

**"Here in the city
there is nothing left over
for lending a hand"**

**Paul Robson
Sandra Roque**

**ADRA
Dw**



Action for Rural Development and the Environment (ADRA) was founded in 1990 and is an Angolan, non-profit, non-governmental organisation that contributes to appropriate development that is participatory and sustainable, closely linked to the strengthening of the democratisation processes of Angolan society.

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Development Workshop (DW) is a non-profit organisation working to improve living conditions for the poor in less developed communities. With a focus on shelter, settlement planning, water and sanitation, health, small enterprise and disaster mitigation, our aim is to help communities and organisations strengthen their capacities to act on development problems and opportunities. Founded in 1973, DW has worked with NGO's, local, governmental and international institutions in more than 30 countries.

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“HERE IN THE CITY
THERE IS NOTHING LEFT OVER
FOR LENDING A HAND”

IN SEARCH OF SOLIDARITY
AND COLLECTIVE ACTION
IN PERI-URBAN AREAS IN ANGOLA

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DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP - OCCASIONAL PAPER Nº 2

First published 2001

ISBN 0 - 9688786 - 2 - 8

Published by Development Workshop

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The research project and the publication of this Occasional Paper were carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada (IDRC).

Printed by SSP in Amsterdam

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Filomena Andrade and João Cunha who carried out preliminary field research in Huambo and contributed to the original research design.

Maria da Conceição Neto who provided valuable comments on historical aspects of the research.

The staff of Development Workshop and ADRA in Luanda, particularly Fernando Pacheco, Allan Cain and Mary Daly, who provided valuable input throughout the research.

The staff of ADRA and ACORD in Lubango, and of Development Workshop in Huambo, who interviewed residents of peri-urban bairros in those cities.

The residents of peri-urban bairros in Lubango, Huambo and Luanda who took part in discussion groups or who were interviewed about migration to the cities, settling in peri-urban bairros and what this meant for their lives.

MAP OF ANGOLA



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**I . ORIGINS
AND RATIONALE
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**1. ORIGINS AND RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH:
WHY RESEARCH ON COMMUNITIES AND COLLECTIVE ACTION**

1.1 Community organisations, collective action and social reconstruction

During the 1990s various development organisations working in Angola, as in other countries, began to introduce a community-based approach in their development projects. These organisations attempted, in this way, to make development activities respond to the interests and preoccupations of the beneficiaries of these actions. The reasons for this orientation were a result of:

- the fact that in Angola the needs are huge; to deal with the challenges of reconstruction and development all available resources must be mobilised, including those of the community
- a perception that government bodies are more interested in large, ambitious, centralised projects that fit into a “modernising” view of development; these big projects will impact most people’s lives only in the long term
- a perception that there must be more and wider community participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the development process and in the mechanisms of management and maintenance of the infrastructures created.

In the process of trying to encourage a substantial involvement of communities in the processes of reconstruction and development, certain organisations have gone further and adopted a “civil society rebuilding approach”. This strategy is based on the hypothesis that in “complex political emergencies” and “post conflict reconstruction”, the cause of people’s poverty and vulnerability is not only material loss but also the weakening of the social fabric. If this is the case, reconstruction of the country and its development call for rebuilding of the social fabric and, in particular, for the creation of mechanisms in society that enable people to work together.¹ Such a strategy implies rebuilding the capacity of institutions and of community organisations that, through promoting solidarity and collective action, will create the conditions for the re-emergence of civil and political structures.

As a response to the perceived need for this approach, the idea gained ground in Angola during the period of the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol (1995-98) that post-conflict reconstruction, reconciliation and the consolidation of peace depended on the participation by Angolans in these processes, in particular by rural and peri-urban

¹ For example: Fagen (1995), Stiefel (1998), Harvey (1998), Duffield (1994b), Colletta and Cullen (2000), Prendergast (1997), Norton (1999), Anderson and Woodrow (1989).

communities. The documents of the Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation for the Roundtable Conference of Donors in Brussels in 1995 noted that “reconstruction in Angola depends on the capacity to rehabilitate economic and social infrastructures through community rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes” (Angola, 1995). By placing emphasis on community-level initiatives, the document expressed the hope that rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes could side-step the State’s centralised and weak institutions, and allow communities to participate in a significant way in the planning and rehabilitation of their own areas while giving them more control over the results and the use of their contributions.

However, the realisation of the need for “social reconstruction” was accompanied by a doubt that Angolan communities had reached such a level of disintegration that it might jeopardise a community reconstruction policy. Even the documents of the Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation express this doubt. They state that “the country’s social fabric has been destroyed”, “the exodus to the cities has corroded the traditional cohesion of rural society” and “social disintegration caused by the war is reflected in the absence of basic community structures” (Angola, 1995). According to Sogge (1996), Angolans only managed to survive 40 years of turbulence, during which there was so little support from the State and other institutions, because there existed mechanisms of mutual support, solidarity and collective action. Thus Sogge goes on to argue that in Angola there is potential for a revival of community organisations (which respond and are accountable to the community itself), yet at the same time he noted that there are signs that mutual support, solidarity and collective action have been damaged.

From these doubts about community capacity for collective action emerged the need to know more deeply the ways that conflict in Angola (and the various disturbances and social changes caused by conflict) affected the social structures that are the basis of society, and of how these can eventually be rebuilt.²

1.2 Difficulties experienced in locating and understanding community organisations

Development organisations that had tried to follow the type of strategy described above have experienced various difficulties in trying to implement them, particularly in peri-urban areas, which seemed to confirm their doubts and uncertainties about the state of social structures of Angolan communities. These difficulties led several of these organisations in 1996 and 1997 to jointly research the reality of communities and community organisations in Angola through a series of case studies (Robson, 2001b).

² The following documents mention the hypothesis that current forms of war in Africa impact on social relationships and mutual trust. Duffield (1994a), Swift (1996), Waal (1996)

This was a first step to try to overcome the lack of information available to development organisations about social reality in Angolan villages and peri-urban areas.³ The information collected also helped a process of reflection on the difficulties encountered by development organisations in strengthening of community institutions.

After the failure of the Lusaka Protocol and the renewal of conflict (in December 1998) many development organisations stopped financing and participating in reconstruction programmes. They began to focus more on emergency aid programmes, saying that reconstruction should wait until conflict had ended. But despite the context of renewed fighting, ADRA and Development Workshop felt that it was important to deepen further the exploration of the real situation in Angola's communities particularly in peri-urban areas where almost half the population now live. As already noted, it is possible to conceive of longer-term programmes in peri-urban areas even in an overall context of military instability, but on the other hand it is in these areas where development organisations have the greatest difficulty identifying, organising and assisting forms of organisation for collective action. Many of these development organisations have expressed some frustration with people of peri-urban areas who sometimes seem to be "corrupted" because they apparently do not want to co-operate with each other, even when such co-operation could offer a rapid and direct benefit.

The importance, for development organisations, of forms of organisation and of collective action is a result of the hypothesis mentioned previously that the capacity of people to work together (their capacity for co-operation) is a fundamental resource for resolving practical problems (for example, the construction and management of infrastructures),⁴ and for resolving wider questions (for example, planning and implementing reconstruction programmes, and building and consolidating peace).⁵ While it seems clear that collective action is important, it does not seem easy to identify and understand the mechanisms of solidarity nor the organisational forms, even informal, that might eventually support collective action. For this reason, ADRA and Development Workshop felt that it was important to carry out a study that would attempt to better understand organisational forms for collective action that exist in peri-urban areas. This would be a study to look for and understand the situations in which people who are faced with similar difficulties join together to overcome them collectively, and to look for and understand the organisational arrangements that come about as a result.

³ See Messiant (1998a) for a discussion about the lack of social investigation in Angola in the years prior to, and after Independence.

⁴ On the capacity for co-operation as a resource in the construction and management of infrastructures, see Narayan (1995), Srinivasan (1990), Srinivasan (1992).

⁵ On the capacity for co-operation as a resource in reconstruction programmes, and building and consolidating peace, see Stiefel (1998), Colletta and Cullen (2000).

2. BASIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The study that was designed, and that was carried out jointly by ADRA and Development Workshop, had as its objective the examination of existing forms of organisation for collective action in the peri-urban areas of three Angolan cities, the analysis of them in the light of theories about collective action, and the evaluation of the potential contribution of these organisations in building peace and in reconstruction.

The research thus aimed to know more about manifestations of mutual aid and solidarity, and the forms of organisation for collective action (formal or even transitory, informal and ad-hoc), that exist in peri-urban areas of Angolan cities. What “traditional” mechanisms for collective action still exist, having survived the numerous changes in Angolan society during the 20th century, and which of these managed to adapt to the large-scale migration into peri-urban areas during this period? Are there mechanisms that are continuations or modifications of “traditional” ones, even mechanisms that are partially hidden? What are the main characteristics of these mechanisms and forms of organisation? What difficulties do they confront, and how have they managed to survive?

The research also aimed to have a better understanding of the relationships that these forms of organisation have with other institutions, particularly state bodies. Does the State recognise, support, understand or show hostility to these forms of organisation? In provision of services are there examples of synergy between state entities and organised forms of collective action?

The initial research hypotheses were derived from the conclusions of previous studies and from interviews with people in development organisations interested in this area. They were based on the existing knowledge of organisations involved in research, understanding generally derived from rapid and loosely structured observations.

The hypotheses, which guided the line of questioning used in the research, were as follows:

Hypothesis 1

- a) The disintegration and/or structural decay of various rural communities, starting in colonial times and accelerated by the war, by the numerous shifts of population caused by conflict and by the “new life” in the peri-urban areas where these people took refuge, has led to the erosion of “traditional” institutions, as well as weakening of “traditional” forms of solidarity that depend on social norms and rules that are well understood by socially stable and clearly structured communities.

- b) The institutions and forms of solidarity that remain in peri-urban areas, even if they are weakened, form the basis of new solidarity mechanisms shared by the rural people living there.

Hypothesis 2

In addition to vestiges of “traditional” models of solidarity, there exist now in peri-urban areas other forms of solidarity linked to churches (some newly created) and to forms of organisation (local or of external origin) which often have emerged to compensate for the absence of services, or deficient services, formerly provided by state institutions.

Hypothesis 3

- a) The existence of organisations for collective action is more likely in communities where there exist forms of solidarity among different groups or members of the community
- b) Various factors (such as origin, kinship, common interests and activities, being neighbours) can form the basis of strong social networks among peri – urban residents. These social networks can generate strong forms of collective action which peri-urban communities make use of to resolve their problems.

Hypothesis 4

- a) Although peri-urban areas are very heterogeneous (for example in terms of origin, ethno-linguistic group, length of residence), there may be small areas which are homogeneous in these respects.
- b) In areas that are more homogenous, social linkages are stronger and forms of solidarity are more frequent; so they can provide catalysing points for creating more robust organisations for collective action.

3. SOME BASIC CONCEPTS

3.1 Collective action and organisation

The phenomenon of “organisation” in collective action

Collective action takes place whenever people facing similar difficulties join together to try to resolve them. Acting in this way, such people are trying to co-ordinate their actions; they are trying to organise, to achieve a common solution: each one of them hopes in

this way to obtain a greater benefit than if they had each pursued individual, independent strategies. By co-operating in a collective action they escape from the perverse logic whereby (in a situation where there is a common problem) individual actions for short-term individual advantage destroy the possibility of greater benefits for all in the long-term. Examples of collective action are: when a group of neighbours combine to bring water to their area, instead of each person fetching water by themselves, thus reducing the cost of the water; when a group of fishermen collaborate to set rules for fishing, thus avoiding depletion of fish stocks and a future fall in family income.

Collective action depends on the capacity for overcoming the dilemmas of collective action.⁶ Even when its advantages are obvious, there may be obstacles that make it difficult to put into practice. These obstacles are frequently related to the difficulty in getting different individuals to co-operate when they have different objectives, or even divergent and contradictory objectives (Crozier and Friedberg, 1977). Obstacles may also be due to the uncertainties linked to collective action, the uncertainties of the result (as with any action) but also the uncertainty about the motivation and behaviour of the other people involved in the action. Every one of the people involved must be confident that the others will do what was agreed, and will not try to take advantage of the results of the collective action without contributing to it. "In the absence of a credible mutual commitment, however, each individually has an incentive to defect and become a "free-rider". Even if neither party wishes harm to the other, and even if both are conditionally predisposed to co-operate ("I will if you will") they can have no guarantee against reneging, in the absence of verifiable, enforceable commitments" (Putnam 1993).

Collective action is not natural and the dilemmas of collective action are not problems of intentions or consciousness.⁷ Although people may lose a potential benefit if they do not co-operate, failing to co-operate is not irrational. And people who do not co-operate are not necessarily "corrupted". The people involved must be able to communicate and negotiate with each other, and they need to set up systems that monitor participants' actions. In other words, they must be capable of organising themselves (Crozier and Friedberg, 1977).

The process of organising is an essential aspect of collective action and is the process of "social structuring of the field of action" (Crozier and Friedberg, 1977) that eventually creates the conditions for co-operation among individuals and allows collective action

⁶ For example the prisoner's dilemma, the tragedy of the commons, David Hume's parable about the maize harvest in two farms. "I will only contribute for water supply if I know that all the neighbours will contribute." "I will only follow the fishing rules if I know that all the other fishermen will follow the rules."

