SHELTER POLICIES AND STRATEGIES FOR

HOUSING AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

IN THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

- THE FIRST DECADE -

Otto Greger

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SHelter Policies and Strategies for Housing and Human Settlements in the P.R. of Angola - The First Decade

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Starting Point

November 11, 1975 (1). With a land area of 1,247,000 square kilometers and now 8.2 million inhabitants, Angola is more than five times larger and at the same time seven and a half times smaller than the Federal Republic of Germany and stands at the beginning of a new chapter of her history.

Almost 500 years of Portuguese colonialism, more than 14 years of armed liberation war of MPLA (2), violent conditions amounting to civil war with the rival groups FNLA (2) and UNITA (2), and finally the bloody so-called 2nd liberation war against these groups and the South African invasion soldiers took their toll of this young People's Republic.

Nation-wide destruction, demolition and removal of transportation, industrial equipment and agricultural machinery, electrical installations, health and other facilities from public buildings and private houses by their former owners, as well as blasting of airports, bridges and railway lines, and the sinking of loading and unloading facilities in the ports by the colonial army during its dispersion and the advance of South African troops (3); all this was followed by a brain drain almost unrivalled in history. More than 400,000 Portuguese, previously in leading and key positions in Angola, as well as 60,000 Angolan specialists left a country marked by:

- an adult illiteracy rate of over 90%,
- a mortality rate of 30% of one-year old babies,
- almost 1 million people suffering from malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy,
- an extreme structural heterogeneity in terms of economic geography (i.e. population distribution, transport development, availability of resources, dominating production methods and structures),
- a pronounced divergence between urban and rural sectors with practical stagnation of the exchange of goods,
- a collapsing infrastructure with consequent breakdown of distribution and marketing systems, increasing gravity of the food supply situation, and slump of productivity in conjunction with blooming speculation and black market,
- attempts to exert pressure as well as open and covert political influence on the part of Anglo-American, French-Belgian and South African capital, as a consequence of the wide-reaching economic intertwining of the country with the world market which Portugal had pursued after the beginning of the armed liberation struggle in 1961 in order to defend her colony,
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<tr>
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<th>P.R. ANGOLA</th>
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<tr>
<td>Background Data</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TOTAL LAND AREA</td>
<td>1.25 M&lt;sup&gt;(1)&lt;/sup&gt; sq. kms</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>AGRICULTURAL LAND</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>POPULATION</td>
<td>8.2 M</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>POPULATION DENSITY</td>
<td>6.5 p / sq. km</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>POPULATION 15 - 64</td>
<td>53 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY MEMBERS</td>
<td>31 T&lt;sup&gt;(2)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ARMED FORCES</td>
<td>60 T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT</td>
<td>3.6 TM US-$</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>GNP PER CAPITA</td>
<td>440 US-$</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>CENTRAL STATE BUDGET</td>
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<tr>
<td>12a</td>
<td>GNP IN AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>48 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b</td>
<td>LABOUR FORCE IN AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>60 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>13a</td>
<td>GNP IN INDUSTRY</td>
<td>23 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>13b</td>
<td>LABOUR FORCE IN INDUSTRY</td>
<td>16 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14a</td>
<td>GNP IN TERTIARY SECTOR</td>
<td>29 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>14b</td>
<td>LABOUR FORCE IN TERTIARY SECTOR</td>
<td>24 %</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>POPULATION GROWTH RATE</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>GNP PER CAPITA GROWTH RATE</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>EXPORTS / GNP</td>
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</tr>
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<td>18</td>
<td>URBANISATION RATE</td>
<td>22 %</td>
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<sup>(1)</sup> M = Million  
<sup>(2)</sup> T = Thousand
enormous numbers of refugees and migration movements to
the cities, especially to "safe" Luanda, caused by mili-
tary invasion in the South and North,
continuing economic sabotage on the part of "old" and new
privileged groups in the public administration, as well as
escalating outflow of foreign exchange from the private
sector of the economy.

Such starting conditions hindering the social transfor-
mation process were consequently the basis for the MPLA gov-
ernment's

IMMEDIATE ACTION

In addition to material and political incentives to mobi-
stripe the population within the framework of mass organisa-
tions and basic institutions of the "poder popular" (peo-
ple's power), a careful strategy of nationalisation of key
industries is introduced, such as mining and medium to
large-scale firms of the processing sector, banks, trade,
transport and large-scale landholding. Firstly, public
planning aims at the coexistence of public and cooperative
sectors as well as semipublic and private corporations (4).

