

## **From Survival Strategies to Sustainable Development in Luanda's Musseques**

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### **Abstract**

The breadth of Angola's "informal sector"—and its pervasive role in the lives of most Angolans—cannot be overstated. Throughout the urban musseques of peri-urban Luanda in which approximately 1 in 3 Angolans currently reside, essential services—such as water and food distribution—are provided mainly through private initiative in the informal sector. For most Angolans land has been obtained through informal mechanisms.

UNDP reported that “Luanda has become the largest laboratory for survival strategies in the world.”

Urban research and program implementation data on Luanda should inform the development of new and important urban policy planning and poverty reduction frameworks.

The paper will promote development and practice of inclusive public planning processes for the provision of basic services, mainly water, sanitation and urban land so as to reduce the urban poverty in Angola, especially in the citizens of Luanda and Huambo. The work will be oriented by the MDGs targets such as: target 1- eradicates poverty and misery; target and target 7- ensure environmental sustainability. The Millennium Development Goals for the measurement of urban poverty, developed by UN Habitat and accepted by the Angolan Government as a basis for monitoring performance on post-conflict reconstruction and shelter provision. Information is lacking on five specific indicator areas:

- a) access to water & basic services;
- b) land tenure and land markets;
- c) urban environmental burdens;
- d) habitat/housing quality;
- e) settlement density and overcrowding

Participatory research conducted by Development Workshop has provided new insights into the informal market's structural profile as well as more in-depth knowledge about specific sectors such as the dynamics of informal peri-urban land markets and the supply of urban services such as water and housing. Findings have shown how the informal sector is being transformed by the new challenges and opportunities emerging in the last decade since the war ended, and of how these changes are affecting the millions of Angolans whose livelihoods depend upon it. Lessons for policy makers and urban planners are evident if the transformation of the informal settlements can be done in a way that includes the poor and ensures that they share the benefits of Angola's economic development.