⁷ A comic strip shows two donkeys tied together by rope trying to co-operate to eat two piles of hay; this well-known cartoon implies that it is the donkeys' lack of consciousness that impedes collective action. Didactic uses of it avoid the fact that collective action requires other abilities in addition to consciousness.

to happen. Organising is a process of changing from a situation in which everybody acts independently to a situation in which everybody acts with a co-ordinated strategy, which creates increased mutual benefits. The result is specialisation and a sequence of actions or a series of procedures that co-ordinate the participants' strategies; knowing what the sequence is, they can co-ordinate their actions. Rules stipulate the processes, the monitoring of the actions, and the sanctions to be applied against those who do not follow the procedures.

An organisational form is the human framework, or the "context of action" (Friedberg, 1993) within which this process of organisation for collective action takes place. An organisation for collective action may be informal (for example, a group of neighbours or friends), or a traditional institution or a formal organisation.⁸

Why is collective action important?

Collective action is one of the foundations of the organisation of society.

"Many things we want and need cannot be created simply by our own efforts. The positive effects of competition, which sets individuals (or groups) against each other, are most beneficially realised within larger frameworks of co-operation." (Uphoff, 2000)

"The performance of all social institutions, from international credit markets to bus queues, depends on how these problems (of collective action) are resolved." (Putnam, 1993)

Even Adam Smith himself, who emphasised the concept of competition in the organisation of society in the book "An Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations" (1776), recognised the importance of co-operation and collective action in his previous book "The theory of moral sentiments" (1759) (Ormerod, 1994).

In general NGOs interpret their role to be "developing processes that increase the space for, and increase the enduring ability of, citizens to come together beyond immediate family to satisfy the 'necessities' they have" (Fowler, 2000). Certain NGOs emphasise projects in which a group of people collectively try to solve a problem that cannot be resolved by individuals – lack of water or a school, for example. These are immediate applications of collective action.

⁸ The use of the term "organisational form for collective action" allows us to avoid the "false dichotomy" between formal organisations (with rules and procedures that attempt to order the actions) and more fluid groupings for collective action. Putting together such organisations allows us to consider each organisational form, more or less formalised, as "contexts for action" in which there exist (even in the most ordered) "problems of social mobilisation, conflicts of logic and interest, competition and alliances and even processes of power, negotiation and restructuring that are an integral part of collective action" and (even in the least structured) some regularities and elements of order" that it is necessary to describe (Friedberg, 1993:14).

At the same time various authors describe wider applications of collective action. The writings about “civil society” and “good governance” indicate that these desirable aspects of society are linked to the society’s capacity for collective action. They suggest that building institutions is an important part of development. Good governance depends on an active and informed civil society, and in turn this depends on the society’s capacity to work together.

Uphoff (1993) says that development indicators are better in countries where community organisations are stronger, and where there are better links between central government and the communities through networks of local institutions at all levels. Putnam (1993), analysing Italy’s historical development, says that institutions perform better in regions of Italy where there is (and always has been) a dense network of horizontal mutual aid organisations at community level, for example in Northern Italy. Where there are (and always have been) mainly vertical organisations, for example in southern Italy where the Mafia installed itself, institutional performance is much worse. Other authors consider that a matrix of forms of organisation, and a synergy among various forms of institution (the State, market and community), is essential for development (Ostrom, 1996) (Ellis, 1997). Organisations at community level, the basis of civil society, are the essential part of this matrix (Harbeson, 1994) (Christoplos, 1997).

3.2 The relationship between the “urban” and the “peri-urban” in Angolan cities

The population of Angola’s cities has grown rapidly since 1945, particularly since 1975. The urban population now comprises about 50% of the total, whereas in 1970 it was 14% and in 1960 it was 11% (UNDP, 1997) (Angola, 1999) (Amado, Cruz et al, 1992). Most of these people, particularly the vulnerable and those with few resources, live not in the zones we call urban but in areas we label as peri-urban, the latter are the subject of this research. Delineating the geographical boundaries between urban and peri-urban areas can be very difficult, and differentiating the two may have to be done using non-geographical criteria. Gama (1987) describes the peri-urbanisation process as:

“the invasion of spaces close to the city, sometimes large areas, introducing important changes in the economic, social, demographic and cultural behaviour of the inhabitants of these peripheral areas; this is accompanied by radical changes in the settlements covered by the process of urban growth.” (Gama, 1987: 37)

In the case of Angolan cities, particularly Luanda, the “invasion” occurred in two directions. People from rural areas migrated to the city and contributed to the growth of the zones we call peri-urban; and during the period after the Second World War Angolan cities grew in such a way that modern concrete buildings penetrated areas which still included the dwellings of poor people built with temporary materials (timber or thatch). In the case of Luanda, the “uncontrolled advance” of cement constructions

during the 1950s and 1960s was responsible for a “tentacle-like” growth of the city, which penetrated poor areas and sometimes surrounded them (Messiant 1989).

In addition to the urban growth in the period before Independence, there has been more recently in urban areas in Angola a decay of services and uncontrolled construction. This has resulted in intermediary areas and isolated peri-urban “islands” in the zone that would be considered urban if the criteria were simply geographical ones (or if we simply designated as urban areas where there are modern buildings). Using construction type as a criterion is even more difficult: in some cities (Luanda is a good example of this) dwellings are mostly built nowadays of cement even in areas normally considered to be peri-urban. Therefore it was necessary, for the purposes of this research, to find some parameters that define the type of area we should include in the study. We used the following criteria to determine that an area is peri-urban:

- the absence of communal public services: piped water, sewers, refuse collection, telephones and tarred roads;
- proliferation of “informal” construction, in other words outside the State’s physical planning and building control systems.

Even with these two relatively simple criteria⁹, it is not easy to establish the boundaries. The physical transition from urban to peri-urban is not sudden. Particularly in Luanda, there is a *continuum* between urban and peri-urban areas; there are transition zones where services still exist but less reliably, and where informal construction is mixed with dwellings built according to an urban plan. Nevertheless, empirical observations can use the factors set out above, even if it is impossible to draw absolutely clear geographical boundaries between urban and peri-urban areas. In general we can talk of an “urban centre” and poorer peri-urban zones around this centre which are informally planned; they are more or less concentric, and poverty increases roughly in relation to distance from the centre¹⁰.

According to Gama (1987), the peri-urbanisation process of urbanised areas “imperceptibly creates a spatial *continuum* between the traditional concepts of urban and rural.” The context of insecurity and military conflict experienced in Angola, for many years, means that in the cities that have served as a refuge for displaced people,

⁹ We decided it was not appropriate to use “way of life” as a parameter because understanding and distinguishing “way of life” was precisely the aim of the research.

¹⁰ The construction in Luanda of the urbanised complexes of Luanda Sul is an exception. For the first time in Angola there are appearing, in these new bairros, rich suburban zones. These bairros are situated on the geographical periphery of the city, away from the central area of the city, but do not form part of the peri-urban city by our definition.

this type of *continuum* does not always exist. The people of peri-urban areas of many Angolan cities have hardly any contact with the rural environment and sometimes little remains of their previous way of life. The lack of land, for example, removes the possibility to gain their living in the previous way, and this in turn brings about deep changes in their way of life as a whole. Some peri-urban areas are no longer a transition zone between rural and urban environments. They have become a category on their own, distinct from the urban environment and the rural environment (the two main types of area with which they are usually compared).

4. CITIES INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH

The research involved peri-urban areas of three cities: Luanda, Lubango and Huambo. The three cities have different characteristics in terms of migration, morphology and ethno-linguistic composition. Luanda is the capital, and is the city with the largest population in the country (approximately 3,000,000); it has received migrants from the whole country and has a heterogeneous population. Lubango is the largest city in southern Angola (population roughly 400,000); it has received migrants from the south and the Central Plateau and, although smaller than Luanda, it is another destination city for migrants. Huambo is an inland city (population approximately 250,000) which received migrants from the Central Plateau while simultaneously providing migrants for other Provinces (because of the direct experience of conflict in the city during the last 10 years).¹¹

In Luanda the research was concentrated in a sector of the city covering the municipalities of Sambizanga and Cacuaco, and part of the municipality of Cazenga. This part of the city includes areas dating from various periods (pre-independence through to the year 2000). The inhabitants include people from various ethno-linguistic groups, and there are zones that are homogeneous as well as heterogeneous in this respect. Although it is not a representative sample of Luanda's peri-urban districts, it has enough diversity to allow investigation of the influence of a number of different factors.

In Lubango the research included a *bairro* in the north of the city, Bula Matadi, many of the inhabitants of which come from rural areas of the Central Plateau, as well as the *bairro* Luta Continua in the south that has a more mixed population (people from the south, the east and the Central Plateau). In Huambo interviews were conducted in six *bairros* chosen randomly.

¹¹

It was possible to conduct the research in Huambo during 2000 when security in the city was good. When the work was being planned in 1999 Huambo was unsafe and, if this situation had continued in 2000 the third city surveyed would have been Benguela/Lobito. Including Huambo was preferable because it is an inland city which at certain times suffered directly from the war, something that is not true of Luanda, Lubango and Benguela/Lobito.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Questions that guided the research

The initial hypotheses served as a guide for the questions that were asked during the research, and the information that was sought. It appeared particularly necessary to answer the following questions:

- a) Which 20th century historical events determined the migrations and the physical evolution of the cities; their growth, the occupation of land, the changes in population?
- b) What remains of “traditional” forms of solidarity and collective action outside the main cities? Are there areas where “traditional” forms are still strong? Are there still traditional institutions which manage communally owned resources (for example land, fishing, hunting, water)? Did rural forms of solidarity and collective action change, adapt, or were they distorted, due to pressures in the colonial period, from the war or as a result of post-independence changes?
- c) How did rural people migrate to the cities, and how did they install themselves in the cities? Did these processes change the social networks of the migrant populations? Were groups of people who shared interests, values and mutual knowledge dispersed or did they stay together?
- d) What is the way of life in the peri-urban areas of Angolan cities? What are the differences between the various parts of cities being studied – in terms of ethno-linguistic groups, homogeneity of population, date of occupation, access to resources?
- e) In the peri-urban areas of Angolan cities what are the signs of mutual aid and solidarity, and what forms of organisation for collective action exist?
- f) In peri-urban areas does the (new) way of life favour a continuation of rural forms of solidarity and collective action?
- g) What is the presence of the State in peri-urban areas of Angolan cities, and how does it link with organisations for collective action? Does the State recognise, support, extend or show hostility to these forms of organisation? In the provision of services, are there examples of synergy between State bodies and organised forms of collective action?

- h) In the context of reconstruction, what is the potential of organisations for collective action in peri-urban areas of Angolan cities? What strategies could lead to fulfilling the potential of the forms of organisation? What kinds of support are development organisations providing, and what are the results?

5.2 The process of qualitative research

The study followed a methodology of qualitative social research.¹² This involves “delving deeply” into the area of interest, exploring and investigating a limited number of cases more closely. In this way the investigator tries to understand the values, interests and attitudes of the people concerned.¹³ In general the methodology involves iterative processes of information collection, analysis, interim conclusions and then further questioning.¹⁴ In each cycle, clarification of concepts and ideas is sought. Subsequently there is another cycle of more deep investigation using the same processes.

5.3 Collection of data

The first cycle of the study involved interviews in the three cities (and in Benguela and Lobito¹⁵) with people who had already worked with the DW or ADRA, and with representatives of NGOs, associations and local administrations. The interviews raised the following topics: migration; the relationship between social and ethno-linguistic composition, morphology and urban organisation; forms of solidarity and organisation; difficulties that the NGOs encounter in community development work in peri-urban areas. The interviewees also provided an “entry” into the *bairros*, and indicated other people to interview.

The second cycle involved interviews with inhabitants of peri-urban *bairros* about recent migrations and about the different processes of installation that the “migrants” went through. These interviews tested the impressions of the people interviewed in

¹² See, for example: Miles and Huberman (1994); Coffey and Atkinson (1998), Morgan (1993); Kreuger (1994), Mason (1996).

¹³ “How can we approach the area and dig into it? This is not just a question of approaching a particular area and looking at it. It is an exhaustive task that requires a high degree of tentative, careful and honest probing, creative and disciplined imagination, resourceful and flexible study, consideration of the results and constant willingness to test and re-organise views and images of the area.” (Blumer 1969 in Haguette, 1987). On the need for “delving” and “thick description” in order to understand and interpret a phenomenon, see also Geertz (1973).

¹⁴ This does not, strictly speaking, involve sampling because the interviews are of whoever can best help to clarify answers to inquiries. A quantitative study tries to recreate the totality of the population “in miniature”, while on the other hand the sampling in qualitative studies tries to capture the depth, richness and complexity of a subject (Padgett, 1998). For this reason the process is iterative stimulated by a continuous analysis of the data.

¹⁵ To have information about these cities in the event that interviews were impossible in Huambo.

the first cycle.¹⁶ The third cycle involved interviews with people who have lived in the *bairros* for more than 10 years, with the aim of a more in-depth investigation of questions linked to solidarity, social cohesion and forms of organisation. In the last cycle, interviews were carried out to study more thoroughly certain forms of organisation that had been identified: those linked to churches, those linked to local power structures and those promoted by NGOs.

