

Peri-Urban Upgrading Programme in Sambizanga, Angola, Africa.

by

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War refugees constitute the main population of the newer *musseque* (unplanned settlements) in the peri-urban areas of Luanda, such as the Comuna Ngola Kiluanje, located in the Municipality of Sambizanga. By the end of 1994, the estimated population of Ngola Kiluanje was 125,000, with an increase rate of 8% per year. The project area shares some of the characteristics of the old *musseques*, but lacks most of the basic services. Before independence, the area was an industrial zone with a low population density. When the project began, the only water collection points in the *comuna* were three broken water pipes which flowed intermittently. Access by road was and is very difficult during the rainy season. The situation in other *musseques* of Luanda is also very critical. In 1976 in Luanda a network of 600 standpipes served peri-urban populations of about 250,000 people. End 1994 there were fewer than 50 functioning standposts for a population of over 2,000,000. A city-wide survey (1995) by Development Workshop, a Canadian NGO, revealed that residents in the city proper have piped water at less than US\$ 0.002 per cubic metre, while residents in the *musseques* are forced to pay up to US\$ 17.00 per cubic meter for untreated water trucked in from the River Bengo, 20 kilometres away. Also, 30% of all Luanda water is sold to vendors who sell it to residents by the bucket. An earlier survey revealed that 69% of the population had no secondary source of household water. In 88% of cases the woman fetches the water and in 5.7% children fetch water. Sanitation services, solid waste removal, excreta and waste water and sewage removal are non-existent in the *musseques*, where large heaps of rubbish have accumulated in numerous informal dump sites. Raw sewage from overflowing septic tanks and flooded latrines pose life threatening environmental problems.

More than 20 percent of Luanda's population is estimated to have arrived in the last three years. Living conditions have deteriorated and employment opportunities are few. Salaries have not kept pace with inflation which in 1994 was 750 percent. Consumer prices are rising by more than 1,000 percent per year. In August 1994, a nurse earned a monthly salary of less than US\$ 5.00, while one litre of cooking oil cost the equivalent of one dollar and one kilo

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of sugar more than five. In Ngola Kiluanje, employment is low and mostly in the informal sector. The few with regularly jobs are mainly non-skilled manual labourers.

When Angola became independent in 1975, formal ownership and control of all privately owned land were transferred to the State, although the use and control of property generally remained with those who occupied it. Governmental decrees were used to confiscate abandoned properties, but regulations to control these acquisitions have not been put in place. Forms of informal occupation are largely accepted and unregistered buying and selling of property is common. In the early nineties private ownership of land and other forms of property was readopted as a government policy, but a system of land registration and valuation has yet to be put in place.

The aim of the Sambizanga Community Upgrading Project is to develop a community-based model for upgrading water, environmental sanitation and public health services in the peri-urban areas of Sambizanga. Specific objectives are to improve access to basic services of water supply, sanitation and primary health care and to mobilise the community to actively participate in the improvement of environmental and public health conditions. The project strategy emphasizes work with members of the community, CBOs, NGOs and local and national government authorities. The project employs two main strategies: community mobilization and physical upgrading. Training is an inherent component of both strategies. No specific monitoring is being carried out.

The project components and the activities undertaken are:

- water supply, treatment and storage: rehabilitation of distribution lines, construction of new standpipes, extension of service areas; training of a team to construct, maintain and repair standpipes; development of a system for monitoring, reporting, and rectifying operation and maintenance problems; training of water mobilizers to work with the community in planning and implementing the standpipe management system; development of a system to collect user fees and manage the standpipes use; organization of the community to manage standpipes; training of community groups and NGOs to implement water treatment programmes; teaching of households on proper treatment and storage of drinking water; distribution of locally produced prototype improved water storage containers to 1000 households.

- basic sanitation: establishment of a prototype latrine production workshop in Development Workshop's main training facility; establishment of a production unit in the community itself; production and distribution of kits to construct improved latrines to individual households and local organisations operating public latrines (e.g. in schools, markets, health centres); training of builders in improved latrine construction; training of 'activistas' on the promotion of improved pit latrines; promotion of the use of latrine kits for constructing improved latrines; kits; development of a maintenance system for public latrines.
- solid waste management: reduction of rubbish accumulations; improvement of drainage and road access; conduct of clean up campaigns.

- community health: training of 'activistas' in preventive health care; house-to-house visits for health education and health promotion; in-service training for health centre staff; management improvements in health centres;

- community development: organisation of the community to be involved in planning, implementation and maintenance of upgrading initiatives; institutional support to emerging CBOs and NGOs working in the area; resource support for small-scale development initiatives

identified and implemented by community groups; training programmes for women entrepreneurs.

•project management and capacity building: in-service training; short-term training programmes (in-country and overseas); local scholarships for project workers. Other activities-related capacity building at various levels involve training of a team to construct, maintain and repair standpipes; training of water mobilizers to work with the community in planning and implementing the standpipe management system; organization of community to manage standpipes; training community groups and NGOs to implement water treatment programmes; teaching households on proper treatment and storage of drinking water; establishment of a production unit for pit latrines in the community itself; training of builders in improved latrine construction; training of activists on the promotion of improved pit latrines and of its use; conducting clean up campaigns; training of activists in preventive health care; house to house visits for health prevention and health education; in-service training for health centre staff; organization of the community to be involved in planning, implementing and maintaining upgrading initiatives; institutional support to emerging CBOs and NGOs working in the area; resource support for small scale development initiatives identified and implemented by community groups; training programmes for women entrepreneurs.

Attempts to recover costs for water and sanitation are being made. A system for community management of the water supply standpipes, the first in Luanda, is being tested. Tap monitoring agents appointed by the community act as standpipe caretakers and collect user fees. Standpipe users have an identification card. A flat water tariff (US\$0.25 per month) is collected, and serves to pay the standposts operation and maintenance costs and a small salary for the agent. The monthly tariff is equivalent to the price of two buckets (40 litres) of water purchased from local water vendors. Regarding sanitation, as a project subsidy, each family who participates in the programme gets one latrine slab, 100 building blocks and two sacs of cement. In return, the family is required to supply or pay for the labour of pit digging for the latrine, pay a mason to do the blockwork and make the cabin (superstructure).

The Sambizanga Project is implemented by the NGO Development Workshop together with CBOs, national NGOs, church organizations, local government and the provincial health office, water company and solid waste company. Although community organizations are not very strong, residents have sometimes spontaneously organised themselves and have worked together with the government in an attempt to solve specific problems. The activists initially provide the main link between the project and the community.

The multifaceted character of the project is one of the most important aspects for its sustainability. The combination of physical rehabilitation (of water treatment and supply, sanitation and waste management) with community mobilization and training, primary health care and capacity building for local management opens the way for sustainable and durable changes. Also important for sustainability is the training of 'activistas' who are the main link between residents and government and the involvement of CBOs and the local government companies (the provincial water company EPAL, the provincial solid waste company ELISAL and the provincial health office). Their presence contributes to the consolidation of the partnership government-community which might lead to lasting changes, although it is too early to conclude what the lasting impact will be. As capacity improves, project partners assume each time more responsibilities. CBOs and NGOs have requested training to replicate,

for instance, water treatment programmes in their respective areas and already in seven locations outside the project's the treatment programme is operational.