One measure to improve the desolate situation in the rural
sector is expropriation of plantations the largest of which
are run by the government (among them the world's largest
coffee plantation). Within the framework of the collecti-
visation of agriculture and the building up of cooperatives,
farmers are not forced into the cooperative movement (which
is regarded as counter-productive). It has rather been
attempted to convince them on a long-term basis of the
benefits of collective agricultural production. Land is
distributed among the landless, light industry has been
begun to be restructured to meet the demands of farming
according to the MPLA's slogan "Agriculture is the basis
of economic development, industry is the deciding factor".

This package is meant to remove internal economic imbalance
by regional planning. The development of rural areas - in
1979, 58.3% of Angolan workers were still employed in the
agricultural sector, and 80% of the entire population de-
pended on it - is to help achieve a more even distribution
of production capacities throughout the territory. This,
however, has remained a largely political aspiration:

Massive, continued logistical as well as financial support
by South Africa, Zaire, the Federal Republic of Germany
and the US for UNITA's partisans, in conjunction with an
escalating destructive war with a trend towards permanent
occupation of Angola's border areas with Namibia by South
African troops, block not only the intended balanced overall
development. They also virtually deepen regional disparities
stemming from colonial times, in that public investment
focuses on politically and strategically consolidated areas.
Continued, undiminishing population migration causes a
management and skilled workforce, this sector was also faced with an acute shortage of qualified building workers, as well as a general shortage of raw and building materials, building machines, tools and means of transport. Nationalisation of all private civil engineering and building companies (10) which was vital under these conditions was followed by first measures for its complete restructuring and reorganisation within the public sector. This sector now assumed, besides its (traditional) control function, an increasing range of planning functions, above all the crucial task of implementation which had been completely left to the private sector before independence. In the face of the available, strongly planning-oriented specialised workforce structure, this must be mainly confined to a declaration of intent. This is shown (despite the insufficient degree of availability of reliable planning data, as well as the lack of binding administrative, legal, and procedural basics) by the relative "surplus production" in the planning area without the consequent project realisation at this stage - so to speak "bottom-drawer planning" while a constant flow of migrants spills over the fringes of the cities, especially Luanda, as a result of the continuing unstable military/political situation in large areas of the country with all fatal consequences - interrupted transport and communications, shortages, starvation etc.

Consequences are a slow substitution of functionaries excessively in charge of planning and planning-related work through implementation-oriented cadres on all ministerial levels, as well as the founding of public and semipublic civil engineering and supplier companies, and also an impetus for stimulating local production of construction materials (i.e. cement). On the other hand, "... the need for immediate action to improve the living quality of the population calls for the adoption of methods which have recourse to a far-reaching participation of those involved,... and which must be effectively supported by the responsible (political-administrative and public (author's note)) structures ..." (12).

"Home-building as self-help" is intended to be "... one of the most effective approaches for an immediate solution to both the workers' housing problems in the cities as well as the reorganisation of the farmers' lives in general ..." (12), and "... the building of collective facilities which are indispensable for the social and economic development of the population, such as kindergartens, schools, health centres, community shops, etc., should be brought in ..." (13). The local workforce demands simple, functional forms of construction in conjunction with the adoption of uncomplicated construction methods with as small a percentage of prefabricated components as possible.

This concept of "state-guided and/or state-organised construction on the self-help principle" ('autoconstrução orientada' resp. 'dirigida') - primarily aimed at the rural sector - signals intent and requirement at the same time.
This concept reflects MPLA's pragmatic attitude towards the population's existing habits like their own constructing of the necessary buildings, whereby traditional rural house construction has remained largely unaffected by advanced technology because formerly there had not been any formal public intervention, nor had any non-traditional construction material been available. In this area, public intervention to stimulate collective basic construction initiatives remains confined to the supply of the most necessary tools and equipment to simplify and improve traditional construction methods, e.g. wooden moulds for a more efficient manual production of clay bricks.

This concept, however, is equally an indication of the deficient manpower resources and the limited efficiency of planning authorities and building contractors, with the consequence of a further concentration of planning and construction activities on cities in the coastal area, especially the traditional MPLA stronghold of Luanda. The concentration of control functions in the centre here stands in an inverse relationship to the absence of effective structures of the construction sector on the periphery. Despite regular de-centralisation attempts and repeated campaigns to this effect, the tendency has been yet stronger since the failed coup d'etat by the "Faction Nito Alves" (14) in May 1977, whose previous instituting of basic initiatives - "poder popular" and local as well as corporate self-administration - the MPLA leadership temporarily encountered with strengthened emphasis on control and discipline, or - in more general terms - with state intervention.