In each cycle, basic concepts and questions to be investigated were defined at the beginning along with the hypotheses (or, in other words, tentative replies to the questions to be explored), categories of information to be obtained, and the research strategy.

Information was gathered using semi-structured interviews. The team used a question guide with open questions, but new questions were posed as the interview proceeded testing the topics as they arose. Interviews were carried out with inhabitants of the *bairros*, *Sobas*, members of Residents' Commissions, Local Administrators, NGOs working in the *bairros* and church ministers. Some individual interviews were conducted, while others were done in groups. Usually men and women were interviewed separately. In Luanda all the interviewees spoke Portuguese. In Huambo, some interviewees spoke Umbundu, others spoke Portuguese. In Lubango some interviewees spoke Umbundu, others Olumwila (the language of the Ovamwila, a sub-group of the Nhaneca-Humbe), others Portuguese. The teams of interviewers included people who spoke the appropriate languages.

A local team of NGO personnel conducted the interviews in each city, supervised by a member of the main interviewing team. Before starting interviews, each team was trained in the methodology and practice of qualitative research.

Various interview guides were used in the different phases of the research, although always maintaining some basic questions. Interviews were conducted by teams of two or three people, one of whom guided the interview while the others wrote the replies in a notebook. Transcripts were prepared from the notes (using a normal word-processing program); these were filed in an organised manner (by survey stage and by geographical area) in a computer and on paper.¹⁷ Usually the transcripts of the interviews followed the structure of the question guide. At the same time the transcripts tried to respect the interviewee's way of speaking – the words, type of sentence structure and way of

¹⁶ And showed that we should reinterpret some of these impressions of migration and the growth of cities.

¹⁷ We tried a computer program that analyses qualitative data, but did not use it for the research. There were difficulties using the program for texts in Portuguese (which has accents); and it was more convenient to analyse the texts on paper than on a computer screen.

expressing ideas. Normally the other members of the team reviewed the text of the transcript to reduce to a minimum the amount of the interview lost in transcription.

5.4 Analysis

The process of analysis ran in parallel with the collection of information. Examination of the information gathered during one of the survey phases redefined what data would be collected in the subsequent phase. Analysis involved studying and interpreting information in the transcripts of interviews.

The transcripts of the different interviews permitted the construction of summaries about each *bairro* and city. The process of compiling these summaries enabled **categories and sub-categories** of information to appear – which subsequently assisted the analysis. Some of the important categories of information extracted from the interviews are:

- characteristics of the neighbourhoods or cities (growth, boundaries, structure, administrative organisation, origins of the population services);
- different kinds of local leadership;
- individual migration patterns;
- processes by which migrants settled in the cities and *bairros*;
- people's way of life;
- methods of solidarity, neighbourliness, mutual aid;
- the different associations and organisations for collective action.

In the transcripts were marked the parts of text relating to each category of information.¹⁸ The reading of this information, marked by category, taking into account the initial questions and hypotheses, permitted the emergence of themes, similarities, relationships, patterns, differences, and sequences in the data.

The process of constant analysis provided tentative conclusions that could be tested in the subsequent phase. This process also allowed the preparation of interim summary documents that provided a synthesis of knowledge at that time, the quality of the data, what information was still missing and a plan for collecting the rest of the data. These documents were analysed in group meetings.

¹⁸

Although a particular category of information might appear in the same place in each transcription (corresponding to the original question), it could also show up in other places. Details about a certain topic can appear in various parts of a document because a semi-structured interview allows a subject to be revisited later if an interviewee wants to clarify something. Marking the documents according to categories of information helps us to find information on a particular topic.



II . HISTORICAL OUTLINE:
URBAN GROWTH AND
RURAL SOCIAL CHANGE
DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

CONTENTS

II HISTORICAL OUTLINE: URBAN GROWTH AND RURAL SOCIAL CHANGE DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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1. AIMS OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter describes, in a summarised form, the history of Angola from the time of the Berlin Conference and the start of effective colonial occupation, events that began a new phase of Portuguese colonialism. The aims are:

- to understand in what way historical events led to migrations and the “physical” evolution of the cities: the growth of the cities, the type of occupation of physical space and population growth. One of the initial hypotheses of this study was that the forms of organisation for collective action are determined by the characteristics of the urban migration, and by the way the cities have grown. There is a need to understand the historical context in which these phenomena have occurred.
- to understand in what way historical events since the end of the 19th century had an impact on rural forms of collective action. One of the initial research hypotheses, on which the study was based, was that traditional rural collective action might form the basis of current peri-urban collective action. Therefore there is a need to understand the impact of social change on rural forms of collective action during the 20th century, so as to create a clearer picture of the forms of collective action that migrants might have brought from the countryside to the city.

For this reason, the chapter emphasises historical events that relate to migration, growth of the cities and alterations to the rural forms of collective action. The Chapter does not try to be a synthesis of Angolan history since 1885. For the same reasons, this historical summary is divided into periods which correspond to the various phases of migration and social change:

1885 - 1945	The first years of effective colonial occupation of the interior
1945 - 1960	The coffee boom and the beginning of industrialisation
1960 - 1974	The nationalist uprisings and the colonial policy reforms
1974 - 1981	The chaotic independence process and the country's first few years
1981 - 1991	The years of “destabilisation”
1991 - 2000	The elections, the post-election war, the Lusaka Protocol and its collapse.

It is difficult to compile a history of migration in Angola. There is little documentation and some is of doubtful quality. Although it is clear that the present distribution of population is different from that of 1975, which in turn differs from the pattern that existed in 1900, there is not much accurate data. No-one has ever done a complete study of internal migration in Angola.¹ In the colonial period the authorities organised censuses in 1940, 1950, 1960 and 1970, although there are some questions about how accurate these were. The last comprehensive census was held in 1970, but the complete results were never published (Torres, 1989). Since independence the only census was a partial one in 1983 and 1984.² There are some population estimates, but these are inconsistent since they used differing definitions, methods and assumptions. For some of the figures from Huambo and Lubango, it is not clear whether they refer to the city or the Municipality (around these cities there is a significant rural population that lives under the jurisdiction of the administrative centre of the municipality). It is difficult to draw conclusions when there are so many doubts about the data.

Similarly, there is no secure information about solidarity, mutual aid and collective action in rural Angola. Social change was not studied very much during the colonial and post-colonial periods, except for a short period just before colonial rule ended.³ Based on the few studies that exist, this chapter gathers what information there is about rural social change in Angola and its impact on solidarity, mutual aid and collective action.

2. 1885 - 1945: THE FIRST YEARS OF EFFECTIVE COLONIAL OCCUPATION OF THE INTERIOR

Before 1885 Portugal only effectively occupied certain places on the Atlantic coast and inland from Luanda on the River Kwanza. The colony comprised coastal districts (Luanda, Benguela, Mocâmedes and Ambriz) and the inland district of Golungo Alto (Neto, 1999b). Away from the coast, trade was in the hands of the local population. Luanda and Benguela were more trading stations than cities. In 1900 there were just two cities in Angola: Luanda with 20,000 and Benguela with 10,000 inhabitants (NEP, 1992).

The final years of the 19th Century and the early years of the 20th Century, after the Berlin Conference (1884 - 1885) and the official end of slavery, correspond to the period during which the map of the country was defined through intense military activity. For the first time, the interior of Angola was effectively occupied through the subjugation of

¹ Confirmed in an interview with the Centre for Population Studies and Research (CEIP) at the Agostinho Neto University, Luanda.

² During 1983 in Cabinda, Luanda and Zaire Provinces; in 1984 in Namibe Province and Lubango, Uige, Negage and Namibe Municipalities.

³ Pössinger (1973), Messiant (1998) and Pacheco (2001) mention the lack of information in these areas.

the people who lived there and the imposition of the colonial administrative system. During this period the railways were built and religious missions established. At the same time some of the inland cities were founded (for example Huambo, Lubango⁴, Uíge and Malange) and the first steps taken in Portuguese settlement in the interior.

Until 1875 **Luanda** covered only what is today the low-lying area between the Fort and the Praça do Ambiente, and the higher land between the Fort and the current site of the Josina Machel Hospital. At the end of the 19th Century the first services in the city were introduced (the railway, the water supply from the River Bengo, and telephone services). The occupation of the higher lands, at the same time, marked the start of the process of racial segregation in the city. Houses with thatched roofs in Coqueiros were destroyed and the (black) inhabitants driven up to higher land in Ingombotas and Maculusso. This process was further accelerated, at the beginning of the 20th Century, with the expansion in migration from Portugal to Angola.

Racial segregation was enshrined in the law, although it never developed into an institution like apartheid in South Africa. The Native Statute, legally in force until 1961, created two different relationships between individuals and the Portuguese State. To be declared “civilised” and become Portuguese citizens “negroes and their descendants” had to satisfy certain cultural and economic requirements. No such demands were made of whites. In 1960 only 2% of the non-white population was in the “civilised” category. The others had the status of “natives”, which meant they were not citizens and were subjected to a different legal regime with fewer rights. The racial criterion meant that whites were “civilised”, even though a high proportion of them were illiterate (Neto, 1997) (Neto, 2001).

Thus began the division between the *baixa* and the *musseque*, a social and racial demarcation fundamental to the organisation of the urban space, although the arrangements were always more fluid than in South African cities.

The *baixa*, the central part of the city, became synonymous with the urbanised area where the whites lived. *Musseque* geologically means the sandy soils that surround the city of Luanda but

“the word came to refer to areas surrounding the city occupied by the poorer inhabitants of the capital. The term still refers to a kind of urban morphology that is improvised, precarious and constantly expanding)” (Carvalho, 1989).

⁴

Later Sá da Bandeira and then, after Independence, Lubango once again.

Until 1940 the urbanised part of Luanda lay within a radius of 1.5 kilometres, and the present line of the Avenida Lenine was the boundary between the *baixa* and the *musseque*.

The city of **Huambo** was inaugurated in 1912, even though there were no buildings there at that time. The inauguration of the new city coincided with the arrival of the Benguela Railway on the Central Plateau. The Portuguese State gave considerable attention to the Central Plateau, in particular to the area around Huambo, as it was an area judged to be suitable for European colonisation and apparently had good land and a better climate than the coast. The plan was for Huambo to be the capital of Angola. A large area was reserved for the city of Huambo, within which the construction of huts “or wattle and daub, or anything that disfigures the exemplary European character the city should have”, was prohibited (Neto, 2000a). But the number of European immigrants arriving was fewer than had been hoped for. Until the 1950s the city was little more than a commercial supply station and administrative centre that also included the workshops of the Benguela Railway. Between the groups of houses were large empty areas. The city was occupied by white people, and around it appeared small groups of houses of local people; but these were always outside the large area reserved for the European city. In 1930 the population was 5000 (of whom 2000 were whites). The city of Huambo acquired, at this time, a colonial form of settlement with more rigid social and racial divisions, different from the older cities of Luanda and Benguela.⁵

In 1928 legislation made Huambo the capital of Angola and bestowed on it the name Nova Lisboa; Luanda became the provisional capital. But in practice Huambo never became the capital. Until the 1940s there was not even electric light, piped water or sewers.

The origins of the city of **Lubango** lie in the arrival in 1882 a thousand settlers from Madeira, following the defeat of the local African chief by the Portuguese army. The settlers scraped a living by subsistence agriculture, and by 1910 they numbered 1,700. It only became a city after Portugal took effective control of all southern Angola between, 1914 and 1918, and the railway from Moçâmedes to Sá da Bandeira had been built in 1923.⁶ Most of its inhabitants were white, and it grew slowly. The local people, the Nhaneka-Humbe, did not want to live in towns or cities (Henderson, 1990) and the settlements of local people around the city were small and temporary.

⁵ Our informants expressed the impression that Huambo was a cement city inhabited only by white people: “until 1975, only whites lived in the city. (...) The natives could not even go to the Catholic churches, the only went to the Catholic Mission of Canha (interview in Huambo).

⁶ After independence the city and port of Moçâmedes were renamed Namibe. Nevertheless the railway still uses the name Caminho de Ferro de Moçâmedes.

The effective colonial occupation of the interior of Angola during the early years of the 20th Century was felt in **rural areas** through the installation of a strongly centralised political and administrative apparatus, which was present even at a local level. Starting in 1907 this apparatus imposed a “hut tax”⁷, and various forms of forced labour. The colonial Administration, by involving village chiefs in collecting taxes and the recruitment for forced labour, reinforced certain centralising tendencies in the Bantu societies, to the detriment of co-operative features which enabled the whole group to participate (Neto, 1997). This started a process by which “the authority of the *sobas* was diminished and seriously discredited, since they started to appear to their people as agents of the colonial administration” (Pacheco, 1991).

Childs (1949) points out that the absence of many adults, who were involved in forced labour, and the need to work all available hours to be able to pay the taxes, had a negative impact on the Ovimbundu’s communal institutions. The *ondjango* had previously been a nightly meeting of all men and young males at which they ate together, planned communal activities and resolved problems. By the time of Childs’ observations,⁸ the *ondjango* (in this form at least) was disappearing, and other communal activities were becoming rarer. Social and communal traditions were breaking down (Péclard, 2000).

Another important factor in the rural areas during this period was the appearance of the Christian missions. The Christian Missions were founded at the end of the 19th Century and the start of the 20th Century, mostly in rural parts of the Central Plateau and the north⁹ and tried to end many aspects of traditional life, thus contributing to the structural decay of the old societies.

