trading, and Angola became the main exporter of slaves from west central Africa during this period. Although initially exported to Europe, the majority of the slaves were sent to the Americas, particularly Brazil, where their labour was an integral part of the early colonisation process. Thus Luanda's main economic function during its early phase of development was that of a trading "factory" for shipping and slaving. Although the slave trade was very important economically, it did not lead to strong colonial investment in the ter-

⁴This was an attempt to control the slave trade that passed through the harbour of Luanda, for the crown's benefit. The Portuguese, based on the island of São Tome in the Gulf of Guinea, had developed this trade early in the 16th century with African kingdoms in the interior, such as the BaKongo. Acting independently from the crown, they were often exiled convicts who had intermarried with African dynasties – and they went on to represent an important political and economic force in the territory. The full development of the slave trade depended on them, and this led to de facto alliances between them and the governors of the territory.

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³The name Luanda dates from the middle of the 17th century.

ritory. In fact, like the other Portuguese African territories in this period, the level of investment by the crown was minimal and usually indirect through trading allocations.

Luanda's relative unimportance as a colonial settlement is shown by the slow population growth (which also reflected the fact that the hinterland of the settlement was arid and sparsely populated by indigenous Angolan ethnic groups) and the slow physical growth of the city. From about 400 inhabitants in 1621 the settlement had only grown to about 4500 in 1810. Until the 17th century, physical occupation was limited to the area around one of the initial hilltop forts (the *Cidade Alta* with the military, church and administrative buildings), only spreading down into the area behind the beach when the slave trade developed some momentum (creating the *Cidade Baixa* as the commercial centre around the port). The independence of Brazil from Portugal in 1822 and the official ending of the slave trade in 1836 led to a reduction in the slave trade (though not its elimination). This in turn led to the exodus of part of the small European settler population, and by the mid-19th century the town was very run down with many houses still thatched. There were no public utilities, water being brought by boat in barrels from the Rio Bengo 20 km to the north.

The colonial period

This situation began to change from the middle of the 19th century. Continued pressure from Britain for an effective end to the slave trade and, in Portugal, the rise to power of a liberal regime under a constitutional monarchy, led to a search for alternative products for trade and ways to employ slaves who could no longer be exported. Under the dynamic government of Pedro Alexandrino da Cunha there were a series of land grants inland from Luanda, with experimentation in growing sugar, cocoa, cotton and coffee. Though production and commercialisation on the volatile world market met with mixed success (Newitt, 1981), the latter two products did eventually become established and, in the case of coffee, led to an economic boom in the next century. The need to develop these alternatives also led to a series of military cam-

paigns to effectively occupy the interior, and the development of a more efficient administration, infrastructure and services.⁵

In the still relatively small settlement of Luanda, an urban government was created in the 1860s, and solid waste collection, sanitation and building control instituted. There were also the first relocations of the indigenous inhabitants from the central town area up to the higher land surrounding the narrow coastal plain where they rebuilt their huts.⁶ Because of the arid red sandy soil conditions in the higher plateau area, these settlements were called *musseques* – a term that has continued in use for all informal settlement areas.⁷

In the "Scramble for Africa" at the Berlin Congress of 1885 Portugal managed to retain its control over the majority of its territory in what is now Angola – more by default than economic and military presence. Britain provided de-facto protection of Portuguese interests to prevent French and Belgian expansion from the north and German encroachment from the south. However, in 1886 Portugal ceded significant territories in the Congo basin to France and in the southern Cunene region to Germany. These cessions were intended to win support for Portugal's objective of creating a trans-continental rail link through what is now Zambia to Mozambique, but this ambition was frustrated by Britain the

following year through the activities of Cecil Rhodes in what became Northern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and subsequently also in what became the Protectorate of Nyasaland (now Malawi). The consolidation of the colonial territory of Angola now became a necessity and military actions to effectively occupy the interior intensified. Further investment in infrastructure was required, particularly in the capital city. An urban telephone network was developed in Luanda in 1884, a limited water supply network in 1898, and gas lighting soon after. The first railway was built from the port to the inland town of Malange between 1888 and 1909, to service the inland plantations. However, despite this investment, the plantation economy was not altogether successful in this period, due greatly to the volatile commodity prices on the world market, and the colony entered economic crisis again until after the Second World War when coffee prices rose significantly.

Plantation-based colonial development was linked to a policy to attract Portuguese immigrants. As with other Portuguese "overseas territories", as the colonies were termed, emigration from rural areas in Portugal to Angola was a key component of modernisation of the metropolitan economy. Due to its proximity and size, Angola received the largest proportion of colonists outside of Brazil.⁸ The policy also required the control of African labour, and its forced recruitment for plantations⁹ as well as the diamond mining areas of the Lunda region in the north-east, the fishing industry on the coast, construction of the ports and other major infrastructure projects. A significant part of the inward migration from Portugal and internal African labour migration ended up in the urban areas, especially Luanda. The city thus grew to over 11,000 inhabitants by 1881 and 28,175 by 1898 – 9% per year on average in

⁵Until 1845 the Portuguese crown was content to tax and facilitate the slave trade, which was handled by African kingdoms and Afro-Portuguese trading elites. The end of the slave trade and the development of alternatives required the Portuguese crown to counteract the power of these groups, which led to a series of military expeditions inland from Luanda between 1838 and 1851, mainly directed against the Ambundu and Bakongo states.

⁶The first such relocation was from the Coceiros Bairro to Maculusso and Ingombotas in 1864.

⁷In *kimbundu*, the language of the Ambundu people, *mussequ* means the red, sandy soil of the interior of Luanda (i.e. away from the coastal plain and river valleys). The first use of the word to mean an area of huts of the indigenous population is on a city map of 1862, with the start of the process of spatial segregation of the African population on the periphery of the city (at that time this was on the slopes) and the dominant classes on the lower-lying city centre (Pepetela, 1990) (Fig. 1).

⁸By 1940 there were 27,400 Europeans in Mozambique, but 44,000 in Angola. However some 1.5 million Portuguese emigrated to Brazil between 1850 and 1950, with this peaking at some 35,000 per year in the early 20th century (Newitt, 1981).

⁹Unlike other Portuguese territories the internal demand for indigenous labour led to strict control over migrant labour to the neighbouring colonial states.

