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HABITAT II

edited by Vivian

NATIONAL HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
FOR ANGOLA

REPORT AND PLAN OF ACTION

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by
Development Workshop
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the current housing situation in Angola and assesses future trends. This assessment comes at critical point in Angola's history.

Angola's 30-year history of civil unrest began with its struggle for independence from Portugal in the early 1960s. Most recently the focus of the struggle has been the post-electoral crisis of 1992. There are a number of groups involved in a range of conflicts, but the most intense adversaries have been the Government of Angola and the rebel group UNITA (Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola).

The long period of civil war has caused severe economic and social disruption. Throughout Angola's 18 provinces, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their homes and been forced to abandon their towns and village. In the course of their flight, many have died. In 1995, officials estimated the number of internally displaced Angolans at 1.2 million.

The war has destroyed roads, bridges and social infrastructure. Equipment, medicine and tools have been looted or stolen. Local government administration has collapsed in many provinces and the entire country has suffered a dramatic deterioration in basic social services.

The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) estimates that almost half a million Angolans died between 1992 and 1994 alone and that almost 3.3 million Angolans are directly affected by the conflict. This is in a country with a population of 11.6 million.

The Lusaka Peace Protocol between the Government of Angola and UNITA marked a turning point in the country's history. With the signing of the Protocol in November 1994, the civil war effectively ended. Angolans began to look forward to returning to their homes and rebuilding their lives. The improved prospects for peace also provided an opportunity to address the issues of housing and socio-economic development of the country.

The existence of a viable peace, however, will not by itself provide the necessary solutions to the country's very serious economic or political problems. In fact, the peace will allow many of the problems which have accumulated under the surface to emerge with renewed force.

The economic stagnation of the last several years of war has been reflected in a paralysis of almost all housing construction, in the formal as well as informal sector. The end of war and return of the displaced to their home districts will result in a rising demand for housing. As confidence returns and the economy begins to recover, this demand may results in a housing construction "boom" in the years to come.

In the absence of any clear national policies on housing and urban settlement, many projects are presently being undertaken in a haphazard manner and not necessarily providing the housing and development solutions that Angola needs. It is therefore extremely important, therefore, to analyze the state of Angola's; housing and settlement, both urban and rural. The housing and settlement policies that would be developed from this information would provide a framework within which housing construction and urban growth can be positively facilitated.

1.1 Country Profile

The People's Republic of Angola is the third largest country south of the Sahara and the largest Portuguese-speaking country in Africa. The Portuguese first explored Angola in the late 15th century and, except for a brief occupation by the Dutch (1641-48), it has always been under Portugal's control.

Angola's population is predominantly black African and most of the people speak a Bantu language as well as Portuguese. The Mbundu are the largest ethnic group. The number of Europeans has greatly increased since 1951, when immigration was officially encouraged. Most of the Europeans live in urban areas.

The modern development of Angola began only after World War II. In 1951 the colony was designated an overseas province and Portugal began an ambitious program of industrial and hydroelectric development.

Although the Portuguese professed the aim of a multiracial society, many Africans still suffered repression. In 1961, the first of a series of uprisings by native Angolans was defeated. It was from these seeds that the 30-year civil conflict began.

1.2 Geography

Angola has an area of 1,246,700 km². It is located in the southwest of Africa and lies between 4 degrees and 18 degrees of latitude south and 11 degrees and 24 degrees of longitude east (see map).

Luanda is the capital city. Other important cities are Nova Lisboa, Lobita, Benguela and Mossamedes.

The Bié Plateau, which forms the central region of the country, has an average altitude of 6,000 feet (1,830 m). The plateau rises abruptly from the coastal lowland and slopes gently eastward toward the Congo and Zambesi basins. It forms one of Africa's major watersheds and its uneven topography has resulted in the formation of numerous rapids and waterfalls, which are used for the production of hydroelectric power.

Rainfall in Angola is generally low and nearly all the land is desert or savanna. The north-east, however, has densely forested valleys that yield hardwoods. Palm trees are cultivated along a narrow coastal strip where precipitation is heavy.

The average annual rainfall ranges from more than 1,600mm in the north-east (Luanda) and less than 50mm in the coastal area of the south-east (Namibe). The hot rainy season lasts from November to April and the cold and dry season from May to October.

Angola shares its borders with the People's Republic of the Congo and Zaire to the north, Zaire and Zambia to the east, Namibia to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Administratively it is divided into 18 provinces, 163 municipalities and 532 communes.