The missions wanted to create communities that would take the place of the traditional community; that would recreate forms of social cohesion, and reinvent local culture in their own way (Henderson, 1990). In this way Catholic and Protestant missions were responsible for profound changes in social and everyday relationships during the colonial period. Simultaneously they opened up some possibilities for social mobility, and nurtured well-educated elites who were culturally influenced by Christianity in various ways: their conceptions and ways of life, ideas about property and the family, social structures and everyday practices (Neto, 1999a).

⁷ Substituted by a Poll Tax, the imposto indigena, in 1919.

⁸ The 1930s and 1940s.

⁹ Chapter VI discusses the reasons for setting up Christian missions in rural areas, some of which were remote.

3. 1945 - 1960: THE COFFEE BOOM AND THE BEGINNING OF INDUSTRIALISATION

After 1945 the Angolan economy developed rapidly, and as a result migration from Portugal to Angola increased. This was the period of the coffee boom, which transformed part of northern Angola (a wide strip of land between Uíge and Gabela) into coffee plantations. Importing goods was difficult during the Second World War, and this stimulated some new industries (production of sausages, dairy products, furniture, bricks and tiles, tanning, paints and many other items) (Neto, 2000b). The cities expanded. According to Messiant (1989) “Luanda really started to grow in 1948 or 1949, and between 1940 and 1960 Luanda’s population grew by a factor of four and there was a tenfold enlargement of the city’s area”.

The coffee boom attracted significant numbers of migrants from Portugal, and much of the population increase in the cities was due to this white immigration. But at the same time industrialisation was a stimulus for people to migrate within Angola into the cities. The “contract”¹⁰ was used to recruit labour from the Central Plateau to the ports of Luanda and Lobito, and to areas of coffee production. In the north people migrated to Luanda to escape from compulsory cultivation of certain crops. Between 1940 and 1960 the population of **Luanda** jumped from 61,028 to 224,540 while the percentage of these inhabitants who were white grew from 14.7% to 24.7%.

“The urbanised white part of the city started to expand rapidly by sending tentacles into the sprawl of huts forming the *musseques*, which therefore had to retreat to areas more and more distant” (Amaral, 1968, quoted by Carvalho, 1989).

The rapid expansion of the city continued “without a real plan” (Pepetela, 1990). To the south of where Avenida Lenine now lies, the Bairro de Café was built with the profits from the coffee trade. The former inhabitants of the area, where the Braga *musseque* stood until then, had to move further out. The Operário and Cruzeiro urbanised neighbourhoods were built where the Burity *musseque* had been and later Alvalade was built where the Bananeiras *musseque* had been.¹¹

“Thus the *musseques* arose from displacements of people who already lived in the capital, as well as from the incessant flow of migrants from the countryside” (Carvalho, 1989).

¹⁰ Recruitment that was initially forced labour – particularly from the Central Plateau to the coffee plantations, to the ports of Luanda and Lobito and into the fishing industry. Later, land shortages on the Central Plateau drove the inhabitants to “work under contract” without being compelled to directly.

¹¹ A small section of the Bananeiras *musseque* still exists on the edge of Bairro Alvalade.

In 1960 Luanda's built-up area extended as far as the railway line to the east of Rangel and to the airport. Around the "white city" there were *musseques*, and in turn these were surrounded by areas comprising vegetable gardens and farms, but with a few houses along the main roads.

Huambo and Lubango grew and developed similarly due to new industries, but they continued to be mainly cities of white people. The small groups of houses around Huambo and around Lubango grew gradually, but stayed separate from the "white city".

The **Huambo** area continued to receive special attention. The industrial capacity of the city grew markedly during this period. The areas where the local population lived started to take the form of native *bairros* "but still with considerably fewer inhabitants than now" (according to interviewees). The boundaries between the *bairros* and the rural areas were indistinct, and most inhabitants were still involved, at least some of the time, in agriculture in the city periphery or nearby.

In **Lubango** industries to process agricultural produce were set up during the 1950s. But the growth of the city depended mainly on government projects in the southern region (dams, colonial settlements and the railway), and on the military headquarters located there. The city's prosperity and growth fluctuated according to the circumstances of these projects (Urquhart, 1963). In 1960, the population of Lubango was still 50% white.

Both Lubango and the city of Huambo received, during the 1950s, a large number of immigrants from Portugal. The pleasant climate of the highlands, considered less difficult for Europeans than the coastal plain, attracted these immigrants, as did the plans for development of the centre-south of Angola and the existence of the Benguela and Moçâmedes Railways. The arrival of such a large number of migrants, who came with the intention of staying, and the various large development projects, provided a strong stimulus to the growth of agriculture and cattle-raising in the region.

During the 1950s **in the rural areas**, particularly on the Central Plateau and in the north, antagonism grew between the local people and the settlers who came in ever increasing numbers. Until 1950, migration from Portugal to Angola, and European agricultural settlement, was less than the colonial government had hoped for. It increased rapidly after 1950 and led to extensive expropriation of land. Dispersion of the population (caused by the settlers taking the best land) and forced cultivation disturbed social relationships. Disruption of the society also resulted from the continuing forced recruitment of labour, organised to satisfy the needs of the coffee plantations, of the settlers' farms and of the growing industries.

The arrival of European migrants who settled in agricultural regions, along with economic growth and the development of the railways, resulted in the foundation of a large number of small towns, particularly in the centre-south of Angola. The census of 1960 indicated that the Districts of Luanda (the capital), Huila, Benguela, Huambo and Bié had the highest numbers of people living in urban areas.¹² Huila, with 277, 411 inhabitants, already had in 1960 46% of its population living in urban areas.

The small towns (*vilas*), even if small and dependent on the rural economy, had a strong social impact in terms of expansion of the urban ideas and the integration of the rural economy in the growing capitalist economy. The small towns, with a small commercial sector and a few services, influenced a large rural area around them and induced changes in the social life of the local population. The small towns were, for many migrants to the large cities, the first opportunity for contact with urbanised social life and spatial organisation.¹³

4. 1960 - 1974: THE NATIONALIST UPRISINGS, AND THE COLONIAL POLICY REFORMS

For most of Africa the 1960s were the decade of de-colonisation, but the Portuguese Government preferred to follow a policy of continuing colonial occupation. This involved even more emigration from Portugal, and increased efforts in economic development. In 1961 protests broke out against the extension of compulsory crops and of plantations in the north of Angola, in Luanda and in the Baixa de Kassanje. The reaction of the colonial government was extremely violent. The brutality of this reaction, in its turn, provoked a massive flight of the population of the Provinces of Zaire and Uige to the Belgian Congo¹⁴ Democratic Republic of Congo, and the number of inhabitants of these areas decreased dramatically. Some authors suggest that this region lost 70% of its population (Schubert, 1999 quoting Pélissier, 1979).

Although the Colonial Government had banked on the continuation of colonial occupation on and large-scale European immigration, it also made some reforms in discriminatory laws. It introduced political and economic changes, which stimulated

¹² In the 1960 census, settlements of more than 2000 people were considered as urban areas.

¹³ We thank the historian Maria da Conceição Neto who drew our attention to the importance of the vilas in the expansion of the urban space in Angola.

¹⁴ The Belgian Congo later became the Republic of Zaire and, in the 1990s, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the time to which we are referring, the population of other areas of Angola, such as Baixa de Kassanje, also fled to the Belgian Congo.

processing industries. European immigration enlarged the internal market, and Angola experienced impressive economic growth during the 1960s.

"Angola's last fifteen years as a colony changed the face of the country more quickly and profoundly than all the previous decades of the century" (Neto, 2000b).

The liberation movements, encouraged by the events in the rest of Africa and responding to the violence experienced inside Angola, started the war for independence from bases outside the country at the start of the decade. The war itself only affected certain remote parts of Angola, but the Colonial Government stepped up the presence of the military throughout the country.

In **Luanda** the new industries that were established were located on the principal roads, where houses sprung up which were built to be permanent but were "*em transgressão*" (in violation). This term meant that they were not authorised and generally had improvised services (Torres, 1973). The presence of gardens and farms around the *musseques* impeded their expansion, and population density in the existing *musseques* rose to 800 people per hectare. New *musseques* appeared further out at Golfe (on land reserved for a municipal golf course which never was built), Cazenga and at Petrangol (in a strip between two areas of gardens and farms). Some *musseques* (for example, Rangel) benefited from public works that improved their services, but at the same time allowed quicker access by the colonial security forces. The authorities built some "*bairros populares*" (people's neighbourhoods), areas of economical houses with services. But they were not popular because they were so far from jobs and markets (Torres, 1973).

The migratory movements to Luanda had been, before the reforms of the colonial system in 1961, mainly a consequence of the flight from recruitment to the "contract", or the result of the "contract" itself (that brought to the capital city many workers for public services such as the port, the railway and the municipal services), and the attraction of the city had been only marginally responsible for the phenomenon (Messiant, 1989). After 1961, with the relatively rapid industrialization experienced in the capital city, migration to Luanda changed in nature and became more the result of attraction to the city, while the families of those already settled in the city helped the integration of new arrivals. Data for the population of Luanda at the time show the rapid migration: the black population of the city grew 102% between 1960 and 1970 (Cahen, 1989). In 1973, 50% of the inhabitants of the *musseques* had not been born in the city.¹⁵ The migrants to Luanda were Ambundu (74%), Ovimbundu (18%) and Bakongo (6%). The rapid growth of the city continued until 1974. Vast areas around the city were being prepared for urbanisation just before independence.

¹⁵

The population of the city increased by a factor of three between 1950 and 1970. The population of Luanda in 1970 was 480,613, of which 126,253 (26%) were white.

The scale and diversity of migration to Luanda stimulated the formation of dozens of sporting and recreational groups that provided spaces for sociability and solidarity. Monteiro (1973) notes the existence in 1973 of “about 20 suburban sporting clubs with their statutes approved” and more than 50 more informal sporting groups. As the names indicate (for example “*Atlético Clube de Icolo e Bengo*” or “*Sporting Mussera e Ambrizete*”) these clubs and recreational centres were strongly linked to regions

“and on this regional basis functioned the majority of neighbourhood associations, mutual aid societies (for burials and sicknesses), sporting and recreational clubs and even catechists” (Messiant, 1989).

Even though these associations and sporting clubs were weak and had few resources, they functioned as channels of assistance to new migrants and of solidarity for members of the community.

Huambo and **Lubango**, as well as Luanda, received new industries. The importance of these cities was confirmed by the creation, in the 1960s, of the Institute of Agrarian Research and the University Faculties of Agriculture and Livestock in Huambo, and the Faculty of Letters in Lubango. The small groups of houses of local people and the “native neighbourhoods” continued to grow, but maintaining a population density lower than in Luanda. It was still possible to graze animals and practice agriculture in the areas between the groups of houses, and people tended to return to the countryside at certain times of year for agricultural work.

Administrative pressures on the **rural areas** changed in nature after 1961. Although some of the pressures on rural people were eased, the forced inclusion in “strategic villages” and the competition from a new wave of settlers, aggravated social problems and pressure on the land (Pössinger, 1986). Control of land and natural resources was no longer communal, and there was a strong trend towards individualism and the privatisation of land and natural resources. Rural poverty grew, and there was more migration to cities, plantations or the fishing industry. On the Central Plateau traditional forms of organisation weakened, because the economic preconditions for them had vanished and had been substituted by cash crops and work “on contract” (Heimer, 1973) (Possinger, 1973). In rural areas, other factors were also at work in stimulating social change. The extension of education and the participation of Angolans in the colonial army brought new social actors to villages (the teacher and the soldier in uniform, as well as the older figures from Christian churches), and these began to rival in importance the *sobas* and village elders, especially among young people. The social changes seen on the Central Plateau were repeated in the north (Pacheco, 1991) and, on a lesser scale, in some parts of the south (Urquhart, 1963).

5. 1974 - 1981: THE CHAOTIC INDEPENDENCE PROCESS, AND THE COUNTRY'S FIRST FEW YEARS

On 25th April 1974 a coup d'état in Portugal (the "Revolution of the Carnations") put an end to the *Estado Novo*.¹⁶ This created the expectation that there would be decolonisation of all the overseas colonies. In the case of Angola, Portugal did not manage to create the conditions for a peaceful transition to an independent State. Portugal departed from Angola on 10th November 1975 with a declaration that they were handing power to the Angolan people, but without attending the ceremony at which the new Republic was proclaimed. The People's Republic of Angola was born just after midnight on the 11th November 1975 in Luanda, proclaimed by the MPLA, and at the same time UNITA and the FNLA proclaimed another Republic in Huambo. Already there was war between the two groups of the liberation movement, and the country had been invaded in the south by the SADF¹⁷ and in the north by Zaire, armies that supported UNITA and the FNLA. By then the country had already lost most of its Portuguese residents and those of Portuguese origin.

The departure of Portuguese firms, technical staff and traders had a serious effect on the rural economy, and it reverted to being a subsistence economy. Where this strategy was impossible, the collapse of the rural economy encouraged migration to the cities.