The relationship between basis and superstructure at that time is characterised by the tendency of the state leaders to direct, or at least control, every form of the people's involvement, whereas economic difficulties, emergencies and urgent decisions too often have the effect that bureaucratic decisions take the place of (joint) decisions by the people involved. This means de-facto stagnation since the public bodies involved are often less able than the people involved, to implement the underlying plans.

The most adequate way to implement the first housing programmes within the framework of organised self-help construction is seen in the concerted operation of the few remaining specialists in the production of light prefabricated parts which can be easily assembled by the dweller himself. According to the directive to have recourse to minimal prefabrication, the construction of field factories for the production of light finished parts for simple house construction in the country and peripheral zones of the cities is started in 1977; at the same time, the Ministry of Civil Engineering states that the establishment of a heavy-component industry for housing construction was not desirable at that time because of the actual Angolan conditions (enormous territorial expansion in conjunction with a small total population, extremely heterogenous pop-
ulation distribution plus correspondingly dispersed settlements) and because of primarily economic/political considerations, so that building on traditional principles would retain its full importance for a long time (15). To some extent, this already shows the "two lines" of future Angolan housing policies, although such first attempt with light, prefabricated building elements of a system which was adopted from Cuba without any modifications at first results in a fiasco. The extremely simple modular system, type "Sandino" which could be set up without special equipment, comprising non-insulated, prefabricated concrete slabs which are inserted in to the vertical grooves of equally prefabricated concrete posts spaced 1.04 m apart, failed to take account of special socio-cultural patterns of the Angolan people, nor of differing climates of the Angolan highlands and coastal areas - in both areas, it was (or was intended to be) used primarily by farmers and fringe migrants. Adapted neither to cultural or climatic demands, simply technically adapted, such a system could not gain acceptance in Angola - evidence of this is to be seen still today in some provinces of the country: wall and support elements piled up as well as houses that have never been occupied or that have been abandoned.

Much more difficult and complex than in the country and in the towns is the housing situation in Luanda, one of the oldest European colonial cities (1576) and today one of Africa's 10 largest cities. This city with its colonial character, the parasitic capital and the country's most important industrial city, centre of administration, consumption and services, accounts for 70% of the national industrial production. 15.9% of the total and around 70% of the urban population of Angola live in Luanda, marked by an (unchanging) vehement population boom: its number increased from 67,000 in 1940 until independence (despite the exodus of 300,000 Portuguese from its greater region) to more than 700,000 and is today - without the equivalent economic growth - estimated at 1.3 million (16). The consequences:

- The social and economic segregation of its inhabitants is reflected by the asymmetry of Luanda's urban organisation and the dual character of its physical appearance.

- The absolute majority, almost 80% (!), of its population is pressed into mediocre (8%) to inferior (67%) flats, although the percentage of the latter is only 60% of the total urban area (17). An average occupancy rate of 7 or 9, resp. persons per flat (in 1981) or the urban slums, resp., indicates an increasing deterioration and a degradation of the substance of flats whose number totalled around 120,000 in 1979, with the occupancy trend continuously increasing (18).

- The public utility services would satisfy the demands of a city of 250,000 inhabitants: for example, there is a
shortfall in school facilities for approx. 35,000 students; urban infrastructural networks cover only 60% of the city's area (19).

The first political measure taken by the Revolutionary Council for improving the tense situation is the immediate nationalisation of abandoned flats 45 days after the absence of the (mostly Portuguese) dwellers, as well as the expropriation of all condominiums and houses not used by the owner. Their distribution among the people hit hardest by the housing shortage with the assistance of the housing committees and basic organs of the "poder popular" - as well as spontaneous squatting - caused a temporary relief on the housing market until June 1980 and, even more after July 1981, when heavy bombing in the course of the massive South African military operations "Smokeshell" and "Protea" and the following military occupation triggered a new wave of rural migrants flooding in from the South.

The new housing legislation is also intended as a means to overcome the (urban) colonial society. Under the slogan "The flat for the dweller", it secures the right of occupancy without permitting its rental to a third party, prohibits trade with flats and regulates rent levels on a uniform basis. Not all these measures can be oriented to the maxim "Nationalisation following politically, economically and technically sustainable principles", as shown by the consequences: shortage of resources of the communal bodies, especially lack of trained personnel do not permit continual maintenance of urban high-rise buildings, with the further consequence of accelerated wear in conjunction with excessive occupancy rates and - despite campaigns to awaken the people's awareness - improper use of a new architecture which failed to meet the social and cultural demands of the new dwellers. But: what could have been the alternative to improvisation at this stage?