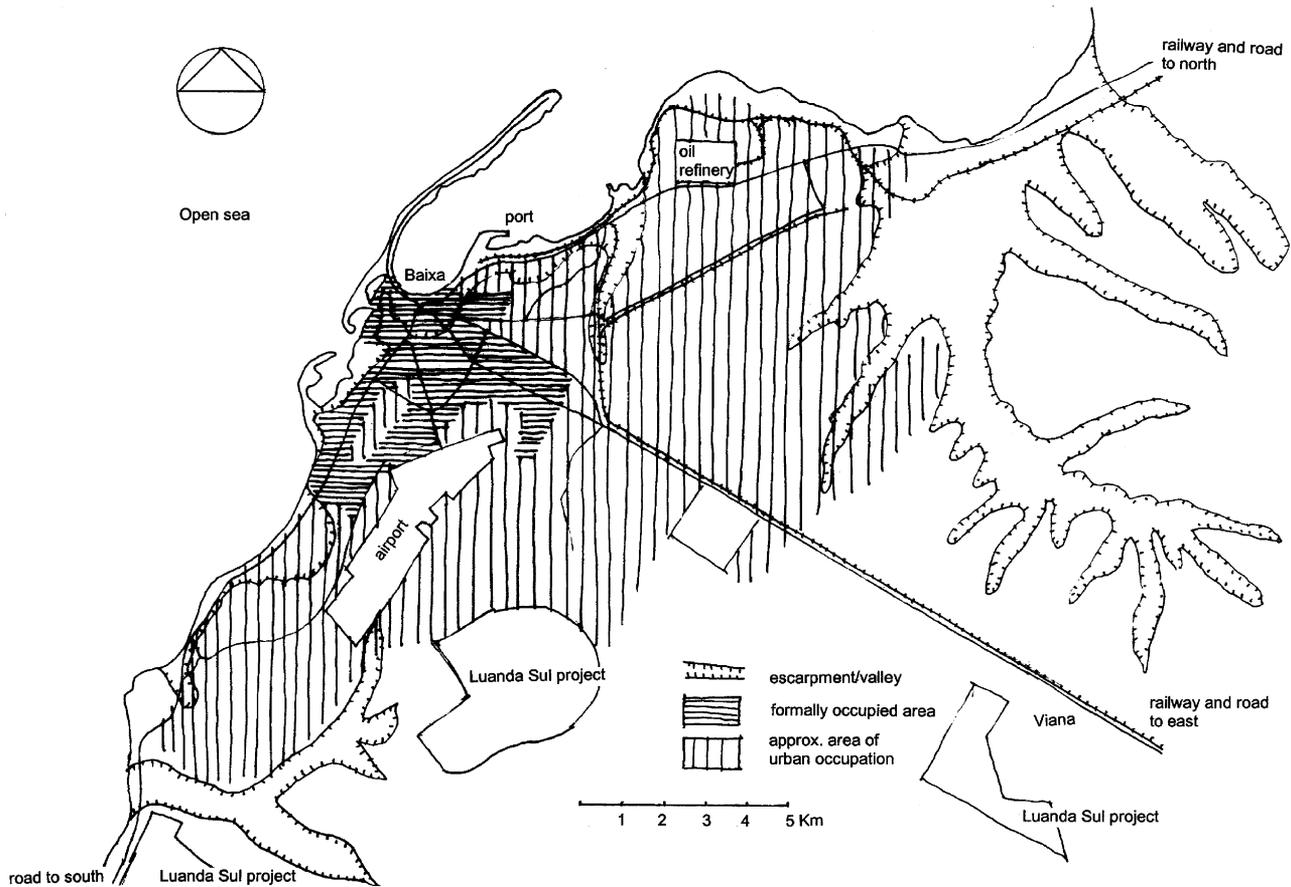


Figure 1 Map of Luanda showing main physical features. Source: drawn by P. Jenkins

the later part of the 19th century – and to 50,000 in 1930 and to 61,000 by 1940. Despite the investment in public infrastructure, much of the rapid growth of the city was in the “informal” *musseque* areas without services, which grew consecutively on the expanding urban periphery. The proportion of the population residing in *musseques* rose to some 10–25% – these were by no means exclusively indigenous Angolan in-migrants, but also included Portuguese peasant emigrants.

The period after the Second World War saw a boom in coffee exports, as well as cotton and sisal, and rapid economic growth in Angola. During the late 1940s and the 1950s there was a resurgence of emigration from Portugal to the colonies and half of all emigrants from Portugal went to Africa – twice as many as to Brazil – with the European population in Angola rising between 7 and 12% per year in the decades between 1940 and 1970 (Newitt, 1981,

p 164).¹⁰ This peaked in the 1950s, as more Portuguese emigrants began to go to other countries in Europe after this time. The coffee boom was followed by a period of industrial expansion through the 1960s and up to 1974, as Portugal responded to growing pressure for independence by intensifying its occupation of Angola rather than seeking accommodation.¹¹

From 1945 to 1974 there was a

¹⁰By 1973 immigration reached a total of 335,000 Europeans in Angola, as opposed to 200,000 in Mozambique.

¹¹Exchange controls introduced in Angola in the late 1960s limited the repatriation of profits to Portugal in an attempt to stimulate local investment and stabilise the settler population in Angola. While the policy resulted in the development of some secondary industrial capacity, most of the coffee profits of the time were invested in land and real-estate acquisition and in turn produced a significant boom in office building construction. Many of these buildings remained uncompleted at independence and were abandoned.

marked expansion of the formal urban area of Luanda, both vertically (in higher rise blocks of flats) and horizontally up to the higher plateau area. Major infrastructure construction included a new port (1945), airport (1955), and a new water system (1952) with water pumped from the river Bengo to the north-east. The urban growth was much more rapid than the infrastructure provision however, and despite upgrading in the 1970s, the major part of the urban fabric was developed in an ad hoc manner without any planning or building control – significant proportions being “formal but illegal” construction (the “clandestine” *bairros*¹²). In addition, a large proportion of the population continued to live in *musseques* with no services.

¹²In the 16 year period 1955–1970, a total of 3378 buildings were erected with a construction licence – with an additional 6016 “clandestine” house constructions registered (Monteiro, 1973, p 61).

Many *musseques* were destroyed by this rapid urban expansion and population density rose rapidly in those that remained, squeezed between the growing “cement city” and a belt of land around the city occupied by small Portuguese-owned farms. Some *musseques* were built on patches of unoccupied land in this belt, and others were left behind as islands within the formal *Cidade Cimento*. The population of the city rose from more than 50,000 in 1930 to about 60,000 in 1940, and doubled about every 11 years from 1940 onwards. In 1970, at the last full census, 66% of the population of the city of Luanda was African, 26% European and 8% of mixed race and the total population was some 475,000, of which 210,000 (44%) lived in *musseques*.