During 1974 and 1975 there was conflict in **Luanda**. In a similar fashion to that in the rest of the country, an air-bridge transported almost all the white inhabitants of the city to Portugal between May and October 1975. During the following years, houses and flats left empty were occupied by other city residents, or by Angolans who had returned from exile. Migration from the countryside to the city continued, but the total population and the total area of the city hardly changed.

Most of the white population of **Huambo** and **Lubango**, except UNITA militants, departed in 1975. By November 1975, UNITA controlled both cities.

In **Huambo**, according to our interviews, the abandoned houses in the urbanised area were occupied by Angolans who had been Portuguese government civil servants, and by traders from the peri-urban areas. Some people from the shanty town who were already familiar with the urban houses started to move into the urbanised area.

During February 1976 the Government recaptured both cities, with the aid of Cuban troops, and UNITA was obliged to leave. According to our interviews, some residents of the urban and peri-urban areas of **Huambo** went into the bush with UNITA.

¹⁶ The undemocratic regime established in Portugal in 1930.

¹⁷ South Africa Defence Force, the armed forces of South Africa.

In February 1976 UNITA decided to withdraw into the bush, and the SADF fell back to near the Namibian frontier. These retreats were the result of advances by the Government with the support of Cuban troops. One phase of the war had ended, and there was at least some stability. In the following years there were sporadic attacks by the SADF (for example, in May 1976 against Namibian refugees in Cassinga); and the SADF provided UNITA with a limited quantity of supplies, provoking some incidents on the Central Plateau. In December 1979 UNITA established itself in Jamba (in Kuando Kubango) close to the Namibian frontier.

The relative peace of these years, but the continued decline of the rural economy, led to a gradual migration to the cities by migrants who slowly left rural areas where they felt abandoned.

6. 1981 - 1991: THE YEARS OF “DESTABILISATION”

In 1981 a new phase of the war started. Between 1981 and 1983 invasions by the SADF forced people in southern Angola to migrate. Simultaneously UNITA managed to extend its control in eastern Angola area to the edges of the Central Plateau, and closed the Benguela Railway in the east. Refugees flowed from Moxico into Zambia. The Central Plateau started to be very unsafe (in northern Huila, Huambo, Bie and inland Benguela), and displaced people began moving from the countryside into the cities (capitals of communes¹⁸ and municipalities) and to Huambo and Lubango.¹⁹

In the mid-1980s UNITA began to use the Republic of Zaire as a base and UNITA began to mount operations north of the River Kwanza. The intensification of insecurity on the Central Plateau, and insecurity in the provinces of the north, set off a movement of people into the towns, provincial capitals and then to Luanda. The small towns lost their traders, teachers and other educated personnel; they became places where people displaced from the countryside concentrated.

The signing of the New York Accords (22nd December 1988) between Angola, Cuba and South Africa, led to the SADF drawing back to Namibia and the departure of Cuban forces from Angola. But the war between the Government and UNITA continued, particularly in the north. Between 1988 and 1991 instability in northern Angola increased, causing a continuous exodus of the population towards Luanda. Namibia became independent in March 1990, a development which put an end to South Africa's direct

¹⁸ **Translator's note: “commune” is a translation of “comuna”, a subdivision of a municipio.**

¹⁹ **Interviews in Huambo and Lubango.**

involvement in the Angolan war. Stability in southern Huila and in Kunene allowed people displaced from those provinces to return.²⁰

After 1979 the city of **Luanda** had started to receive a large number of Angolans who had been exiled in Zaire in the 1960s. Initially returnees from Zaire occupied empty flats in the *Baixa*, but later they started to build houses in areas set aside for construction (but where no building had started). The best-known neighbourhood of this kind is Palanca (close to the road from Catete and Viana). There are other areas of this type in the area where the present research was focussed: to the east of the long-established Petrangol *musseque*; and at Mabor where the roads and plots marked out before independence were maintained, but with various houses or outbuildings on each plot.

At about the same time, migrants from the countryside started to build in areas where there were gardens and farms before 1975. Similarly people began moving from the old *musseques*, suffocated by high population densities, to land available for the first time in areas slightly further out. The Golfe *musseque* expanded into the surrounding areas. The Val Saroca area (between the railway and the old Petrangol *musseque*) was occupied. Subsequently *musseques* were built in bands that were increasingly further from the centre of the city: by 1986 the areas between Petrangol *musseque* and the road from Kikolo to the cement factory were occupied; and by 1991 so were areas to the east of this road.

In **Huambo** and **Lubango** this was the time when areas with small groups of houses became peri-urban *bairros*. From the early 1980s, UNITA began to take over the municipalities of the Central Plateau, and to threaten the city of **Huambo** itself. Insecurity caused a gradual movement towards Huambo from nearby rural areas and from other Municipalities. The rural area around Huambo, about 3 to 5 kilometres from the centre, became depopulated due to the insecurity and people concentrated in the peri-urban areas, voluntarily or forcedly. The spaces between the small groups of houses were occupied. The peri-urban area grew within its existing perimeter, because outside this limit there were fields belonging to individuals who never left, and because the area already inhabited (which still had some space available) was safer.

In **Lubango** people arriving from rural parts of the Central Plateau created new *bairros* to the north of the city, while people coming from Plateau towns and from areas to the east occupied spaces between the groups of houses on the south side of the city.

²⁰

After 1990 they were not affected much by the war.

Similarly in the **countryside**, the “dirty war”²¹ caused significant transformations. In this type of conflict the civil population is the main target and “the attacks devastate the social and cultural foundations of a society” (Nordstrom, 1992).

“Fear is not only a response to danger but enters the collective memory, becomes a chronic condition and... disturbs social relationships, eroding confidence within families, between neighbours and between friends... and divides communities (Green, 1994).

7. 1991 - 2000: THE ELECTIONS, THE POST-ELECTION WAR, THE LUSAKA PROTOCOL AND ITS COLLAPSE.

The conversations between the Government and UNITA, begun at the end of the 1980s, led to the Bicesse Accords (31st May 1991), the beginning of 500 days of peace and the first elections held in Angola (29th and 30th September). The rejection of the results by UNITA led to a new war that, contrary to the previous wars, directly affected the cities. On 10th January 1993 UNITA began to shell Huambo. This was the start of the 55 day battle for Huambo which ended with UNITA capturing the city on 6th March 1993.

Between the end of 1992 and 1994 the whole country was unstable (except Namibe, Cunene, and Cabinda Provinces, and southern Huila) and waves of people became displaced. The war was intense and affected inland towns and cities directly (in particular Huambo, Kuito and Malanje). The internal economy suffered (what little of it had survived the post-independence collapse or been recuperated during the 1980s); the country was left even more dependent on the petroleum sector. The populations of Luanda, Benguela, Lobito and Lubango (the safest cities) rose rapidly. Perhaps three million people migrated between October 1992 and October 1994 (UCAH, 1995).

On 20th November 1994 the Lusaka Protocol was signed, signalling the start of a “fragile peace” (“neither war nor peace”) which lasted until December 1998. Despite the “fragile peace”, migration to the cities continued. Peace meant that some people in areas controlled by UNITA could migrate. People in the countryside who had not managed to escape during the conflict, but had little confidence that the peace would last, could now move.²² During 1997 and 1998 the number of military incidents increased, and this created more displaced people, discouraged confidence generally, and stimulated migration. In December 1998 serious battles started on the Central

²¹ Or “LIC – low-intensity conflict”. This is “a new type of war in the third world – neither classical guerrilla warfare nor external aggression: a kind of warfare that has elements of civil war but is dominated by the initiatives of external powers” (Minter, 1994).

²² Several factors undermined confidence: Jonas Savimbi did not attend the signing of the Lusaka Protocol; the UNITA Congress in Bailundo in February 1995 was openly hostile to the Protocol; and implementation of several steps set out in the Protocol was slow.

Plateau and in the north. Malanje, Kuito and Huambo were surrounded and shelled. The fragile peace had ended. In September and October 1999 an offensive by the Angolan Army led to the end of the sieges of these cities and the capture of Bailundo and Andulo, though this did not bring peace. The battles of 1998 to 2000 forced at least one million people to move.²³

The city of **Luanda** was the most sought-after refuge during the 1990s, and Luanda expanded even further. People occupied new areas of land in Cacuaco, Viana, Samba and Kilambi Kiayi municipalities. Simultaneously, even more people moved into areas that were already occupied. Some people built outhouses adjacent to existing houses, while others occupied the edges of certain roads or empty parcels of land (for example, some plots that had been reserved for factories).

Example of the way an area developed: BAIRROS VAL SAROCA and OSSOS

These two *bairros* form part of Ngola Kiluanje Comuna. Until 1975 farms covered most of the area although, on the highest land along the Estrada Antiga do Dande, there were some wooden houses (inhabited by people who worked at the Dembos coffee factories). Bones from the slaughter-house were deposited in part of the area, in the 1960s, which led to the name Ossos (bones).

Starting in 1982 people built houses there, initially in the highest part of the two neighbourhoods; a 1985 survey by Development Workshop showed that 10 hectares at the highest elevation (and the furthest from the city) contained about 200 houses. During the 1980s housing advanced into the lower areas; a 1989 survey by Development Workshop counted 1250 houses and found about 36 hectares to be occupied. In the 1990s occupation advanced further, to the Catete Road and the railway, and population density increased. Where there were 200 houses in 1985, now there were 400, and the area that contained 1250 houses in 1989 now had 2660. Population density had risen to 500 people per hectare, and the total population of the two neighbourhoods was about 40,000.

Lubango continued to grow during the 1990s, especially between 1992 and 1994 but less rapidly after 1995. Many of our informants felt that growth during the 1990s was less than growth during the 1980s.

The case of **Huambo** is different however. It was directly affected by the war, and sheltered displaced people during these years – although simultaneously other people left. The area of the city grew little, although the flows of migrants had been intense

²³

Web-site of The Global IDP Project, January 2001. <http://www.idpproject.org>

and complex.²⁴ In general the violence of the conflict on the Central Plateau led to a steep decline of the population in this region of the country as people fled to the coastal areas (especially the cities of Luanda, Lubango, Benguela and Lobito).

8. AFTER 100 YEARS OF PROFOUND CHANGES

8.1 The cities in the year 2000

The following table shows the growth of the 5 cities (Luanda, Lubango, Huambo, Benguela and Lobito) between 1940 and 2000, on the basis of the census (between 1940 and 1970) and on the basis of various estimates subsequently. The data may not be fully accurate but does show the rapid growth of the cities in this period.

Estimates suggest that by 2000, 20% of the total population of Angola would live in Luanda and another 17% in other urban areas (UNDP, 1999). It is estimated that the population of Luanda, Benguela, Lobito and Lubango (the safest cities) in 2000 was 40 to 50 times that of 1940. Luanda remains the most populous city. Even though, in recent decades, many of those who migrated to other cities subsequently moved on to Luanda, the population growth of Benguela, Lobito and Lubango has been spectacular and their populations are 10 times greater in the year 2000 than in 1970.²⁵

In the case of cities of the interior, various times directly affected by war, the population flows are more complex and there have been movements inwards and outwards at various times.²⁶ Better educated people, and those with more resources to pay for the available transportation, left the inland towns and cities, which now these shelter people who have come in from the countryside. The peri-urban area of Huambo has a significant population, but it did not grow as much as the equivalent parts of Lubango, Benguela, Lobito and Luanda. Even so, the population of Huambo is 20 times more than in 1940.

²⁴ See Chapter III for more information about the flows of migration in Huambo.

²⁵ There have also been large international migratory flows to and from Angola, for which few data are available.

²⁶ Our research interviews confirmed how complex this was. Pacheco (1997) gives details about: the complex flows of migrants in Huambo Province in recent years; voluntary and forced migrations in areas near the city; and the exodus from the city at times when it was directly affected by the war (to other provinces, or to the countryside).

	Luanda	Huambo	Lobito	Benguela	Lubango
1940	61,000	16,000	13,000	14,000	8,521
1960	224,000	38,000	50,000	23,000	15,086
1970 ²⁷	480,613	61,885	59,528	40,996	31,674
1978	738,000 ²⁸				
1983	937,263 ²⁹				
1984					104,847 ³⁰
1985	1,138,000 ³¹		338,300	219,000 ³²	
1988			347,450	225,000 ³³	
1991	1,538,779 ³⁴	300,000 ³⁵	400,000	300,000 ³⁶	
1995	2,100,000 ³⁷		600,000	355,000 ³⁸	
2000	3,276,991 ³⁹	300,000 ⁴⁰			400,000 ⁴¹

²⁷ Angola (1973)

²⁸ Núñez (1981)

²⁹ Census data, 1983.

³⁰ Census data, 1984.

³¹ UNICEF (1991).

³² World Bank (1991)

³³ UNICEF (1991) quoting a provincial census.

³⁴ UNICEF (1991).

³⁵ This figure is calculated on the basis of data for each commune given in UNICEF (1991). One of this document's tables gives a figure of 750,000, but this number seems unreliable and does not correspond to the data per Comuna found in the same report. Minter (1994) and Tvedten (1997) mention 1,000,000 as the city's population at that time, but give no justification or sources for this figure. Interviews suggest that the population of the city increased during the 1980s because of the influx from rural areas, but that there was also an exodus to Benguela, Lobito, Luanda and Lubango.

³⁶ World Bank (1991) and UNICEF (1991) have slightly different figures.