Further priority is given to the gradual improvement of the "Murseques", Luanda's giant slums spread over the entire city, interrupted by "concrete jungles" (the largest, Cazenga, covers 25 square kilometers) where over 60% of the city's population live and work in precarious and unstable conditions (20). Although first construction programmes have been launched in some of these squatter settlements to provide basic technical infrastructure and to build small communal facilities, their implementation is rather slow despite the fact that preparatory planning work has been completed. At the same time, the urban fringes extend continually towards the periphery: new "Murseques" emerge, grow unplanned and steadily, with state intervention confining itself to minimal regulation of the process; compared with their predecessors from the colonial period, building density is lower, distribution is more even, building materials used are more resistant.
In regard to urban condominium building, houses damaged during the war are in the process of being repaired and completion of the buildings left unfinished by the Portuguese is under way: out of 130 rough constructions in Luanda alone with a total area of 1 million square metres (living space for approx. 2,500 families as well as office and business space), 20 buildings were given priority for completion (21). On these so-called pilot construction sites, a novel training programme developed in close cooperation between the Ministries for Civil Engineering and Education is being implemented for the training of foreman and specialist workers: Unskilled workers attend literacy courses on the construction site and are simultaneously given the necessary vocational qualification through their practical work. Such a demand-oriented, "combined" training is also available to secondary-school students who are trained as senior construction engineer cadres in conjunction with practical site work. Construction progress is therefore slow, not only because of the lack of construction plans and spare parts or permanent lack of materials - this is also the reason why international cooperation has been sought, especially from Cuba, since mid-1976. Already one year later, the Angolan construction sector employs, alongside approx. 2,000 skilled workers, middle-level technicians and Cuban managers, more than 40,000 Angolan workers of whom 5,438 have completed their training as construction workers to form the "backbone" of the first construction brigades.

STANDING ON TWO FEET: PUBLIC HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND ORGANISED DWELLER PARTICIPATION (22)

After the first 3 years of development of public housing construction marked by stagnation and improvisation forecasts are made concerning Angola's overall population growth, its urbanization rate and Luanda's city growth rate as well as the expected demand for dwelling space calculated until 2010 on the basis of a first dwelling space census, up-dated population statistics and projections of the socio-economic development of the country. These projections show the total demand for the period 1980 - 1990 amounting to more than 15,000 flats per annum on the basis of an average family size of 5.3. For the 2 decades following, the dwelling space requirements have been projected as follows:

1990 - 2000: 56,600 flats/year
   (5.3 persons/flat)
   75,000 flats/year
   (4 persons/flat)

2000 - 2010: 122,000 flats/year
   (5.3 persons/flat)
   162,000 flats/year
   (4 persons/flat) (23)

It is evident that the young People's Republic will not have the material or manpower resources to even come close to covering this demand within the foreseeable future, in the
light of the desperate colonial heritage and the burden of the "dead weight of the old society" (Rossana Rossanda).

One strategy for the long-term solution to these problems is:

- creation of the material preconditions for the building up of modern urban mass housing facilities making use of technical and technological progress to develop the construction sector and to increase productivity,

- introduction of technological approaches in terms of partial prefabrication - with the aim of simplified housing construction and the development of methods for the production of heavy prefabricated parts - for the construction of public buildings,

- planning and preparation of city construction projects to materialise such housing construction philosophy.

The other strategy provides for the stimulation of "state-organised self-help construction" and collective user participation through technical orientation and organisational support by the central and local bodies of the Ministry for Civil Engineering and Housing; this above all else in the initial phase and especially in the rural sector with use of all the resources available to this effect (24).

The first stage of public high-rise construction involves a 5-storey Cuban-based construction type of building consisting of light, partially prefabricated elements of simple construction standards, with a degree of prefabrication according to the conditions of production - construction site of field factory. From this so-called E-14 as well as its successor model which is better adapted to local conditions, "E-15", 3,000 flats are built with the initial cooperation of Cuban construction brigades, especially in Luanda - "bairros" Golfe and Rangel - and some some larger cities as well. Most of the flats are temporarily used to accommodate foreign helpers and "Internacionalistas" from Cuba and other COMECON countries, and from Portugal, Brazil, Sweden and Italy. The ground plans are well adapted to the climatic situation through sufficient cross venting and effectively shaded facades; the area of the flats varies from 55 - 80 square meters and 3 to 5 rooms, with one (household) balcony provided for the sitting room and kitchen. On the basis of these two "prototypes" of semi-industrialised building with prefabrication of parts in Angola, local architects of the National Agency for City Construction and Housing have developed a multi-storey type of condominium suitable for the use of light prefabricated parts, which - with comparable areas of the flats - takes more account of the requirements and living habits of Angolan dwellers in terms of its ground plan. Today this type is known as "Luanda-1", although recently another type of building of Yugoslavian origin is found in newly developed housing areas, especially in Luanda. This type
has been given the Angolan name "Sistema Túnel". It is a 4-storey dwelling complex based on a partition system whose ceilings and partitioning walls are concreted storey by storey in one action on the basis of the all-concrete principle with the help of reusable sliding casing structures, whereas curtain walls (both longitudinal walls as well as partitioning walls) are made of brickwork. With its ground plans that conform to the socio-cultural demands of the Angolan city dwellers and the country's climatic conditions, this construction system presently constitutes the most recent part in the development of public Angolan housing construction which has as yet been mostly oriented to Cuban and Yugoslavian patterns. Still in the phase of reorganisation and reconstruction, the "public branch" of Angolan housing policies will be hardly able within the foreseeable future to satisfy the present demand for dwellings in the P.R. of Angola. Organised involvement of those concerned will play an important part in this context.