In terms of urban planning, a series of attempts was made to control the rapid and ad hoc expansion. An urban master plan of 1943 quickly became out of date and was succeeded by five other variants in rapid succession before 1963, none managing to regulate the urban growth. One of the problems was a blockage to southern expansion due to the airport, but there was also the fact that land holding was concentrated in the hands of a few who wanted to capture the speculative gain.¹³ Urban regulations were published in 1954 and a Sanitation Plan was developed in 1966. In 1973, a French firm was contracted to prepare a new Master Plan, by when it was estimated that 350,000 inhabited the *musseques*. This plan was based on a “growth pole” strategy for urban de-concentration to three nuclei, including a new urban core at Viana, the first main stop on the railway to the interior, but also accepted – for the first time – the need to upgrade, as opposed to replace, the *musseques*. As with other contemporary plans in the Portuguese colonies, the Master Plan was doomed from the start as the Portuguese regime began to collapse in 1974.

The occupation of Angola by the Portuguese colonial power had required a continuous series of military campaigns from 1850 to 1919. From then on, strong repression in the colonies

and the metropolis had maintained dissent largely in check until the 1960s. By then growing criticism by the United Nations of Portuguese rule, as well as regional manifestations of the growing Cold War, led to a number of liberation movements developing outside the country and attacking from external bases. In addition, in 1961 an urban-based uprising to free political prisoners from a Luanda prison, a revolt against forced cotton planting in the east of Malanje Province and a revolt in the north-east coffee growing areas became the first major manifestation of the liberation struggles within the various Portuguese overseas territories. But the revolts were brutally quashed, and three movements operating from outside Angola continued to lead the struggle for Independence in remote rural areas. Following the military coup in Portugal on 25 April 1974 that ended 38 years of dictatorship, a transitional government was set up in January 1975 to lead Angola to independence. Portugal proved unable to manage this transition and most of the white population left during 1975. There was no one clear leader of the then three main liberation groups in Angola and the power vacuum led to conflict between the movements. The MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), which had urban roots as well as strong links with disaffected parts of the colonial army and Portuguese interim revolutionary council, was able to control the media and arm civilians and this led to their establishing control in Luanda – but also set the scene for continued civil war.

Post-Independence

The post-Independence period in Angola has been characterised by continuing civil war, the expansion of oil and diamond exports and a collapse of other aspects of the economy. There have been four main periods of war: 1975–76 (before and after independence), 1981–91 (the years of destabilisation), 1992–94 (the post-election war) and from 1998 to the time of writing (early 2002).¹⁴ These have been separated by

years of uneasy peace, sometimes described by Angolans as “not war yet not peace”. At no stage in the entire post-Independence period has there been any period of stability that would allow a more coherent approach to urban development, which continues to be rapid and uncontrolled and mostly “informal” during this period.

During the immediate pre- and post-Independence period, until control over Luanda had been asserted by the MPLA, some 200,000 inhabitants are estimated to have abandoned the city and the country – mostly for Portugal. Building that had been in progress during 1974 suddenly ceased, leaving half-finished buildings, islands of *musseque* housing in half-finished urbanised neighbourhoods and layouts marked for urbanisation schemes that had not materialised. The new government introduced legislation that allowed for the confiscation of abandoned property and its allocation to indigenous Angolan citizens, under state managed rental contracts. While a legal framework was set up to permit this nationalisation, the administrative procedures were often not followed and ad-hoc occupation for residential and many non-residential buildings was the result. Abandoned properties were more often occupied by returning refugees and rural migrants to the city, rather than by existing *musseque* dwellers. Together with infill in existing *musseques*, overall this led to limited territorial expansion of the city despite continued strong in-migration.

In 1979 the National Directorate of Physical Planning, with Cuban technical assistance, produced a series of planning studies, but none of these were implemented and they had little influence on the spontaneous development of the city. The main physical intervention of the state in this period was the construction of a series of medium rise apartment blocks, also with Cuban assistance.¹⁵ The publication of the 1982 law of *auto-construção*, or self-help housing, marked the first attempt by the state to deal with the increasing demand for urban shelter. It demonstrated a realisation that the state was incapable of providing

¹³In 1964 nine major landowners held most of the land in a 15 km radius of the centre, interspersed with nearly 300 small landholdings (do Amaral, 1968, p 126).

¹⁴The death of UNITA’s leader Jonas Savimbi in late February 2002 may finally lead to an end to the war.

¹⁵Some 25,000 units were constructed in four to six floor walk-ups in the 1977–87 period.

formal housing at a scale to meet demand. The programme foresaw the demarcation of plots and areas for social services and the provision of subsidised building materials for those who wished to build their own housing. However, demand so overwhelmed the capacity of local government to provide land, and even register applicants, that the programme collapsed. Sites earmarked for *auto-construção* were generally squatted on by informal settlers and the programme was eventually shelved.

By the mid-1980s the unrelenting flow of rural in-migrants fuelled by the war and collapse of the economy led to massive expansion of the *musseque* areas. In 1987 a new initiative was undertaken, inspired by experiences in the Southern African region in urban squatter area upgrading. The international non-governmental organisation Development Workshop, together with the National Department of Urbanism, set up an Office for *Musseque* Upgrading (GARM) in Luanda. The Sambizanga Upgrading Project undertaken by the team subsequently became a pilot for developing social mobilisation strategies for basic urban service provision and the community management of water distribution by elected water committees. The project was one of the international Best Practices identified by the Habitat Human Settlements Conference in Istanbul in 1996, but was not able to scale up to respond to the rapidly increasing demand (Cain, 1987). In 1995, a World Bank funded foreign consultancy was employed to produce a new "Urban Land Use and Growth Management Plan". This estimated an urban population of 2.1 million in Luanda, likely to continue to grow at between 6 and 7% per year to 2010, the plan horizon, to give a population of 5.4 million. In 1997, with further credit from the World Bank, an urban infrastructure rehabilitation plan was drawn up. Lessons from the Sambizanga project were incorporated into this plan along with the strategy for community management of a proposed stand-post network in the *musseques*.¹⁶ However,

implementation of the programme remains stalled, along with other projects pending conclusion of Angola's negotiations with the IMF.