³⁷ Dar al Handasah (1996). This was a quite careful estimate of Luanda's population in 1995, done for the Provincial Government. However, other official documents give numbers from 3 million to 3.5 million.

³⁸ Burnside International (1997).

³⁹ Estimate by the National Statistics Institute of Angola.

⁴⁰ Calculation performed during the research on the basis of data provided by various NGOs giving figures per neighbourhood and per comuna.

⁴¹ Estimated on the basis of reports by the NGO Care International and of data from the Provincial Government.

8.2 Ideas and hypotheses about the present state of rural institutions

It is particularly difficult to write about the present state of rural institutions. In both the years before and after independence there were few studies about Angolan rural societies. The description throughout this chapter of the events that affected rural societies has aimed to assist in understanding the evolution that rural institutions might have gone through. The aim has been to generate some ideas and hypotheses about the present status of such institutions with particular emphasis on the aspect of solidarity (one of the objectives of this study).

Rural societies probably vary greatly according to the area. The east and south of Angola were, for example, less affected by the transformations of the colonial era than other regions. But at the same time they are areas with a low population that did not contribute significantly to the migration to peri-urban areas. There is also little available information about the present situation in the east of the country.

In the south, in the purely pastoral regions, there continue to exist the “traditional” institutions indispensable for organising the use of water, pastures and transhumance.⁴² With respect to the agro-pastoral regions of the south, the interviews carried out in Lubango and certain other documentation indicate the continuing existence of traditional institutions for mutual assistance.⁴³

In rural areas there is still ondjambi. Anyone who has oxen and a plough lends them, but in exchange later for work on the field of the person who lent them. The logic is that no-one should go hungry or be forced to steal. Ondjambi also means collective work with food and drink afterwards, and this still continues. (Interviewee from agro-pastoral region, in Lubango)

People help because tomorrow they may need help. In the rural areas there is this kind of help to make sun-dried bricks, or to help build a house. (Interviewee from agro-pastoral region, in Lubango)

A large part of the north of Angola (the Province of Zaire and the north of the Province of Uige) has a particular history. In 1961 a large proportion of the population emigrated to the Belgian Congo where they sought refuge in the cities. In the cities of the Congo the refugees had their first contacts with modernity in a different colonial context from that of Angola, where cultural assimilation was less demanded in the different channels of social promotion.⁴⁴ As they received little assistance, they survived mainly through mutual assistance. In the process these people created a new identity that emphasised

⁴² Documents of ADRA about projects in Manquete (Cunene) and Gambos (Huila).

⁴³ Interviews with people from the agro-pastoral regions of the south carried out in Lubango, and also with NGOs working in the region. See also Correia and Morais (1993) and CARE (1994).

⁴⁴ For more information about this social group see Perreira (1999), Tali (1993), Tali (1999), Messiant (1994) and Messiant (1995).

mutual support, using traditional solidarity values as its reference point. After Angolan independence these people returned to Angola, many of them settling in Luanda. They brought this new identity that is noticeable for its attitudes to traditional values of solidarity that are more positive than other inhabitants of the city (Robson, 2001a).

The rest of the country (between Lubango in the south and Uije and Dembos in the north) experienced significant transformations since the end of the 19th century as a result of the various processes described above. Many immigrants into the cities came from these areas. There may be differences between areas, or even between villages, in the way that the changes of the last 100 years have operated and have affected local institutions (Pacheco, 2001). But generally the information available indicates that community institutions are in constant decline. One reason mentioned for the decline of certain rural institutions is the insecurity that prevents people going into the bush.

“‘Evamba’ (circumcision ceremony) is no longer carried out because no-one can go to the bush or stay there any length of time. The ‘ovingandji’ (masked figures covered in straw) only appear occasionally even in rural areas”. (Huambo).

However the feeling of community and solidarity appears to still exist in rural areas and, even of the traditional institutions are weak, there continue to exist social rules, norms and codes (Pacheco, 2001).

As for practices of co-operation, there are indications that they continue to exist but less frequently than before (Pacheco, 2001) (Andrade, 2001). Respondents in this research noted, for example, that

“the present situation in rural areas is such that it is not possible to practice these forms of co-operation. There are fewer resources available, and there is a fear of bringing many people together to work together or realise ceremonies.”

The absence of secure data and of studies does not allow us to draw definitive conclusions. However, it seems to us plausible to think that, after such a long period of social transformations in rural areas in the colonial period, followed by various decades of instability, rural institutions of solidarity have been strongly modified. Mutual aid may occur in rural areas, but less frequently than before. Perhaps migrants from rural areas not arrive in the cities with their institutions of solidarity already weakened.





III .

POST-INDEPENDENCE

MIGRATIONS

CONTENTS

III POST-INDEPENDENCE MIGRATIONS

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1. CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRATIONS SINCE 1975

1.1 The growing importance of the war and displaced people

The growing importance of the war

Migration from rural to urban areas before independence took place in a context of economic growth. The Angolan economy collapsed immediately after 1975, and this had serious consequences for the rural economy so migration took on a different character. Simultaneously, intensification of the war increased rural isolation and economic crisis, and drove people, particularly younger ones, to leave the countryside for the cities even when their safety was not threatened. If the cities appeared to be the “promised land” before Independence, this was even clearer after 1975. Pacheco (2001) mentions war-induced economic collapse, lack of prospects and unemployment as important causes of the flight from the countryside by many people in Huambo Province.

As the military situation in Angola deteriorated, fleeing from danger became the greatest reason for migration into the cities. During recent decades many Angolans have had direct experience of this type of migration, a particularly painful and traumatic process that has produced a group of people we now call “displaced people”.¹ Displacement of people started in the first years after independence, but became more widespread at the beginning of the 1980s when military instability again began to affect Angola.² By 1982 there were already about half a million displaced people in Angola (UNDRO, 1981), since when the number of displaced people has grown continuously.

Who are the displaced ?

Various sources say that in 1993 approximately three million people had left their areas of origin (ADRA and SCF, 1998). In 1995, after the Lusaka Protocol, there were still more than one and a half million displaced people (UCAH, 1995). The Global IDP Project’s Internet site states that the conflicts of December 1998 forced at least one million newly displaced people to flee. Given the unstable conditions in Angola since independence, it is difficult to calculate accurately the number of people who have been forced to abandon their land and move to safer places, and estimates from different sources often give different figures. One common difficulty with the data that are

¹ Another type of migration related to war is the movement of soldiers, particularly those in the national army. A soldier who is serving in a city far from his area of origin may, in due course, establish a family and settle down there, or may find it difficult to return to his original area.

² The phenomenon of displaced people may pre-date 1975, but it became of national importance, involving significant numbers of people, at that date.

available is that it is not clear exactly which displaced people have been considered³. Do the data include people in camps, or also include those who were taken in by relatives or friends? Do the data only include the most recent wave of displaced people; or also include people who were already displaced some years ago?

The various uses of the term mean that at times it is difficult to use the published data about displaced people. Examining the data published by humanitarian agencies with close attention leaves the impression that they are a series of numbers for the use for various bureaucracies, which do not reflect the complexity of the phenomenon in the field. One particular difficulty is lack of a defined time limit for the period someone remains “displaced” after arriving at the place of refuge. Often it is not clear if figures relate to the number of displaced people in a place who have arrived recently, or whether they include all the people listed for the distribution of humanitarian aid, without taking into account when they moved.⁴

In this study, people have been considered to be displaced if they were forced to abandon their areas of origin – due to war or because the conflict made them feel insecure – and had to seek another place to live in the same country.⁵ In this report we use the term to refer to people who migrated for these reasons and have been in a new area in the last two years. As we will see in this chapter, within two years most displaced people are settled in the place of refuge. During the period of adaptation and installation in the place of refuge, displaced people form a special group due to the various types of vulnerability experienced. The term is not used for those who, although they were once displaced people, are now installed in a new area.⁶

1.2 Displaced people: more of them head for the cities

During the 1980s most conflict was in rural area, far from the urbanised parts of Angola. During this period, people who abandoned their insecure rural villages found refuge in small inland towns and in inland cities as well as the larger cities.

³ This is on top of the regular difficulties one has compiling data for Angola. The Web site of the Global IDP Project in Geneva does not manage to be more precise than “the conflicts in Angola displaced between 1 million and 2.5 million people between the middle of 1998 and the middle of 2000”. <http://www.idpproject.org>.

⁴ For example, Duffield (1994) complains that use of the term “displaced people” does not show more clearly the relationship between the war and a particular group of such people, nor the result in terms of the group’s circumstances, its vulnerability and its real needs.

⁵ In full, “internally displaced people” or IDPs. Others, for the similar reasons, seek refuge in another country and therefore become “refugees”.

⁶ Whenever figures from another document appear in this report, the definitions are given. But before using any such numbers, consulting the original report is recommended.

The war that erupted after the 1992 elections led to insecurity in small towns, District capitals, and even in cities particularly on the Central Plateau of Angola. It was more violent, and aggravated Angola's crisis and economic collapse. Displaced people started to seek protection in urban centres, and most of them eventually arrived in cities on the coast. Many people have moved in stages: from the inland village to the municipal capital, and then to the provincial capital or to Luanda, seen as the only "safe haven". The origins of the capital's inhabitants are now very diverse. As we shall see, people "mix" in the peri-urban *bairros*.

1.3 The diversity and complexity of displacement

It is sometimes assumed that displaced people abandon their original homes en masse. However, the reality is that many of the people we would categorise as displaced did not migrate during the periods of intense conflict, nor did they move in large groups. In general terms, displaced people have experienced one of two situations. They have either fled conflict which flared up suddenly, or which seemed to be on the verge of starting; or they have left their village or town at a time when the inhabitants lacked confidence and so felt insecure, even though the circumstances were relatively peaceful. These situations generate two different kinds of displacement.

In the first case they may flee en masse⁷. An example of this was the post-election conflict which, particularly on the Central Plateau, caused people of all social classes to flee together.⁸ But then; people who abandon their villages in a large group do not necessarily stay in a group for the whole journey, and may not reach the destination with that group. Andrade (2001) writes:

"Initially they tended to form large groups which provided solidarity and mutual support to deal with the difficulties. As the walk continued the circumstances changed – big groups were more vulnerable to attack because their pace was slower. Therefore many small groups (frequently just one nuclear family) split off and travelled faster; but the potential for solidarity and mutual support was diminished."

During the last few years, conflict (real or potential) has never disappeared completely in Angola. Often, people have left their villages because they continued to feel unsafe and because they had an opportunity to move. They migrated even when there was relative stability. After violent conflict had affected them, people waited for peaceful interludes (or for some level of calm) to leave the areas they considered to be still insecure, even after the fighting stopped. The afflictions suffered by the people of

⁷ A document that discusses displacement in large groups is Richardson (1999).

⁸ People in Kasseque camp near Huambo, and in other camps of this type in the province, live in groups according to their origins. They say they arrived in large groups. In one of the Huambo interviews we were told that the 1998 displaced people were the first to arrive "in bands".

Angola during a series of wars have taught them that the end of fighting is not a sign of peace. Rather it is a moment of cease-fire in a war that does not end, and their areas of origin seem to be always the setting for this conflict. Another consequence of the long succession of wars is that many people have experienced multiple displacements. The uncertainty about the possibility of war ever ending may explain why one of the large waves of displaced people into Luanda came after the signing of the Lusaka Protocol. In this kind of displacement most migrants leave their villages or towns in small groups. Sometimes a group comprises members of just one family. In some cases relatives who are already settled in safe areas come to collect them.

Another impediment to the formation of groups for the journey is the lack of transport. Most displaced people leave their villages on foot, or they pay for lifts on lorries or pick-up trucks and take what they can (animals, agricultural products or whatever money they still have). Even groups that are large initially lose people during the journey; some move more slowly, or do not find space in a vehicle. Many people have been displaced several times, also reducing the tendency to stay in large groups. Comparing the cases studied by Andrade (2001), and on the basis of interviews during this research, it seems that the size of the groups reduces the longer is the journey. While groups of people from the same origin may be found in some inland towns and camps for displaced people, people arrive in the larger cities as individuals or families.

The tendency for groups to fragment, combined with the fact that quite a number of migrants do not travel in any group, is an important point for this study. It is part of the reason why, contrary to a common myth, displaced people do not reach the cities "in communities", and to some extent explains the heterogeneity of the peri-urban *bairros* that were studied, a characteristic that will be mentioned frequently later in this report.

2. ORIGINS OF DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE CITIES INCLUDED IN THE RESEARCH

2.1 City of Lubango

The city of Lubango grew rapidly in the 1980s, after South Africa launched its invasions of Cunene Province. Simultaneously UNITA, with support from the South African government, began military action in the rural areas of the Central Plateau and this forced people to migrate into Lubango from rural areas to the north of the city.

Some of the displaced people who came from the south of Angola settled in other towns in Huila Province (Castanheira de Pêra, Matala, Humpata and other towns on the Huila Plateau), while others went directly to Lubango. It is apparently in this period that Lubango grew most quickly.

Later, during the post-election war, towns on the Central Plateau were also affected by war and many of their inhabitants fled. People who had been displaced previously from rural areas sought refuge again in rural areas, which were at that time slightly safer. The long-established residents of these towns fled to Lubango. Since then, population growth has been less rapid.