Citizens' participation in Angola can be divided into 3 basic categories:

- traditional farmers' self-help in the sector of non-market oriented rural subsistence economy,
- political mobilisation in order to implement particular aims: a way to promote participation that has its origins in the resistance and liberation struggle against Portuguese colonialism,
- public-sector measures to encourage participation of those concerned in order to realise long-term development aims, i.e. institutionalisation of participation.

This report focuses on the third category, above all on the housing sector.

Probably one of the most promising approaches of the Angolan revolution to use the country's own resources in the promotion of participation projects, is the national programme of "Autoconstrução", "housing construction as self-help" based on the purpose-oriented principles of "learning by doing". A special law enacted in December 1980 explicitly emphasises the social character of planning and constructing activities as reflected, for instance, in collective and cooperative participation. The process of collective consciousness-building inherent in joint construction efforts resulting in the completed building as tangible evidence gains primary importance. According to the principle that "construction" is more important than "architecture", construction and dwelling is less valued on the basis of the underlying HOW than on the basis of WHAT the benefits are for the people.

The Ministry for Provincial Coordination is responsible for the coordination of all self-help projects. The Ministry for Economic Planning sets out urgency zones for partici-
pation projects, while the Ministry for Construction and Housing is responsible for the most complex task of all public organisations involved. Among its responsibilities are the realisation of city planning studies and drafts, the evaluation of possible uses of the most differing types of buildings and construction methods based on traditional architecture, the development of prototypes for dwelling construction and public buildings, as well as city planning and working out of upgrading projects. In order to ensure the nation-wide planning and implementation of these self-help projects, regional offices have been set up in 18 provinces of the country working closely together with local administrations. Planning groups, such as the Canadian "Development Workshop on Building and Planning in the Third World" cooperate with the National Agency for City Construction and Housing which is responsible for "publicly organised construction by self-help", to initiate a programme to develop popular forms of construction on the basis of a nation-wide study with the following aims:

- identification of problems and potentials for the realisation of local participation projects,
- analysis of organisational networks which are in the position to give local support,
- evaluation and assessment of locally available construction materials, applied technology and technical skills which can be called on by self-help construction projects.

First results show relevant, although not always encouraging findings. The following project stage focuses on several aims at the same time:

1) (Further) development of adapted production techniques for self-help construction using local building materials,

2) Preparation of technical and information manuals for unskilled construction workers and so-called "energisers",

3) Project planning for communal facilities under the aspect of the most efficient use of available personnel as well as material resources.

Re.: 1) Owing to a permanent undersupply of modern building materials, the present demand for flats and service facilities in the rural sector can only be satisfied with long delays. Substitution by smaller, decentralised units for the production of building materials based on the persistent use of locally available materials is meant to remedy the situation. Small-scale machines for the on-site production of building materials are thus under development. As the first of such machines, a new hand-press has been developed featuring considerable improvements in comparison with the CINVA-RAM press and similar models. Its advantage
lies in its product diversity ranging from full bricks to various types of perforated bricks, roofing tiles and further construction elements.

Re.: 2) The newly established regional planning offices set up in order to promote and support various basic activities in the construction sector through their "energisers" are desperately understaffed and still without any basic technical and information material. In order to maintain the effectiveness of their operations, a number of studies, work materials and manuals are under preparation to give technical assistance and to serve as "mediators" between self-help "energisers" and construction workers on the one side and all those who work on regional projects in the regional offices on the other side. The manuals which are already available and used "in the field" comprise, among others, a guideline for the adapted, climatically suitable planning of small buildings for all of the 15 environmental areas of the country, a primer describing the production of cement-stabilised clay bricks using the newly conceived hand-press, planning fundamentals for site, service and upgrading projects, as well as a design manual for the planning and collective construction of elementary schools, and instruction material for workers in the communal education planning sector.