The extremely rapid growth of the population thus continued after Independence. Unlike in the pre-Independence period, however, there has been very limited urban investment and the vast majority of the in-migrants are extremely poor – many having lost everything in the war. Also different is the economic basis. The national economy has since Independence increasingly become a highly "enclaved" economy reliant on oil and to a lesser extent diamonds – with an extremely low level of general economic capacity and a resulting very low per capita income for the majority.¹⁷

Urban characteristics¹⁸

Physical setting

The urban area mainly occupies a sandy, fairly arid, plateau about 40 m above sea level, rising to 80 m in the highest parts, with the city centre (*Baixa*) and some areas to the south on narrow coastal plains averaging some 5 m above sea level. The sandy soils are adequate for construction but expansive clays are found to the north-east, an area into which the city is now expanding, as well as in isolated pockets in the area already built up. In the former area of expansive clays, the surface is cut by a series of small river valleys draining to the north and north-east, providing areas of possible erosion. Erosion has already become a major problem on the coastal escarpment, both north and south of the city centre. In addition, some areas of the upper plain have no natural outlet for surface water drainage and flooding occurs in the rainy season. The climate is tropical with a hot rainy season from October to April, but is reasonably equable due to the prevalence of sea breezes created by the differential

standposts, using the Sambizanga project model, to bring piped water to about half a million people.

¹⁷For more information on the economic impact of globalisation, see Jenkins et al (2002).

¹⁸This section draws on Dar Al-Handasah 1996.

between the sea and land temperatures, the former being specifically affected by the cold northward-flowing Benguela current.

The original settlement was near the fort, which still exists on top of a promontory overlooking the bays to the north and south as well as the long thin island immediately offshore. These were the original settlement areas of the indigenous Axiluanda fishing people, who remained based there until after Independence, despite progressive occupation of the island for recreational, maritime and secondary residential use. The cold Benguela current meeting with the Kwanza River to the south provides an ideal environment for many fish species, although unregulated industrial fishing and spill from oil tankers using the port increasingly threaten this.

The River Bengo to the north and River Kwanza to the south provide the urban area with water. The former is the main current source of water (see below), although water for the Viana area is supplied from the Kwanza as part of an irrigation scheme created in the late 1980s. Alternative ground water sources are very deep and relatively expensive to access. In addition, while the immediate hinterland of the city is arid, the overall prospect for agricultural production in the hinterland is good – although extremely limited at present due to the war and government policies. The vast majority of food resources are currently imported and then distributed through generally extensive informal market channels.

Demographic and socio-economic situation

There has been no full census in Angola since 1970 and in general data collection and provision is extremely weak, rendering difficult any quantitative analysis.¹⁹ However, the National Statistical Institute has recently completed a national household income survey including some 2700 interviews in the Luanda area of the 10,000 conducted nationally. While the detailed data are not as yet available, the survey's

¹⁹There was a partial census in 1983 and 1984 that did include Luanda.

¹⁶The plan was designed by the Development Workshop in collaboration with Luis Berger and foresaw the construction of 600

overall estimate of the city population is 3.4 million.²⁰ This is less than various other estimates, including that in the Provincial Government's 2000 plan for the city (4 million).

The demographic structure displays a very young population structure as well as irregular distribution by sex across age cohorts – due to higher male mortality and different migration patterns. The average age is 20 years, with 35–40% in school age cohorts and 40–45% in working age cohorts. Fertility rates are very high – eight births per female since 1983 – but so is infant and child mortality. Given the high proportion of young residents and continued high natural growth, the 1995 Urban Plan estimated growth rates as likely to continue at between 6 and 7% per year and the city population to rise to between 4.7 and 5.4 million by 2010. Currently Luanda has some 20–25% of the overall national population, and 60% of the urban population, which are some 34% of the total. The overall urban proportion is estimated as likely to grow to 44% by 2015 and 53% by 2030 (UN statistics). If Luanda grows to 5.4 million in 2010 this could represent some 33% of the total national population.

Economically, the city does not directly benefit from the major revenue generating oil and diamond industries, despite the former being partly shipped and refined in the city area. The main benefits are the spin-offs from housing the managerial staff of the state and private sector industrial actors.²¹ The 1995 Urban Plan estimated that 50% of the national installed capacity in formal sector commercial and industrial employment (to a great extent food processing and construction material production) was located in the city area, as was 23% of foreign direct investment. However years of neglect and lack of investment have led the industrial sector to near collapse. The port also needs major rehabilitation, as does the railway. The vast majority of

port traffic is importation and much national transport is by air. National economic growth rates were between 3 and 7% in the early 1990s and were expected to be between 4.5 and 6% through to 2010. The reliance on oil and, secondarily, diamond revenue – much of which has been off-budget and has been used to finance the war as well as the growing national debt²² – has led to a bleak overall picture for economic prospects despite the natural potential.

In 1993 the economically active population was estimated at 722,000, with 24% unemployed and 60% underemployed. Formal sector engagement was estimated as being only 30–35% of the workforce, and this has probably declined since, due to continued migrant influx and more economic constraints and formal sector job losses. The informal market is by far dominated by commercial activity and the extensive and extended informal trading networks are the basis for survival for the majority – up to 45% of total employment.

It is estimated that between 50 and 60% of the population of Luanda is living in poverty, and between 6 and 15% in extreme poverty, varying between different parts of the city.²³ Poverty is more prevalent in peri-urban areas and the most at risk are new in-migrants, many of which arrive with nothing. As mentioned above, no recent detailed data are available for the city but national estimates show extreme differentials in income distribution: the richest 20% of households capture 61% of the total income and the difference between the highest and lowest increased from a factor of 10 to a factor of 37 between 1995 and 1998 alone.²⁴ The incomes of the richest 10% of the population rose 43% while those of the

poorest households dropped 59% in this period. The very poor spend 64% of their income on food, 5% on water, 5% on health, 4% on education, 1% on housing, while the rich spend 48% on food, 2.5% on water, 10% on health and 7% on education, as well as 5% on housing (significantly rising from 1% in 1995). Inflation has been rapid, especially between 1993 and 1996; by 1998 inflation was said to be under control but was still 135% per year at the end of 1998 and had risen to 217% per year by mid 1999 (Hodges, 2001).²⁵