The most important displacements to Lubango have been from:

- the rural areas of the south when South Africa invaded at the beginning of the 1980s, though since 1990 some of these migrants have returned to their areas of origin;
- Nganguela areas (eastern Huila and northern Cuando Cubango) throughout the 1980s and 1990s;
- rural areas of the Central Plateau during the 1980s and 1990s;
- small towns of the Central Plateau in 1992 and 1993.

Most displaced people came from inland areas of the province, or from the provinces surrounding Huila Province. Here they joined the smaller groups of previous migrants from these areas, migrants who have arrived from various regions for commercial reasons (some Bakongo people, for example), and soldiers who were stationed in Lubango and decided to remain.

2.2 City of Huambo

Most inhabitants of Huambo Province are Ovimbundu though, as in Lubango, there are also a few people from other parts of Angola who came to Huambo when doing their military service, or to do business, and decided to settle there.

During the last 25 years the pattern of migration in the city of Huambo has been complex, as it was one of the places most affected by the post-independence wars. The major population movements were as follows.⁹

1983 - 91

UNITA's military action intensified in the countryside and in some peri-urban areas surrounding the city. Some inhabitants of the urban and peri-urban zones left in search of a safer city (Benguela, Lubango or Luanda). A few people moved from the peri-urban

⁹ From information collected during interviews between December 1999 and July 2000.

areas to be nearer the city centre where there is less insecurity. Displaced people from rural parts of the province migrated towards the city.

1991 - late 1992

The Bicesse Accords were signed and elections followed. UNITA came to Huambo again, and its militants come in from the bush. Some people, who were from Huambo but had been living in other cities, returned to the city's urban and peri-urban areas. Some displaced people who had found refuge in the peri-urban zone returned to their areas of origin in rural Huambo Province.

Early 1993

The "55 Day War" (13th January - 8th March). Large groups of people of diverse social origins left the city of Huambo and took refuge in Benguela and Huila Provinces, or returned to the countryside where they felt safer.

March 1993 - November 1994

UNITA controlled the city. More people left the city when they could, to the coastal provinces where many were received in camps for displaced people. For some, Benguela and Huila Provinces were just places of transit from which they continued towards Luanda. UNITA militants and people arriving from the countryside occupied the houses that had been abandoned.

End of 1994 - 1998

The Government regained control of the city. Some UNITA militants left. Many inhabitants of Huambo took advantage of the "peace" to leave the city and make their way to the coast, particularly to Luanda. Some people who had been displaced to coastal cities returned to Huambo. From 1995 until the end of 1998 the situation remained relatively stable.

Since the end of 1998

Fighting started again, close to Huambo. There was a new flow of peasants into the city of Huambo from the rural areas around. At the same time many people left the city and its peri-urban zones and went to other provinces. In November 1999, after the Government's recapture of Bailundo, some of these displaced rural people returned to their areas of origin and some people who had been displaced to other provinces began to return to Huambo.

2.3 City of Luanda: Ngola Kiluanje, Hoji ya Henda and Kikolo Comunas

The peri-urban *bairros* of Luanda are much more heterogeneous than similar parts of Huambo and Lubango. Luanda is host to displaced people and migrants from various provinces. Moreover, many people of Bakongo origin who emigrated to Zaire in the 1960s and then returned to Angola after independence went to Luanda when they came back to Angola. And when the military conflict escalated, people from quite distant places sought refuge in Luanda¹⁰.

Generally the closer a *bairro* is to the centre of Luanda (to the *baixa*¹¹, in the words of our interviewees) the longer it has been inhabited. So Kikolo Municipality is the most recently occupied area of the three. Ngola Kiluanje and Hoji ya Henda *bairros* were settled at roughly the same time, and their population expansions have followed a similar pattern. Therefore we will discuss these two zones together.

Ngola Kiluanje and Hoji ya Henda Comunas

Settlement of the areas that are now Hoji ya Henda and Ngola Kiluanje Comunas started at the end of the 1960s. Before this, farms and fields covered this land. Part of what is now Hoji ya Henda Comuna was built on at the start of the 1970s with formal housing, most of which was occupied by Portuguese settlers and their families, or people from Cape Verde. Ngola Kiluanje Comuna started to grow soon after independence – people arrived who had been working on coffee plantations in Bengo and Kwanza Norte regions, and they came fleeing the war which raged during the independence period.¹² Both areas received people who had emigrated to Zaire before independence, but had returned to Angola after 1975.

During the 1980s these two zones continued to grow as more migrants arrived. According to interviewees, the population increased most rapidly between 1989 and 1992. This was the period of intense war in the northern provinces (1989 - 1991) but also the period of peace after the Bicesse Agreement. This information reinforces the idea that people move when there is peace as well as when there is war.

¹⁰ For example, according to a 1993 report (INE, 1993) displaced people in Lubango city at that time came from Huíla Province (79%) and Huambo Province (11%); in Luanda displaced people were from various provinces: Bengo (29%), Moxico (19%), Malanje (16%), Kwanza Norte (12%) and Huambo (10%). In Luanda this survey found no people displaced from Uíge Province; the report gives no clear explanation for this.

¹¹ Translator's note: in this context *baixa* means a low, flat place – in a city like Luanda the *baixa* is the coastal part of the city adjacent to the original port.

¹² A road passed through these regions.

The current inhabitants of these areas come from a variety of places, but mostly from the north of Angola: Bengo (Bula Tumba, Pango Aluquem), Kwanza Norte (Dembos), Malange, Uíge and Zaire are the areas of origin mentioned most frequently.

These *bairros* are nearer to the downtown area than many others, and there is no more open space in them for new construction. So plots of land are quite expensive. Some inhabitants sell their land or houses, and then move to *bairros* further out. Sometimes the purchasers of these properties are people who have similar intentions to the sellers – they sell their “downtown” dwelling and come to live in a “*bairro*”.

Kikolo Comuna

Compared to the two Comunas discussed above, Kikolo was occupied recently. Substantial parts of the Comuna continued to be large farms at the end of the 1980s; nowadays one can still find farms in those areas of Kikolo which are furthest from the centre of Luanda. Even Kawelele *Bairro*, one of the first to be settled, grew most rapidly in 1992 and 1993. In 1995 in Boa Esperança *Bairro* “there was still space for us to build”. Augusto Ngangula *Bairro* is still in the process of being occupied.

Kikolo Comuna received many migrants from the Central Plateau (this is another aspect that differs from Hoji ya Henda and Ngola Kiluanje). Kawelele and Boa Esperança *Bairros* are still populated by people of Ovimbundo origin (mainly from Huambo and Bié). Some of them had already migrated to Luanda in search of work at the beginning of the 1980s. Some interviewees returned to the Central Plateau in 1992, but subsequently came to the *bairro* yet again, this time accompanied by more relatives who have fled from the war on the Central Plateau.

Augusto Ngangula *Bairro* was settled more recently, and the population is more heterogeneous. Some inhabitants are from the Central Plateau, but others come from the north, particularly from Uíge. And, as already mentioned, others have moved there from more “expensive” parts of the city.

2.4 Some observations on the complexity of the migrations

As already noted, most of the migration of the last two decades has ultimately been a result of the war, which therefore generated population growth in the cities. However this single cause does not mean uniformity in the resulting migration patterns, and in practice there has been great diversity. Migrants’ journeys have been complex, a series of treks made at various times, in different directions, in a series of stages, and in large or small groups which often fragmented on the way. Moreover migrants (displaced people and others) are diverse, in terms of their ethno-linguistic origins, ages, social classes and reasons for migrating (military, displacement, or to obtain work).

All this means that, in practice, the common hypothetical model “transfer of village communities to cities” has been the exception rather than the rule. The heterogeneity of the peri-urban *bairros* studied is partly due to the diversity mentioned above; but another factor was a result of the way migrants, particularly displaced people, were received and settled in those *bairros*.

3. RECEPTION OF DISPLACED PEOPLE IN THE CITY; ADAPTING AND SETTLING IN

Displaced people usually have had to leave their homes suddenly, abandoning them and most of their belongings. They are thus potentially vulnerable materially. They also moved under psychologically harsh conditions, often experiencing violence, transportation problems, illnesses and deaths during the journey and feeling uncertain and insecure about the future.

Many displaced people experienced the move into the city as a sudden transfer from a rural to an urban environment, with completely unfamiliar surroundings in which they would struggle to establish themselves. The urban milieu has basic rules and ways of functioning that they do not understand, so it takes a long time for them to settle down in the new place. They arrive in the city but then go through a process of adapting before it can be said that they have settled in.

3.1 Receiving displaced people

The manner in which a displaced person is received is a basic factor governing whether the process of settling in is a success. When they arrive in the city, displaced people try to locate family or friends already living there. The presence of such people to receive new arrivals is a crucial factor in the process of adapting and settling in. Usually a camp for displaced people is only a place for a few days of rest, coinciding with a search for a relative or friend.

As one interviewee remarked, the family “**must** make the displaced people welcome”. They may take pleasure in receiving relatives who are in difficulty, but more importantly family norms (“the tradition” as various informants said) makes this course of action compulsory. However staying with relatives or friends is not easy, neither for the hosts nor for the guests. Usually the family in the city is very poor, while the displaced relatives are unable to “help with the food”. But some rural people have high expectations of their relatives in the city, people who had migrated previously, and believe that these urban members of their family live well. This belief puts more pressure on both parties, and the pressure makes the stay with relatives as brief as possible. It may be as short as a few weeks, or as much as two years when settling in is difficult.

Therefore, while family relationships have some difficult and delicate aspects (namely the contradictions between a “traditional” duty to show solidarity and the burden which the presence of displaced relatives places on the host family), the family remains the quickest and easiest way route to establishing oneself in the city.¹³

On arrival in the city, the family offers not only a place to stay but also plays a key role in helping the displaced to adapt to and settle into the life of the *bairro* and the city. The family introduces them to the *bairro* authorities and helps them to look for land. Above all it provides precious information to the newcomers, about life in the city and the “rules” of the informal market, how to gain a foothold in that market, which products yield most profit, where to set oneself up, whom to talk to, and so on. Sometimes the family lends the money that enables the displaced to start a small business or even purchase a plot of land on which to build a house. In some families’ backyards there is enough space to allow a displaced relative to build a small room.

Some displaced people belong to churches and religious assemblies, and networks linked to these provide another reception framework, providing support rather similar to that offered by family and friends. Many of these migrants carry recommendations from their hometown or village priest, addressed to priests of the same church who work in the city of refuge. The importance of churches and religious networks is an aspect that was mentioned in various contexts and will be examined again in Chapter VII.

If there are no family members or close friends in the city, camps or centres for displaced people provide an alternative shelter. The so-called “camps for displaced people” take different forms and may be organised in a variety of ways. It can be a “centre” formally created and managed by MINARS¹⁴ or aid agencies. But it may be a “gathering” of displaced people only remotely linked to these institutions, if at all. The location, how long it has existed, whether it was created by the authorities or humanitarian agencies and whether it has attracted the attention of this kind of institution are considerations that affect the condition of a camp for displaced people, and the nature of the support provided there.

¹³ In case studies of Benguela and Malanje, Andrade (2001) also mentions the importance of “family and friends” for displaced people – for their adjustment and particularly their access to gainful work: “Having family or friends at the new place of residence is a decisive factor in terms of work. It increases the chances of gaining access to the labour market and, even more, the probability of obtaining a social and occupational position that (on the a scale measuring prestige) is “good” in relation to the other displaced people.” [p.36] Newly-arrived migrants settle down and integrate. The fundamental role that relatives and friends play in this process is found in many cities (see Gondola, 1997, on Brazzaville and Kinshasa, for example) and in other types of migration. People migrating into Luanda in the 1950s and 1960s also mainly used this channel (Messiant, 1989: 145).

¹⁴ Translator’s note: MINARS is the Ministry of Social Services and Reintegration.

Damba Maria “camp” of displaced people in Benguela is an example of a camp with significant support from humanitarian agencies. It started as a group of tents donated by these agencies but which has now become a *bairro* in which displaced people are fully settled. This process has been relatively easy due to the proximity of a station where trains on the Benguela Railway stop, and of the Cavaco and Catumbela valleys that provide opportunities for paid employment. Moreover, the inhabitants of Damba Maria received support from humanitarian organisations for some time. Probably the fact that they arrived as a large group attracted the attention of humanitarian institutions and drew more support.

On the other hand, in *Bairro Cambalacho* (in Luanda), the Comuna administration gave a plot of land to a group of displaced people from Bengo. They built a “camp”, a group of huts of cardboard and bits of plastic, but received no aid from humanitarian institutions and live far from opportunities to work or to trade in the informal market. The displaced people in cardboard and plastic shacks on the hillsides of Boa Vista (also in Luanda) have less guarantee of being able to stay there though they are closer to trading and job opportunities.

Most displaced people have not migrated in a group, and have not attracted the attention of aid organisations and received little institutional support. Even if a “camp” provides a minimum of material support on arrival (the best case scenario)¹⁵, this support is unreliable and the inhabitants usually feel insecure and excluded. Furthermore, a displaced person who lives in a camp does not benefit from family information and social networking, so will find it more difficult to adapt to city life and will take longer to settle in.