1.3 Environment

The present environmental situation in Angola is very much the legacy of its recent turbulent history. In terms of its sustainable development potential, the country's natural resource base is, on the whole, in good condition. The forced abandonment of large parts of the countryside during 30 years of war has allowed natural resources to regenerate.

Data on natural resources is unreliable, as most of it was collected in the early 1970s. Recent reports, with a few notable exceptions, have not actually collected any new information but instead presented projections made before 30 years of warfare and massive population movement altered the natural landscape. But even without the data to support it, one can hardly imagine more difficult starting conditions for a country that wishes to embark on a program of sustainable development.

1. World Conservation Union (IUCN): Angola, Environmental Status Quo Assessment Report, Harare, 1992.

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1.4 Background Data

Indicators	Value
I Demographic Indicators	
Size/Age structure/Growth	
1. Population total, 1995	11.6 million
2. Gender ratio (w/m)	1.06
3. 0 - 14 years (%) 1990	45.0
4. 60+ years (%) 1990	3.0

5. Annual growth rate (total/urban) 1993	3.0/5.3
6. Total fertility rate 1993	6.6
7. War affected population (January 1995)	3.3 million
8. Displaced population	1.2 million

II Health Status Indicators

9. Access to safe water % (1991)	41%
10. Access to sanitation %	19%
11. Access to primary health care %	30%
12. Infant mortality rate (1994)	195/1000 births
13. Under- five mortality rate (1994)	320/1000 births
14. Maternal mortality rate (1993/94)	1,500/100,000
15. Low weight at birth rate (<2500g) 1993	17.8%

III Socio-economic Status

16. Unemployment rate in Luanda (1993)	
Total	24.4%
Among women	32.0%
17. Inflation rate:	
Luanda, Jan.1995-Aug.1995	544%
Luanda, Aug.1994-Aug.1995	2,040%
18. GDP per capita (1993)	US\$ 611
19. Real growth (1994)	6% (d)
20. Total external debt (1994)	US\$11.3bn
of which arrears	US\$7.3bn
21. Debt service ratio (1991)	Nat.Bk World Bk
22. Obligation	52%
23. Actual (excl. private, non-guaranteed and interest on short-term debt)	12%(est.)5.8%(est.)

IV Education, Luanda

24. School enrolment rate (1992)	42.0%
25. Illiteracy (1992/93)	
Women	29.3%
Men	9.3%
26. Completed 8th grade 1992/93:	
Women	19.0%
Men	26.0%

Sources :

- Government of Angola: National Institute of Statistics (INE)
1. Boletim Demografico, No. 9 Ministry of Educ.2
 3. Gabinete de Estudos, Planos e Projectos (UNDP: 3),
 4. Development Cooperation; Angola, 1990 Report The Economist Intelligence Unit
 2. Country Profile, 1994-1995 UCAH: 7,8. Inter Agency Appeal for Angola, January 1995.
- UNICEF: 9,10,11,15. State of the World's children Report, 1995.
 5,6. State of the World's Children Report, 1993.
 12,13,14,16-23. Angola : Economic Indicators Data Sheet
 ,1995.
- Aguilar Renator & Asa Stenman: 24,25. Angola 1995," Let's Try Again," Gothenburg University, Sweden, 1995.

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2.0 NATIONAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR HABITAT II

a) National Commission on Habitat II

According to article 1140, No. 3 of the constitutional law of the Republic of Angola, dated 29 June 1995, the Government of the Republic created a National Commission on Human Settlement in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement (Habitat II) to be held in Istanbul in June 1996.

The commission has a multisectoral as well as multi-discipline representation, involving different levels of government institutions, departments and non-governmental organizations under the coordination of the Secretariat of State for Housing (SEH).

Thus, the National Commission on Housing is composed of the following:
- Secretariat of State for Housing
Coordinator - Ministry of External Affairs
Member - Ministry of Territorial Administration
Member - Ministry of Social Reintegration
Member - Ministry of Plan (National Institute of Physical Planning and Institute of Statistics)
Member - Secretariat of State for Women's Promotion and Development
Member - Angolan Youth Association for Housing
Member - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Adviser - Development Workshop (DW)
Adviser

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b) Objectives of the Committee

The National Commission for the Habitat II Conference is charged with the following tasks:

- i) to identify problems related to human settlement in all regions in the National Territory;
- ii) to mobilise forces within Angolan civil society with the aim of enlarging their contributions to solving the problems of human settlement;
- iii) to promote conferences, workshops and other forms of discussion and dialogue to determine the optimum methods of involving the public and the private sector on issues related to human settlement;
- iv) to discuss and evaluate the issues of human settlement and housing; and
- v) to formulate a plan of action and produce a national report.