As the UNDP Human Development Report for Angola (1999) stated: "Angola's dire economic performance and abysmal human development, is fundamentally an issue of political economy. The gradualist approach adopted in the 1990s with its objective of creating a national elite has proven to be socially inefficient. It reflects the interests of the main urban pressure groups that do not necessarily represent the interests of the majority". The report goes on to indicate that the country is characterised by lack of competition, excessive monopolisation; excessive informality in economic activities; a weak judicial system; inadequate regulatory role of the state; collapse of the state in basic service provision; increased corruption; apathetic union movement; weak civil

²⁵An example detailed in der Winden (1995), illustrates the social and economic impact within households. The surveyed extended family of 14 adults and 20 children had an income of about £525 (sterling) per month, mainly from selling produce from a field on the outskirts of the city and from informal commerce of various kinds. Formal employment, involving men, only provided 5% of this income and it was the women in the family who brought in most of the household income from agriculture and trading. Eight adults worked full-time, with, in addition, one young woman looking after the children to allow the other adults to work. Due to the organisation within the family that allowed the adults to work night and day, and to have a range of sources of income, this family was considered relatively well off. However, £1 only bought 2 kg of rice or 1 kg of fish, or half a litre of cooking oil. Prices are close to First World levels, even if incomes are not. The extended family had gradually built their own rooms around a yard, as resources permitted. A 50 kg bag of cement cost £3, six 20 l buckets of water cost £1 and six concrete bricks cost £1. At these prices, a two-room dwelling for two adults and three or four children costs about £1000 to build.

²²Thirty-seven percent of oil revenue went into debt servicing in 1998. The debt in 1999 was \$12 billion.

²³Poverty and Nutritional Insecurity Survey in Luanda (1996): the definition of the poverty line was based on average expenses for a food and non-food basket – extreme poverty was defined as 33% of the poverty line expenditure.

²⁴Poorest monthly average income \$100, highest \$3700 – UNDP Angola Human Development Report (1999). The UN Human Development Index ranking in 1999 was 156th, GDP/capita ranking 128th – up from 133rd.

²⁰Data cited from the as yet unpublished 1999 National Statistical Institute survey by the National Director in an interview in October 2001.

²¹Fuel prices are also kept extremely low nation-wide, a factor that affects traffic and transport.

society; excessive military presence in economy; absence of social safety nets; and economic inequality – which “leads to the understanding of Angola’s transition from a centralised economy to what might be termed ‘wild capitalism’”.

Land, housing, infrastructure and the environment

The last overall assessment of land use was the 1995 urban plan, based on 1994 satellite imagery. In this, 75% of the occupied area was estimated as residential land use, with the next largest categories being infrastructure (including the port and airport) and special uses (e.g. military) – 9% each. Educational and other social uses each occupy 2% while industry only occupies 1.5% and commerce (identifiably) 2%, although much more (unidentified) urban space is used for informal commerce. Of the residential use 70% was estimated as high-density *musseques*. Housing typologies that were identified were as follows:

- *high quality housing*, comprising three small inner city areas with large single family plots, mostly low density but with some 6–15 storey high rise flats, these mostly being in the downtown area;
- *the formal and historic core*, with quite high standard individual houses of one or two storeys and medium rise apartment blocks (up to eight stories), many being highly overcrowded after new occupation;
- *areas which were under development in the early 1970s* (“*transition areas*”), similar to the above, but of a lower standard. These are mostly two and three floor single family dwellings, but also include some 7–17 floor high rise apartment blocks that are badly rundown. This latter category also includes about 25 high rise buildings incomplete at the time of Independence which are now informally occupied despite their continued state of incompleteness;
- “*clandestine*” *areas dating from before 1975 (and especially from the 1960s)*, mostly one or two storeys and single family, however with few utilities;
- *housing built on state sites and services as part of musseque redevelop-*

ment, poor-quality small semi-detached units, badly degraded and extended in an ad hoc fashion²⁶;

- *housing units in four to six storey flats* built under the Cuban aid programme 1977–87;
- *musseques*, which comprise older consolidated musseques in a ring around city dating from the 1960–70s, and a series of more recent (post-1985) *musseques* in the outer peri-urban area. The open spaces in the older *musseques* have been filled in and population densities in them have increased through plot subdivision. The peripheral *musseques* also occupy many environmentally unsuitable locations such as hill-sides and a former rubbish dump.

In general it was estimated that probably 75% of the population live in informal settlement areas or in informal ways within the formal urban areas, a proportion which may have increased since.

The housing stock abandoned by the colonial population was managed by a State Secretariat for Housing after nationalisation or confiscation in 1976, as were state housing units provided later (such as through the Cuban programme). Part of the political settlement in 1992 included the privatisation of this housing stock and a significant proportion has since been sold. However, complications in the administrative process have led to substantial corruption and thus, despite the officially discounted price, many units remain unsold, although informal transfer, letting and sub-letting are very common. A special fund was created to receive the revenue collected from state rents and subsequent sales, but little has been done to operate this. The formal housing stock is thus predominantly managed informally and there has been little re-investment or improvement.

The housing stock in the *musseques* is also managed informally, and a rental market has existed since the inception of *musseques* – as evidenced

in an early 1970s sociological study (Monteiro, 1973). Older residents have generally sub-divided their plots for sale or rental, or built further units for family members, or for rental, on their plot. While rental costs are higher than the formal sector state rentals, the variety of property on offer permits a wide range of rental prices. There is not so much evidence of a house selling market, but this does exist with some informal entrepreneurs making a living through land purchase, house construction and resale. In general, the *musseques* now are very densely developed with little open space. The high occupancy rates (three inhabitants/room, and 12–15 per dwelling), together with the generally very low provision of infrastructure, lead to very unhealthy conditions.

The number of housing units was estimated in the 1995 Urban Plan at overall about 270,000 units and likely need for new housing units – given the rapid demographic growth and the saturation of the existing formal and informal areas – was estimated as between 350 and 475,000 units by 2010. Although no firm data are available, the capacity for formal supply is minimal: the Provincial Government’s programme to provide new plots for self-help construction for 5000 households and the private sector led Luanda Sul Programme’s supply of 2200 units in the past 2 years are the only major state-assisted programmes (Box 1).