Re.: 3) Owing to the "education boom" - the total number of Angola's elementary-school pupils increasing by 400% in 9 years - rapid substance losses of overburdened class-rooms - up to 3 teaching shifts per day - set in, so that all available rooms, whether dwellings, store-houses or factory floors, are converted into provisional class-rooms. Only approx. 15% of the total area presently used for teaching in Luanda can be classified as being definitely suitable for this purpose. As there is still not an exact survey of the total teaching area presently used, and its distribution over the city's area (especially the enormous Musseque areas), there is a lack of planning information for a rational new construction and distribution of means to self-help collectives.

The Education Delegates of Luanda province have therefore launched an initiative to offer advanced training courses for communal planning cadres. Before their return to their various city districts, participants are instructed in simple polling/surveying techniques, reading of city maps, preparation of simple sketches, and the use of a newly developed surveying and polling form. The resulting field work includes localisation and topographic survey of all of Luanda's elementary schools totalling almost 200, as well as the out-buildings spread over the city's squatter settlements, description of the physical conditions of the buildings, maintenance of buildings and intensity of use of class-rooms, as well as identification of especially "critical" areas whose only limited use of available resources calls for special support. Continually up-dated, the method once applied will be a useful source of inform-
ation for the promotion and optimisation of participation projects. In Sambizanga – which, according to poll results, is a Musseque area where by far more than 1000 inhabitants live on one hectare and which is subject to an extremely low class-room density and therefore one of the "critical" city areas of Luanda – the now developed pilot project of an elementary school with locally produced, cement-solidified clay tiles is being implemented by the squatters.

In an exemplary way, these measures demonstrate the principles of state-organised, participatory construction in Angola:

- integration in an overall development programme in order to avoid potential interference with other projects as a consequence of the given shortage of resources,

- being an integral part of a comprehensive project to satisfy the population's basic requirements,

- using the most simple, application-oriented techniques to enable graduated learning of the participants,

- basing the implementation of plans on the principle of trial and error, as well as achieving an optimal matching of the overall project with the users' demands through the realisation and analysis of pilot projects (25).

CITY DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL PLANNING: TRENDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Severe shortage of housing and structural problems still mark the situation in the cities at the end of the 1st decade of independence, especially because war (and the resulting population exodus from rural areas) causes an almost continual migration into the cities. The revolutionary government therefore attempted in recent years to achieve a far-reaching elimination of and solution to these problems through an initial improvement of the institutional framework to create the necessary basis. Since mid-1983, increasing numbers of local city committees, basic organs of the government and the pertinent dwellers' committees have been set up to which locale administrative functions, organisation and enforcement projects (i.e. construction of flats on a social self-help basis) are delegated. "Channels" of such activities to by-pass bureaucracy and thus (previously self-established) centralised structures is intended to intensify their demolition on the one hand and to simultaneously enhance the efficiency of state support; on the other hand, to simplify for the future user the construction procedure by means of planning and implementation aids which have been optimised in the meantime. This simplified procedure provides for abridged "one-sheet" building application and approval, planning advice and technical assistance, land measurement and lot surveying in one of the city districts Golfe, Palanque or Pet-
rangol earmarked for this purpose in the city development plan, and reaches as far as the completion of supply permits for construction materials as well as procurement of the necessary construction equipment and tools. One must, however, admit that the persisting shortage of manpower and material capacity often limits advisory activities to the procurement of type drafts on the part of the organs involved in the process, the National Housing Construction Institute and communal Implementation Departments. Against the background of such shortages as well as an energetic campaign against irresponsible bureaucracy (which also means a limitation of the proliferation of the public sector in housing construction) the lifting of the prohibition of private housing construction is to be seen; moreover, this measure aims at an expansion of the economic field of activity of the petty bourgeoisie whose financial potential is to be channelled into "socially productive" areas. In this context, the risk of corruption of this class in the private sector is considered smaller than the growing bureaucratic encrustation in the public sector.

Measures aiming at a gradual structural improvement and continual integration of squatter settlements within the city are being continued, and - in addition to the inhabitants' participation through the local organs of the "poder popular" (people's power) - increasing relevance is accorded to voluntary work action of industrial collectives and/or employees in the public sector on so-called sábados vermelhos - "red Saturdays". Innovative approaches are often the outcome of practical work situations. For example, sponsorships have emerged between schools, health centres etc. and the undertakings whose employees built such institutions in "trabalho voluntário" with the aim of securing the continual supply of materials, maintenance and service of such new social facilities in the Musseques.