Secretariat of State Coordinator
Ministry of Ex Member

2.1 Relevance of National Housing Development and Policy Review

a) Objectives of National Housing and Policy Review

General Objectives:

- To prepare a statement of housing policy, identify its main challenges and address the concerns of urbanization in Angola;
- To identify constraints to human settlements development at local and national level, and
- To develop a vision of sustainable human settlements and adequate shelter for all.

Specific Objectives:

- To evaluate the needs and resources available for housing in Angola;
- To assess the institutional framework necessary for development of a housing policy;
- To develop a program of action necessary for a meaningful improvement in adequate shelter for all Angolans.

b) Justification for a National Housing and Urban Development Policy Review

Housing and urban growth in Angola has been largely un-controlled during the years since independence. The migration to urban areas has been fuelled by all the same factors influencing other countries in the region - loss of economic base, successive crop failures, threat of violence - but the rate of migration is one of the highest in Africa due to the length of the conflict.

The war has devastated the physical infrastructures and weakened the institutional capabilities of many urban centres. The war has also prompted substantial population movements, which in turn have led to uncontrolled growth of squatter settlements in areas surrounding these urban centres.

It is estimated that between 60% to 70% of Angola's population is now living in urban centres. The vast majority of these people live in spontaneous peri-urban neighbourhoods, known in Angola as "musseques."

1. UNCHS-Habitat Contribution to the Round Table Project (ANG/94/001): Community Rehabilitation Programme, Angola, Preliminary Mission Report - Piet Goovaerts, Ir.Arch - Castors Consultants/Belgium, March 1995, p.(i).

The experience of other countries with a similar history to Angola's indicates that while the end of war will permit recent migrants to return to their villages, many who have already settled in urban areas for several years may not return to their places of origin. The end of the war and the opening of free road access to the cities may, in fact, lead to new urban migration. Major

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investments are urgently needed to rebuild settlements in rural and provincial areas to help stem this tide. Parallel investments in infrastructure are also necessary.

c] Justifications for Focusing on the Housing Sector

. Conscious of the fact that the housing problem in Angola is posed by the large number of homeless and of those living in extremely poor shelter and unhealthy neighbourhoods, whether in urban slum and squatter areas or in poor rural areas,

. Deeply concerned about the present alarming situation in which, over the years, the number of homeless and of those who lack decent shelter and services has continued to increase,

. Recognizing that adequate and secure shelter is a basic human right and is vital for the fulfilment of human aspirations,

. Aware that a housing programme for the poor can only operate in the context of a national policy aimed at the delivery of the adequate housing for all income groups, which can only be successful if framed within a comprehensive strategy that lists priorities and identifies affordable approaches and challenges,

. Understanding that the Angolan government has identified housing as a sector of concern as exemplified by the modifications of administrative structures responsible for housing and human settlement that led to the creation of an independence state secretariat for housing (SEH) in 1986, and

. Aware that many of the actions being taken now concerning Housing and Urban Settlement will have socio-economic repercussions throughout the decade,

We believe, therefore this is an important moment in the history of Angola to analyze the condition of the country's housing and urban development policy, as its longstanding civil war comes to an end. It is hoped that this assessment and report will help to identify the urgent need to integrate housing and urban upgrading issues into the national development and rehabilitation programme.

d] General Policy Framework

In a major shift from its previous strong interventionist policy, the government's current privatization policy aims at liberalizing the housing market, upgrading buildings and accumulating resources in a fund aimed at promoting housing construction.

The Government is aware of the importance of urban and housing performance in achieving its development objectives. Their commitment is expressed in Law No.2/86 of 1986, creating the State Secretariat of Housing with a mandate to give a precise and

detailed method for evaluating urban and housing performance as an important input to social progress and economic growth.

e) Institutional Framework

State Secretariat for Housing:

Responsible for policy, public housing programmes and planning, as well as control and co-ordination of housing construction in the country.

Provincial Governments:

Function as a metropolitan authority. Responsible for community services like markets, gardens, cemeteries, cleaning and refuse collection, hygiene and sanitation facilities.