The extremely limited provision of infrastructure is also a major environmental problem. The water supply network only covers a small proportion of the urban area – an estimated 25% of households have access to piped network – and many parts of the network have not received water for years due to bulk supply shortages and many network problems. Water for the majority of *musseque* dwellers is brought by hundreds of tankers which truck the water from the River Bengo and sell it to water sellers who have tanks at their houses and who re-sell to households. Water is thus generally expensive (from \$16.90/m³ near the river in the north-east of the urban area up to \$16.90 in the south-west). A major new water supply project was to be financed by the World Bank but, as the agency

²⁶This includes some 6000 units built after 1948 by the Administrative Committee of Indigenous Bairros Fund that later became the Board of Popular Housing in the colonial period.

Box 1. Luanda Sul Self-Financed Urban Infrastructure Program²⁷

In 1992 a proposal for a large scale formal urban expansion was commenced for the city, based on a master plan which proposed the concept of “three cities” – the centre, the *musseques*, and an expansion area of some 10,000 ha called Luanda Sul. This proposal was put forward by a Brazilian company and after lengthy negotiations, in late 1994, the Council of Ministers gave agreement for an innovative public-private partnership, called EDURB.²⁸

EDURB acts as an urban developer, but does not own the land, which remains in state control and is made available to the partnership at no cost by Provincial Government. The developed land is then returned to the Provincial Government for allocation at a price calculated as the cost of the installed infrastructure plus a social contribution (the price is paid to EDURB).²⁹ The land is allocated with “surface rights” which are transferable, renewable and can be mortgaged (at least in theory as no housing finance instruments are currently available in Angola). The land is to be disposed of either through cash sale with full infrastructure; payment over period with gradual infrastructure provision; or “social provision”. While some land has been provided at no charge in the last category for re-located families, no land has as yet been made available in the second category.

EDURB does not provide housing, but the land for housing development. The main initial clients were oil companies requiring staff accommodation who were attracted to the scheme as an alternative to the high rents in the city and informal sector provision of rented accommodation (e.g. sale of “keys”). However, after 5 years, oil companies are only a small proportion of the more than 100 clients, though most are still foreign companies.³⁰ Of the several thousand families resident in Luanda Sul by 2000, some 75% were upper income group and 22% were middle income group. An estimated 1500 lower income residents had land provided (and in some cases also housing) as compensation or re-location – one initial objective of the programme had been to relocate occupants of the area destined for the political-administrative centre of Luanda. Two main problems identified so far by the firm include the problems of protecting the project’s land reserves, as these have been invaded and allocated by others; and poor links with urban service providers, which have led to EDURB having to invest in this area.³¹ Future plans of the partnership include attracting new investors to re-dimension the original project, and increasing activities in other cities/provinces (especially Benguela). It also hopes to create an Agency for Sustainable Development to widen activities from housing to include infrastructure rehabilitation and development, as well as develop a housing savings scheme.

While a major achievement by any standards, and especially in war-torn Angola, the sustainability of the programme is questionable. The upper end of the residential land market is finite, and to what extent the programme can expand “downmarket” will be determined by the capacity to pay the up-front developed land costs, unless mortgage finance becomes available, thus permitting access for middle-income groups. In addition, the use of the public resource of land to benefit primarily higher income groups (although low-income groups have benefited from the programme with no cost recovery due from them, this has been exclusively in compensation for relocation) is probably not socially sustainable, as evidenced by the invasions. Despite this, in 2001 the programme received an International Award for Best Practices in Improving the Living Environment from the Municipality of Dubai (United Arab Emirates) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNCHS-Habitat), awarded for its contribution in urban renewal, sustainable community design and homelessness. The UNCHS Best Practice database asserts that the “model is easily transferred and applied to any other country in the world”.³²

has frozen its urban projects, its status is unknown at present.

By 1975 most of the formal *Cidade Cimento* had a mixed storm-

water/sewage system, discharging directly into the bay. However, currently this probably only serves some 10% of the population. A further 16%

use septic tanks. Some 56% use latrines and there has been international agency support through NGOs in the promotion of latrine and associated public

²⁷Information from EDURB (2001) and interview with project director, October 2001.

²⁸This entailed the creation of a public company EPRO-URBE (Empresa Provincial de Participacoes em Programas de Urbanizacoes) to partner with a newly formed private company (P.V. – Consultoria e Participacoes em Desenvolvimento Urbano Limitado, based on Prado Valladores Partic-

ipacoes, a private Brazilian architectural firm) and was full formulated as a legal entity by mid-1996. One of the principal proponents and initial financial supports for the joint venture was a Brazilian firm already active in Angola in various sectors, OSEL (Odebrecht Servicos no Exterior Lda), which has subsequently been EDURB’s main operator.

²⁹The final land price varies between \$50 and 68/m², including the “social land price” of \$2.5/m².

³⁰The total value of contracts signed by EDURB by the end of 2000 was over \$133 million, with most of this in land already developed (\$93 million). This includes four major developments: Sector Talatona with full services network (\$70 million); Sector Novos Bairros with limited water, elec-

health programmes.³³ However, an estimated 15% overall still use no sanitation system and the percentage is almost 70% in areas where newly displaced have settled, creating severe health risks. There are also severe problems of storm-water drainage, as mentioned previously, especially around the port to the north of the centre and on parts of the coastal plain to the south, where major erosion valleys have been opened up. The Provincial Government is planning, with European Union and Italian aid, to stabilise some of the most dangerous of these that threaten the road network.

The areas of standing water are a major malarial health risk, and also provoke water-borne diseases as well as risks from drowning. Flooding and landslides claim numbers of lives annually. Solid waste collection is only operated in the formal city area and thus perhaps benefits at most one-third of the population. The management of the city sanitation company has been privatised and seems to work more efficiently as a result. However, the collection points in the streets are major sources of pollution, as is the only official landfill site, which has no regulation and from which there is serious leaching into nearby watercourses that are upstream of a salt works. An estimated 900 unofficial rubbish tips exist – many in storm-water channels,

tricity, road and sewer networks; Morro Bento with a limited water network only (these two developments cost a total of \$6 million); and Projecto Morar with water, electricity and public lighting networks. This latter seems to have been the social component for re-located families.

³¹The company had to build its own water supply and treatment plant, two sewage treatment plants and upgrade the main road to the main new up-market area, Talatona.

³²EDURB indicated its intention to use the \$30,000 prize to develop a Centre for Studies and Training in Sustainable Development.

³³Development Workshop with assistance from the One World Action, the European Union, DFID and Swiss Development Cooperation have assisted local residents in constructing almost 10,000 household and school latrines in recent years.