After initially opposing (centralisation) trends in the areas of city development and national planning, new tendencies have become obvious aiming at overcoming the contradiction between urban and rural areas, i.e. curtailing the dominating role, especially Luanda's as the country's main city, and redefining its function as the capital city. The intention of this policy is a slowing down of Angola's rate of urban growth through improvements in the rural sector, such as full-employment policies, wage increases, improved free social security, construction of new settlements, etc.

In addition to attempts at an "urbanisation of rural areas" ('deurbanization') supported by an intended "ruralisation of the urban population" ('villagization'), such as campaigns for the recruitment of volunteers for cultivating and harvesting, there is an increasing tendency towards an "agrarisation of cities' fringes" themselves - a concept that fits best with the actual social, political and economic process of transformation under the conditions of a continuing destructive war with its disastrous con-
sequences for a just distribution of supplies between cities and rural provinces. The declared aim is the quickest possible realisation of self-sufficiency of urban and rural consumer centres and thus the abolition of urban parasitism and regional disparities. The "Projecto Cinturão Verde", the planning of a periurban green belt to surround Luanda, is connected with irrigation projects from the nearby reservoir of Kikuchi, and with the planning of complex settlements and the resettlement of small, cooperatively based undertakings in order to achieve the economic development of the capital's periphery. The medium-term aim is a diversification of agricultural production, i.e. cultivation of basic foodstuffs and also special agricultural activities to supply the regional population.

In accordance with the slogan of MPLA-PT (Labour Party) "The land belongs to its cultivators", the land of this future agricultural zone will be distributed among the inhabitants of Luanda's city region who are interested in agricultural production and who have the necessary knowledge (26). This project as well as comparable planning in other provinces are expected to yield positive effects, such as absorbing and retaining migrants (country-city) through the creation of additional jobs, controlling the fringe-area, marginal growth and self-sufficiency in the face of the city's food supply; the Ministry of Planning rates these effects higher than the (acknowledged) real danger of an increasing migration pressure on the (attractive) centre.

Within the framework of enormous efforts to counter the further process of concentration in conurbation areas, and to stimulate the social and economic development of the rural areas, future outlook planning work was done which, in terms of its ambitious dimensions, (yet) seems hardly fitting to the actual situation and real requirements, and which are classified as "strategic projects" within the country's overall development process. For example, the agricultural and cattle-farming "Complex Kwanza-Bengo" with its projected size of as much as 270,000 hectares extends far beyond Luanda and its neighbouring regions, already in terms of its range and impact on the economic, social and political situation. This example is taken to discuss questions concerning the relationship between the necessary (enormous) capital investment and the availability of qualified farm workers and technical staff for its building up and support, as well as the performance capacity of the distributing and marketing sector; moreover, to discuss in which ways and to what degree projects of this size (should) take account of the social and cultural adaptability of the local population and changes in their customary living and production patterns. Embedded in this geographical development concept is a settlement policy which provides for the establishment of decentralised "núcleos" - an integral form of rural settlements. Comparable with Mozambique's "aldeias comunais", such settlements are gradually growing villages with a maximum population of 250
families with their development stages adapted to the in-
habitants' demands at that particular stage. Owing to the
tense (war) situation throughout large areas of Angola,
this programme, however, can only be implemented to a very
limited extent.

In the efforts to overcome the marked regional asymmetry,
the slogan "Planning with optimal preservation of human
and material resources" is not always observed. This is
illustrated by the example of the province capital Lukapa
founded in 1979 in the province Lunda-Norte, founded only a
short time before. This project, however, had a specific,
colonially marked background: the former large province
of Lunda which was situated in the extreme North-East of
the country, virtually centralises all of its physical
infrastructure in its Southern part; the North (320,000
inhabitants living on 103,000 square kilometers) is almost
exclusively concession area of DIAMANG (27), and is reserved
for diamond mining, its supply facilities being reserved for
the personnel of this company which is presently the coun-
try's largest employer. In the absence of a social under-
structure and without any own food production worth mention-
ing - huge areas reserved for diamond exploration permit
only a very limited form of subsistence economy - almost 94% of
the population are dependent on supplies from Luanda and
some neighbouring provinces, even after independence. The
division of the province and the establishment of a new
main centre in under-urbanised North Lunda offering new,
formerly missing infrastructure, are intended to reduce
and steer away the migration movement which previously was
aimed at the West, with the consequence of a long-term com-
ensation of the development shortcomings. After 3 years,
however, construction work on the (provisional) first set-
tlement centre with 700 homes for 2,500 inhabitants, public
and social facilities - from where the future construction
of the final capital city of the province for a maximum
of 50,000 inhabitants is to be controlled - came to a halt:
(the attempt of) an independent approach making far-reaching
use of local (cheap) resources was abandoned in favour of
a technically ambitious solution using imported (expensive)
prefabricated parts. Such prefabricated elements, including
equipment and installations, were bought in Portugal in 1979
and had to be transported 1600 kilometers (!) from Luanda
port to Lukapa where the completion of the city's infra-
structure was still unfinished.