National Institute of Territorial Orientation (INOT):

Responsible for land use policy, urban and town planning.

f) Related Policies Measures

i) Health Policy

The present National Health System, established by law No 21- B/92 on 11 April 1992, has the following guiding principles:

- That it is the responsibility of the state to promote and guarantee the access to health care of every citizen, within the limit of the available technical, financial and human resources.

- The promotion and the protection of public health are effected through the activity of the state and other public or private agents, as well as the civil society.

- Health care is provided through the services and establishment of the state or, on its supervision, by other public agents or private entity, with or without profitable proposal.

- That health care is a right of every citizen and must be provided by the state as stipulated by this law, the effectiveness of which depends the joint effort of both the individuals and the state.

- That health services should have an integrated character, but priority given to preventative health services.

ii) Water Supply Policy

As with other key service sectors, Angola has lacked a coherent policy on water supply, maintenance and development. Water regulations inherited from the colonial government, as well as pricing structure, have generally been left intact. The current official price of water piped to households in Luanda is kzs 3 per cubic meter (USD 1.00 = 10,000M3).1

In urban areas officially registered as users pay for the volume of water used on a metered basis. In Luanda only the older residential, industrial and business areas are served by the water network. Some of the informal residential areas, the musseques, are served by standpipes or communal water fountains. However, many of the musseques are not even served by standpipes: they have no access to piped water at all.

It has been government policy not to introduce payment system for water obtained from public standpipes. Few standpipes have been built since independence and there has been only limited extension of the colonial grid. Most of the standpipes that existed at the time of independence are no longer in working order.

1. Dr. Felix Neto, Director de DNA, Luanda, 1996.

With no cost recovery built into the billing system, there is little incentive for the water company to invest in maintenance or new standpipes. Residents in unserved areas have no choice but to buy water, which is often untreated and of questionable quality, from commercial tanker trucks at extremely high prices.

The National Directorate of Water (DNA) prepared draft legislation in 1995 to regulate the water sector and introduce a system of cost recovery. The proposed policy is awaiting ratification. The DNA also hopes that international financing will be available for engineering and feasibility studies, as well as institutional support. The World Bank's stated objectives are to ensure that services should be provided on the basis of "equity criteria, cost recovery and consumer participation."

iii) Sanitation Policy

Urban sanitation breaks down into three interrelated problems; solid waste removal, disposal and drainage of sewage and waste water. There is no clearly enforced policy on sanitation in Angola but there is a growing consensus that the problem has reached a critical dimension, especially in urban areas where it is threatening the health of the whole population. Responsibility for sanitation policy has not clearly been assigned to any ministry or national institution.

The infrastructure for managing excreta and waste water disposal has been inherited from the colonial period. Most of the older residential areas have septic tanks and municipal legislation within Luanda requires the installation of a septic tank with any new construction.

The city's small fleet of pump trucks is incapable of regularly cleaning all these tanks. New policy currently under consideration, therefore, envisions water-borne systems of excreta disposal. A few zones of the city already have piped sewage disposal systems for carrying away septic tank effluent, but most septic tanks flow directly into the stormwater drains, whether they are piped or open

ditchers. The existing sewage network discharges both untreated black and grey water directly into Luanda bay. Serious concerns about this practice have been expressed by the fishing and recreational sectors.

While local by-laws require septic tanks and water-borne sewage disposal, there is not enough water in most parts of the city. Nor is there a working drainage system to carry away liquified waste. Since 1989, the Department of Public Health has adopted a policy in the sub-urban parts of Luanda of promoting the use of dry pit latrines which do not require water. The Provincial Government has effectively set aside the by-laws provisions for "musseque" areas by giving limited material support to the latrine programme. The main support for the improved latrine programme has come from Development Workshop, an NGO working with local community-based organizations.

The government is presently seeking major overseas investments to extend Luanda's formal sewage system and build its first treatment plant. Priority is to be given to the "Baixa," the central urbanized zone of the city. Extension of the sewage system will not be possible for some years until plans to improve water distribution throughout the whole city are implemented. The promotion of dry or low water consumption sanitation systems, such as improved latrines, remain the only feasible cost effective option for the intervening period.

2.2 Evaluation of Housing Policy and Supply in Angola

a) Housing Situation in Angola, and Luanda in Particular

In the colonial period, the State subsidized housing for Portuguese settlers and civil servants. After Independence, the State became the only official investor, assuming control of properties, often uncompleted constructions abandoned by Portuguese who had left Angola.