³⁴It has been estimated that the approximately 45,000 tons of rubbish accumulated at the largest informal market, Roque Santeiro, would take the municipality a year to clear using ten trucks fulltime (Dar Al-Han-dasah, 1996).

further compounding problems. Only 5% of the population burns or buries its rubbish, and major pollution problems occur near the large informal markets (Box 2).³⁴

The unplanned growth of the city has meant that major road axes have not been developed, especially north-south primary routes, and there is a dominance of radial routes. In many areas of the central city there is no clear signage and priority at crossings, and in the peri-urban areas there are few collector roads. There have been few changes in the past 20 years to the road network, yet in the 1990s rising wealth of the rich and small middle class led to a 700% increase in the number of vehicles in 4 years. Individual car transport now dominates – and completely congests – the inner urban area and the limited number of traffic police have little effect. Travel times for even short trips are excessive and liable to risk. In the peri-urban areas the operational state bus fleet has remained at only 75 vehicles despite the expansion of the city and its population. Most travel in peri-urban areas is by “para-transit”, in private mini-buses with very limited regulation (as in most other African cities). These operate on short routes at flat fares, but the size of the city and the complexity of the road network lead to the need for multiple-leg journeys by most travellers. Thus overall transport costs are high, despite low fuel prices.

Urban Government

The city is governed by the Provincial Government of Luanda, and the city now covers most of the administrative area. The Provincial Governor and his Vice-Governors are, as in all the other 17 provinces, appointed directly by the President. The Governor in turn appoints sectoral directors responsible for the provision of services. The urban area is divided into nine Municipalities, and the Municipal Administrators are appointed by the Provincial Governor.

³⁵For more information, see Aegisson (2001).

³⁶The Sustainable Community Services Programme is supported by the British government's Department for International Development – DFID – as part of the Luanda Urban Poverty Programme.

The municipalities, which have little autonomy, vary enormously in population, from Samba and Viana with between 80 and 90,000 inhabitants to Cazenga with nearly 500,000 inhabitants (estimates from the 1995 Urban Plan). Each Municipality is further divided into between two and four Communes, in turn also with an appointed Administrator. It has been rumoured that the administrative divisions of Luanda may be altered, removing the Municipal level of administration except in the more rural parts of Luanda Province. Below the level of the Commune there is no official administration, but Communes are divided into *bairros* and sectors, each of which has a Residents' Committee. Although nominally chosen by residents, the Residents' Committees are often strongly influenced by the local Administrators and traditionally by the MPLA who set up this community level structure in the era of the one-party state.

The Provincial Government Report for 2000 focuses on the sheer scale of the challenge to urban government of a possible population of 4 million in the near future. It suggests, however, that there is a need for relocation of internal refugees (*deslocados*), and proposes that the Ministry of Planning – the main state resource allocation institution – should develop this through a system of incentives and support, although it recognises that state relocation of urban in-migrants has had little success elsewhere in the world. It stresses the need for an independent tax base for the urban area, for access to external credit for capital investment, for institutional capacity building for its staff, and for the development of a series of key urban regulations in (amongst others) management of land, common areas, and traffic. The proposed 2000 budget was 861 million Kwanzas (about \$120 million at the time but eroded by inflation to about \$50 million by the end of the year³⁷), and included some 166 million Kz of external investment from Brazil in the Luanda Southeast Water Programme

³⁷The Kwanza-US Dollar exchange rate was about US\$=7 Kz in March 2000 at the time of budgeting and had fallen to US\$=16 Kz by December of the same year.

Box 2. Development Workshop's Sustainable Community Services Programme³⁵

The Sustainable Community Services Programme³⁶ is developing a model of basic service provision in an area of the *musseques* of Luanda. It creates links between the users of these services, the local government and the providers of the services, so as to improve the maintenance and sustainability of the services and to help create space for participative politics by poor peri-urban residents.

The Development Workshop's experience from 20 years of work in the field, and from community consultations, is that poor peri-urban residents are interested in community participation in management of water and sanitation services. They are certainly very capable of participating, but want help in creating mechanisms to do so, and in working with the relevant state institutions. Thus SCSP uses practical activities that are of high interest to residents to create space for dialogue between residents, service providers and local government. It builds on Development Workshop's successful experiences in the last 10 years of assisting families in these areas to provide themselves with dry-pit latrines, and of organising groups of residents to form Water Committees that manage water points connected to the mains' water system, while tackling identified limitations (Fig. 3).

SCSP is working with Water Committees so that they are strong enough to maintain their autonomy and to negotiate effectively with local government bodies and the Water Company. A forum is being created that brings together the Water Company, an association of Water Committees from a given area and local government. The forum will attempt to create co-ordinated action between these stakeholders in maintaining water supply, continuing the promotion of family latrine building and developing a rubbish collection system. By creating the space for dialogue, it is hoped that the state service-providers will be forced to provide improved services in the *musseque* areas (at present largely un-served) and develop them in a way that is relevant to the needs of poor peri-urban residents.

and a further 313 million Kz of international assistance – mainly in food aid and infrastructure development at local level, including the Development Workshop programmes featured above.

Key issues in urban management

Urban governance and engagement of the broad population

There is a key issue of how the broader population engages in political life in general in Angola, and this is true also at local government level. However, here the developing role of Residents' Committees is of considerable importance, given the weak nature of local government. Resident's Committees are increasingly undertaking service provision and advocacy roles (e.g. for land rights) and the most important aspect of development work in this area is how to link this in with the state, with its greater access to resources, while retaining accountability (Jenkins, 2001).³⁸ The work of NGOs in urban community based services and livelihood projects and their partnerships

with residents organisations and CBOs contribute to the growth of grass-roots leadership. It can be anticipated that these new leaders will eventually become the spokespersons for their constituencies in future city and municipal councils.