The existing restrictive situation, such as long distances
in conjunction with transport difficulties and limitations,
distribution and supply bottlenecks in general, lack of
skilled technicians and trained workers, the absence of
an administrative and procedural "planning understructure"
with the ensuing coordination and cooperation deficits
among 7 ministries involved, as well as still underdeveloped
planning means to control processes once initiated: all
these factors contributed to the (preliminary) failure of
a controversial concept which did not fit into the con-
ditions.
The Lukapa example specifically illustrates an irrational component of Angola’s planning and construction policies since 1975, the "Angola é grande" (Angola is great) syndrome whose desperate striving for the large scale (apart from predominantly progressive, relevant - because adapted solutions) again and again produced "white elephants" like, for example, more recent plans for the "Cidade Desportiva" (sporting city) and the construction project of Luanda’s "Square of the Revolution".

Against the background of a situation clearly marked by economic difficulties, emergencies and a continuing war of attribution of internal and external enemies of the social project of MPLA-PT, it may be of secondary relevance whether such manifestations are the seemingly indispensable signs of a newly developing self-confidence of a young, newly independent state, or whether they show an exaggerated need for representation of a still unconsolidated regime, "... still marked with the birth-marks of the old society" (Marx-Engels Vol. 19, p. 20). Although these "contra" forces are too weak to take military control over the whole country, they are nevertheless strong enough to boost the social costs of the revolution, and to affect the social and economic aims of independence to a considerable degree with the result or a complete hindrance of their realisation. At the same time, critical situations worsen as a consequence of the war and the far-reaching economic and social changes connected with the revolutionary process, and contradictions become more evident with increasing shortages with which the revolution has had to live from the very beginning.

"A Luta Continua, a Vitória é Certa" (The fight goes on, the victory is certain), MPLA’s well-known slogan from the days of armed resistance, has been changed by the people, in the streets and squares, in villages and cities of the country: "The victory goes on, the fight is certain" - changed by people of who Lúcio Lara (28) says: "The process is dialectic: Angolan people are conscious that the alternative to MPLA is colonialism".

(1) Independence day
(2) MPLA: People’s movement for the liberation of Angola
PNLA: National front for the liberation of Angola
UNITA: National union for the total independence of Angola.
(3) Columbian author Gabriel García Márquez, after his visit to Angola in 1976, estimated the material losses at, among others, 28,000 vans (i.e. more than 80% of the total number of vehicles), 3,000 cars, 144 bridges, 1,531,000 head of cattle (cf. Márquez, G.G., Una nación entera en escuela primaria, in: Alternativa No. 116, Bogotá May 1977, pp. 16 - 22; here: p. 18 and onwards).

(5) as at August 1981.


(7) Jornal de Angola, Luanda, Nov. 11, 1976.


(13) ibid., p. 10.

(14) Group around former Minister of the Interior Nito Alves who, in radical words, called for head-long nationalisation and, in a demagogic manner, propagated accelerated and intensified class struggle availing himself of the elements of reactive racism.


(18) cf. CIPRO, cit. op., section 4.6.1.

(19) ibid., sections 4.7.1, 4.9.1, 4.9.2.1.


(22) This paragraph is based in part on an unpublished article by ALLAN CAIN, Development Workshop, entitled 'BUILDING PARTICIPATION IN ANGOLA' which was translated from the English language and shortened or supplemented, resp., by the author.


(24) ibid., pp. 7 and onwards.

(25) ibid., p. 20., Annex I.


(27) Companhia de Diámatos de Angola: Angolan diamond company.

(28) Organisation Secretary of MPLA-PT (Labour Party).
SUMMARY

500 years of Portuguese colonialism and more than 14 years of guerilla war resulted in a burdensome heritage for the young people's republic. In the beginning the construction sector was totally paralysed in terms of its manpower and material resources. After the first emergency measures two main lines were pursued to provide housing area: 1) Direct public housing provision based on the technology of prefabrication (which seemed initially to fail). 2) State-aided self-help construction as a broad social process reviving century-old forms of collective participation (which puts more emphasis on the social effects of the housing process than on the physical standards themselves).

Urban development and regional planning reflect the oft-debated new approaches to "agrarisation of urban fringes" which is meant to generate urban and provincial self-sufficiency in food and to reduce urban parasitism and regional disparities. This new priority - despite some inevitable shortcomings and failures - will in the long run lead to improved living conditions in Angola.