Apart from the nationalization of abandoned housing stock, the State only intervene in a few specific construction initiatives in certain urban areas. The vast majority of the people spontaneously resolved their housing problems without State support or control. This, together with rapid growth of urban immigration due to security problems in the countryside, resulted in the proliferation of unplanned and unserviced residential areas in and around the old urban centres.

Post-Independence housing policy set by the MPLA Party Congress noted that the utilization of abandoned housing to resolve housing problems was only a temporary solution. The Congress recognized that the root of the problem was urban influx, Luanda having already doubled in size without increase in infrastructure. Reasons cited for the continuing degradation of the housing situation are:

inability to build new houses; the poor management of the existing stock; and destruction by the war.

Between 1980 and 1983, an inventory of state-controlled housing found 127,568 units nation-wide. There is some doubt about the accuracy of this information. Current data on housing construction projects is not available.

Estimates are that Luanda grew from between 400,000 to 500,000 inhabitants in 1975 to more than 2,500,000 in 1995, without any appreciable increase in social services and infrastructure. In fact due to poor maintenance the network of infrastructure inherited at Independence has deteriorated significantly.

1. UNDP/UNCHS-Habitat: Housing Situation of Angola and Luanda in Particular; Workshop on National Shelter Strategies, Luanda-Angola, March 1990.

b) Housing Needs and Demand

Although there are no reliable statistics on housing trends, a joint UNDP/UNCHS/Habitat study in 1992 estimated that about 50% of the total population needed adequate shelter and that the total national housing need was for about 1,000,000 housing units. Out of this, about 370,000 housing units would be required to cater for the total urban population, the majority of which lived in the capital city of Luanda.

The 1992 post-election conflict rendered the above estimates meaningless, as much of the rural and provincial housing infrastructure was destroyed during this period.

The poor urban housing conditions in Angola in general and in Luanda, in particular attributed to the following main factors by the 1990 UNDP/UNCHS mission:

1. Galil-Lewin et al; op. cit.

- The absence of adequately defined national housing policies and shelter strategies to enable the effective participation of the public, private and community sectors in a housing production programme;

- The limited operational capacity of the relevant national, provincial, municipal and local housing institutions to plan, programme, implement, manage and maintain housing development projects (partly caused by the departure of Portuguese managerial and technical manpower just before Independence and the rapidly growing urban populations, among other reasons);

- The loss of significant local financial autonomy of the relevant housing institutions, including the loss of local revenues from land rates taxes due to nationalization of land after Independence,

and limited budgetary allocations for housing development and maintenance. (Revenue from housing development and maintenance revenue from existing state-owned housing is not reinvested);

- The control over land development, distribution, management and surveyed land for housing development projects;

- The increasing dependence on foreign building materials, components, technologies and construction techniques due to the unavailability of the local building materials and the adoption of expensive, pre-fabricated, high-rise housing construction (an inappropriate approach developed with technical assistance from Cuba after Independence);

- The lack of participation by the community and private sectors in formal public housing programmes for low and middle income households in the urban areas, especially in the upgrading of existing musseques and development of the necessary data, information and skilled manpower for integrated human settlements development.

c) Government Housing and Urban Development Policy

The departure of the Portuguese, as well as a substantial number of the professional and managerial elite in 1975, briefly alleviated the severe housing shortage. It has been estimated that some 127.500 dwelling units were abandoned by their owners and tenants. These houses and apartments were nationalized by the Angolan State and distributed to Angolan citizens.

Due to political destabilization and a shortage of professionals and constructions workers, as well as equipment and essential inputs, construction and housing remained paralysed until 1977.

The government's housing policy was limited to construction undertaken with the support of Cuba and other countries. It is estimated that during the period 1977-1989 only some 3,500 dwelling units were constructed.

Official policy also called for the support of self-help construction through the allocation of serviced plots and sale of building materials to low-income households in need of housing. In practice, however, this strategy did not materialize because of the scarcity of building materials, limited production capacity, high costs of imports, inefficient management, the shortage of qualified professionals to implement and monitor this strategy and excessive centralization. As a result only few programmes were successfully carried out.

Despite some interest and initiatives to improve land and housing supply and to commence with squatter upgrading in partnership with an NGO, government policies prior to 1990 favoured construction of

multi-storey buildings, clearing and relocation of squatter settlements and the repatriation of rural migrants.