Urban land, forced re-locations and citizens' rights

Urban land, having been nationalised, has no formal monetary value.³⁹ However, it has use and exchange value. This is beginning to be reflected in the emergence of an informal land market in Luanda, the extent of which is unknown.⁴⁰ A more obvious trend is the emergence of large-scale formal urban development projects and their tendency to forcibly re-locate existing urban residents. In some cases these are given adequate compensation in kind through new housing, or serviced land (as in the Luanda Sul Project), but in other situations this may not be the case – or the re-location is to an area which is far from any adequate socio-economic opportunities. An example is

the Boa Vista area on the escarpment above the port (Fig. 2): this area admittedly has severe environmental and public health problems, but the residents here are being re-located to tents on barren sites at Viana between 15 and 25 km away outside the city area. The Resident's Committee has been the vehicle for organisation of the resistance to this move, and support from groups within civil society and the media has highlighted its injustice. There is an urgent need for an overview of residential land issues which involves a broad range of stakeholders and a few NGOs have taken the lead in this area.⁴¹

The demographic trends and residential rights

The formal state position on urban growth is that it is unmanageable but that many of the current residents are temporary since they were forced to migrate from rural areas because of the war, and hence will return when there is peace. International experience shows that this is often not the case – unless there are real social and econ-

³⁸See also Jenkins *et al* (2002) for further development of this issue.

³⁹Although the legal basis for this is unclear.

⁴⁰It would appear that land has been commodified in the *musseques* right through the socialist period.

⁴¹The NGO Development Workshop has initiated work in this area – see Jenkins *et al* (2002) for further information.

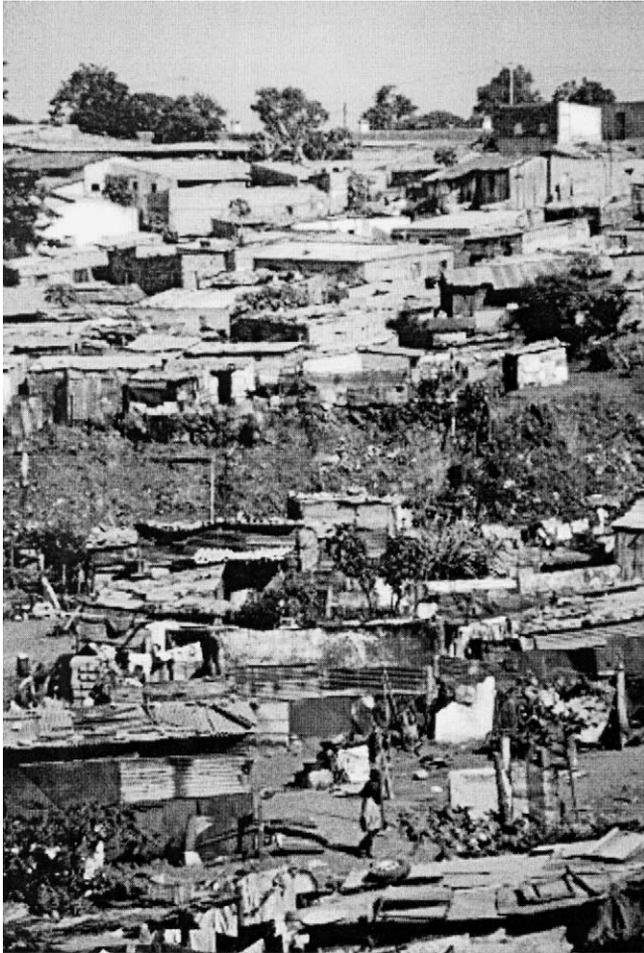


Figure 2 Musseque at Boa Vista

omic development opportunities in rural areas, or secondary urban areas. The majority of the current population, while bemoaning their losses and forced re-location, do not express any interest to return – partly because they have lost everything. Furthermore, the sheer number of the urban population who are in the early stages of their reproductive years will mean that the number of new urban residents will rise due to natural growth regardless of internal migration trends. Luanda's extremely rapid urban growth – with all its attendant problems – may be only just beginning, and there is a need to understand this and reflect this in official policy, and in issues such as citizen's rights.

Housing supply: vibrant informal market versus highly limited formal market

The major proportion of housing provision, as has been shown above, is

through the informal sector, and this is becoming more stratified as available land and basic resources for self-help construction of housing are in shorter supply. In fact there has been a long tradition of renting in the *musseques*, and the social and economic circumstances of many lead to this as a favoured option. There is thus a need for a realistic overview of housing provision and subsequent housing strategies and programmes which recognise the limitations of the state and formal private sector to provide for the majority, and the strengths (and limitations) of the informal sector. This should lead to realistic and sustainable forms of state support.

Sustainable infrastructure supply, including problems of bulk supply and urban transport

While local community inputs can be an important contribution in providing sustainable urban services, there are

limitations to what can be achieved at the local level. The current innovations in service supply at a community level need to be complemented by large-scale investment in bulk provision, such as mains water supply and treatment, final rubbish disposal sites and mains sewerage. This requires investment at a scale that even the state cannot afford, hence partnerships with private sector and international donors are necessary. However, it also requires realistic pricing policies and forms of cross-subsidy for basic provision to underpin issues of public health and safety, which are still lacking.

There has never been any overview of urban transport problems in Luanda, and this is reflected in the daily chaos on the roads, which in turn severely affects urban efficiency. There is thus a major challenge in terms of the urban transport system – networks and vehicles – which needs attention. This, however, requires a level of metropolitan planning – as with bulk services and environmental problems – that is not available to date. Hence there is a need to focus training programmes, including university training, on such pragmatic issues.

Financing urban development from a low fiscal base

Financing urban development in a situation such as Luanda, which has a low fiscal base, is a severe challenge. This is due partly to the poverty of the majority of the inhabitants (and to the weak taxation regime in general), but also to the weak economic basis for the urban area as a whole. While Luanda probably has more formal sector urban-based economic activities than other urban areas in Angola, these are weak and are undermined by the highly enclaved nature of the economy. Hence the economic basis of the city cannot on its own – or even significantly – be the basis for urban development. This has always been a problem: even in times of rapid economic growth, with high accumulation of wealth (by some) in urban areas, the capacity of the public sector to guide and control private urban development, formal and informal, was minimal. Hence strengthening the governance regime and institutional capacity for urban management is an



Figure 3 Community water supply

essential aspect of addressing this challenge.

Conclusion

Luanda faces many extreme challenges for urban development. However, activities developed at local level in civil society provide a lesson on “learning by doing”, and these need to be scaled up and used as a basis for better local forms of governance. Well-managed and democratic urban development is lacking, but is an essential requirement for economic growth and public service provision. Strategic partnerships between the state, private sector, and organisations in civil society at various levels are required. Some activities already developed in civil society, with international aid support, have a potential as pilots for such partnerships. Continued international support, by donors, NGOs and other institutions (such as research and training institutions), is essential to build on this

potential. Above all, urban development needs to be raised as a key issue on the national political front and realistic urban development policies, lacking at present, need to be developed.

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