Except in cases where camps have received a large amount of regular attention or are well located for job opportunities, displaced people tend to move on to the houses of relatives or friends.¹⁶

This explains why there are many more displaced people outside camps than are in them. According to statistics of the International Organisation for Migration, in January 1996 only 310,000 (24%) of the 1,287,000 displaced Angolans were in camps. The proportion was 58% in Huíla, 77% in Huambo, 59.5% in Benguela,

¹⁵ **Andrade (2001) mentions that “(...) receipt of assistance from the state or NGOs reduces the psychological pressure on people. It means that the product of their work improves their diet – and thus the quality of life for these displaced people and their families.”**

¹⁶ **Clearly it is better to go to a camp for displaced people than to receive no support at all. Those who do not have anybody to go to, nor are sheltered by social institutions, have the greatest difficulty adapting. Even if an individual's reception at a camp is important on arrival, he or she will settle down more easily if sheltered by relatives or friends.**

but only 3% in Luanda! (IOM, 1996). Moreover, it is likely that the number of displaced people outside camps is an underestimation, given that they are so difficult to count.

3.2 Adapting to the city and the importance of finding work

Changing to city life is a shock for most displaced people, and **adapting** is usually a long and difficult process. Given the dilemmas of living with relatives or friends, everyone wants to find their own place to live. Interviewees said that they consider that they have settled in the city, and adapted to it, when they start to live in their own houses.¹⁷

The amount of difficulty that displaced people encounter when trying to adapt to life in the city depends on many various factors. Some are related to individual characteristics, such as age, ethnic origin, educational level attained, household composition and previous occupation. Other factors are whether they are helped by their family or not, the type of *bairro*, the accessibility of housing, the kind of work available. These variables interact to create a variety of adaptation patterns and the degree of success in adapting.

In terms of successful adaptation (or lack of it) particular cases vary a lot, and sometimes are surprising. Some displaced people of peasant origin (from Dembos) struggled to adapt to life in Luanda, and preferred to go to Kikoca (outside Luanda) where they could continue to practice agriculture. But in Lubango, Ovimbundo people (who are just as much rooted in the countryside) have been forced to adopt a different way of life in the peri-urban *bairros*. Because they have not been able to gain access to land (all of which was already in use by local people) they have entered the informal trading market or made a living making and selling items such as bricks or drink.

Settling in a new environment is more difficult for older migrants. For example, most of the older displaced people in the peri-urban parts of Lubango are illiterate. So they have fewer resources to help them to settle down in the city, where counting and reading may be very useful for survival. Moreover, old people have more difficulty adapting to cultural differences and innovations. On the other hand, some interviewees were fairly well-educated youths who were struggling to adapt. Many of them had arrived alone, and knew nobody in the city. They have few possessions, do not go to school, experience serious social exclusion; and have to take any available odd jobs to survive.

In her case study of displaced people in Malanje and Benguela, Andrade (2001) mentions, as factors affecting adaptation to the way of life in the cities, the difficulty

¹⁷

In this research we use the terms “settle” and “establish oneself” to mean something different from “integrate”. “To integrate” (and the respective noun “integration”) means more than just settling in materially, a process we discuss; it also encompasses acquiring and integrating social and cultural models and behaviour which enable the individual to identify with the place and the community. In other words, as well as feeling integrated, the person is integrated.

for rural people in understanding the urban way of life, culture shock when confronted with other values and social norms and difficulties in making a living by means other than agriculture.

"Their lack of understanding of the urban environment, and of normal behaviour there; differences in moral values (between rural and urban areas); the need to struggle all the time just to survive; a feeling of insecurity, linked to the need for protection against petty thieves; becoming dependent on money, and the reorganisation of their lives; the existence of a market in goods, including public markets and shops; the need to learn how to do business...; nutritional habits that differ from those they are used to; they do not know how to spend free time..."

The question of how to make a living is crucial in the process of adaptation to the city. Having a source of income aids adaptation in several ways: it reduces material insecurity; it lessens the feeling that the migrant is a burden, and other difficulties with the host family; it supports the person's self-image and self-confidence; and it combats social exclusion. In addition finding one's own place to live almost always depends on earning money. So settling down in the *bairro* takes less time.¹⁸ Therefore the first aim for most recent arrivals is to get a job or become involved in an activity that generates income, even if this just goes to support expenses in the host family's house.

A migrant's chances of finding work depend on whether he or she has family or friends in the city. As already mentioned, relatives provide information about the local labour market. The formal job market is small, so most people engage in trade in the informal market. Social networks, in the *bairro* or the city, help new arrivals find a position in this informal market. Moreover, if a displaced person needs a loan to start a business, the family will be about the only possible source for this.¹⁹

Some displaced people, such as those who have no family or are poorer or who have limited access to social networks, have to start by accepting any odd-job that generates a little money, even if not enough to live on. The most frequently mentioned odd-jobs are: loading and unloading cars and lorries²⁰; cleaning or digging other people's fields; cleaning latrines. Usually the remuneration from such odd jobs is enough for survival, but not sufficient to enable the migrant to establish a presence in the informal market, or to save enough money for a plot of land. People become trapped in the circle of "odd-jobs, everyday survival, odd-jobs".

¹⁸ Some migrants manage to bring enough resources from their areas of origin (money, provisions or others) to pay the rent for a house during the initial period in the neighbourhood. However, this is rare.

¹⁹ For this kind of loan, often the lender will get some interest, although the amount of this may not be fixed in advance. One interviewee in Luanda said "people pay back the money with equity".

²⁰ In Roque Santeiro, in Luanda, such workers earn according to the number of sacks carried, the weight of the sacks and the distance they are carried.

In informal trade, an individual's level of poverty and social network govern which type of product they can acquire and then sell. In general therefore, the products vary according to the *bairro*. In Luanda one can buy more expensive items (household appliances, clothes, construction materials) in the *Bairro Ossos* (Ngola Kiluanje); but in *Bairro Cambalacho* people trade mostly in second-hand goods and cheap food. Generally, in Luanda a wider range of items and more "expensive" things are for sale than in provincial cities where displaced people involve themselves in trading products that are made at home or are cheaper: home-made drinks, bread, sun-dried bricks, salt, paraffin, charcoal and so on. In Huambo displaced people live in abject poverty, and most of them live from humanitarian aid and on the proceeds from selling agricultural products produced in fields around the city. It takes them a considerable time to build their own house, so they stay for long periods with relatives. Displaced people who are in camps are almost totally excluded from any social network outside their camp; so they must accept any work, and this usually leads to the insecurity of the vicious circle mentioned above.

Interviewees stated that informal trade is the quickest way to acquire enough money to start to build a two-room house (in Portuguese "*um quarto e sala*", literally "a bedroom and living room"), quicker than through paid employment of the kind a displaced person is likely to find.

3.3 With your own house you can settle down...

Displaced people think of themselves as established in the city when they are living in their own house (which they have rented, built or bought). However, various factors mean that the process leading to this transition is usually long and difficult. Displaced people of recent years have arrived in cities that were already crowded, and lack of space has been a major obstacle preventing them from settling in.

A smaller initial investment is needed for **renting**. But this can only be done if there is monthly remuneration that is more or less fixed, and thus some activity that generates a stable income. This is rare. Moreover, most people prefer to live in their own house. Tenants of a house, or (even worse) just one room, do not feel that they are "in their own house". Renting a house is expensive because the market is not large and there is considerable demand, particularly in Luanda. Tenants feel insecure, because at any time the owner may increase the rent or replace them with another tenant who will pay more. Renting is thus considered to be a sign of instability, and of incomplete settling in the city.

So in most cases a family wants to buy or build its own house. Few houses are for sale so usually it is necessary to build, and this means finding a plot of land on which to build. In all three cities the main ways to obtain land are:

- **A relative offers part of a plot of land.** Sometimes relatives have lived in an area for some time, since the 1970s or 1980s when the flow into the cities was not so intense. So in certain cases they have an area of land which they are willing to offer as a site for a new house, or to allow some more rooms to be added to an existing outhouse which then provides a dwelling for the displaced family. This is the easiest and quickest of the three possible processes, but is now rare as most such plots have already been occupied.
- **Buy land from an owner.** Each of the three cities has a market in land, although the price of a plot in Luanda is very different from the other two cities. In parts of Luanda like Hoji ya Henda and Ngola Kiluanje, where there is now no free land, constructing a small house (the so-called “*quarto e sala*”). might cost from 2000 to 4000 US dollars. An owner of a large area of land, occupied for example at the end of the 1970s, might subdivide it for sale in small plots. This process has important effects on the way particular areas are now structured, and we will discuss this below. In recently occupied areas that are further from the city centre, such as Augusto Ngangula *Bairro* (Kikolo Comuna), a plot costs about 300 US dollars. The prices in Huambo and Lubango vary according to the area of the plot, but are not higher than 35 US dollars; the inhabitants are much poorer than in Luanda, and even this amount is more than many of them have. Not all migrants can afford a plot, because of the large initial investment required. It is possible if the displaced people arrived with money or brought goods that they can sell, or when they borrow money which enables them to start a business which rapidly produces some profit. The loan may come from relatives, but sometimes people manage to borrow from churches.
- **“Occupy” land.** In the 1970s and immediately after independence pressure on land was not so great. People squatted on an area that appeared to be empty, and then informed the *bairro* authorities, the administration or the *Soba*, depending on the location.²¹ The peri-urban *bairros* of Lubango and Huambo always had *Sobas*, and they indicated an area where a new arrival could build.²²

²¹ For example, in the final years of the colonial period the peri-urban neighbourhoods of Luanda mostly used to be fields, farms or areas set aside for future development. During the years immediately after independence there was no control of these areas, which were still unoccupied. So, according to many of our interviewees, “all we had to do was occupy it”.

²² The absence of *Sobas* in Luanda will be discussed in Chapter VIII. Some have recently appeared in peri-urban zones, normally figures appointed by the local administration. Usually they are long-standing members of the Residents’ Committee, or senior residents who are respected in the neighbourhood.

Having family already living in the *bairro* was important for this process. The relatives were able to present new arrivals to the *bairro* authorities, thus diminishing their problem of being strangers and legitimising their desire to live in the area. But today the situation is rather different, particularly in Lubango and Luanda where land pressures seem to be greater. In Lubango the area of certain *bairros* has been increased, so the *Sobas*' control over the flow of people has diminished. In both cities, to obtain a plot legally, one should submit a formal application ("*um pedido*") to the administration, including a "location sketch". In *Huambo*, instability and the resulting frequent migrations have made the process of obtaining land in the city easier. It is still possible to squat on an "empty" plot, and then inform the *Soba*'s so that he can "certify" the acquisition. In *Lubango* it seems that the attitude of the *bairro* administration varies according to how much land pressure there is. In the most highly-populated zones the administrations do not grant land any more.²³ In some other cases the process outlined above is followed, and people have to pay for their construction permit. Sometimes people "just move onto the land"; after occupying land and building a dwelling the "new resident" approaches the *Soba*, co-ordinator or administrator for "legalisation". Some do not even take this step.

In recent years in **Luanda** the process became much more complicated, time-consuming and expensive. To obtain land one must submit an application to the administration, which deals with it in various stages. It seems that the first level to intervene is the Residents' Committee (*Comissão de Moradores*) which authorises the occupation or sale of the land²⁴. Next, this authorisation and the location sketch are sent in turn to the Comuna, municipality and province for their approval. This can take months and may be quite expensive – as well as paying for the land, at the different stages the applicant often has to pay bribe. This more organised system is a fairly new phenomenon, and is found in the newer areas of Viana and Cacuaco Municipalities. In older areas (Kikolo Sede or Ngola Kiluanje or Hoji ya Henda) the occupation of land is still "unorganised", but the problem is to find empty land on which to build.

After obtaining a site, **construction** can start. In Luanda, although an authorisation from the administration and a localisation sketch are required, this does not prevent the construction of "clandestine" buildings. Many people build without permission when the inspectors are not working, during a weekend or even at night. Then they start a "negotiation process" with the inspectors from the Comuna. If no "agreement" is reached, sometimes a house may be demolished.

²³ Even the *sekulu* (elder) we interviewed was unable to get another plot in the neighbourhood where he lived.

²⁴ The interviewees told us that plots are "granted" to people who already live in the neighbourhood, for example to those who are staying with relatives, as a priority (according to some, exclusively).

Obtaining land is therefore the decisive phase, and the most difficult, in the process of settling in the city. Although building a house is more expensive, the family concerned has more control of the process, and can carry it out at whatever speed they can manage. In practice, because most people are very poor they build their houses slowly. Many start with just cardboard and plastic. The more fortunate start right away building with blocks and mortar. First they build the two-room house we have already mentioned, but this will expand later if they obtain further resources. But some people who started building more than ten years ago have still not completed their houses.

3.4 How long does it take to settle?

We can define the **time it takes to settle** in the city of refuge to be the period before displaced people are living in their own houses (rented or built). After this they are no longer “displaced” but have become residents of the *bairro*. The length of this period depends partly on factors we have already mentioned (how they were helped, the kind of work they get). But it is also affected by the characteristics of the *bairro* where they wish to live – in Luanda it is cheaper, and therefore quicker, to settle in a “poor” *bairro* like Cambalacho or Augusto Ngangula, than in Hoji ya Henda or the Ossos. In practice new arrivals build in poorer *bairros*; the main possibility in the “richer” *bairros* is to rent a room or a small house.

Some interviewees said that it takes between eight months and a year to settle in *Bairro* Augusto Ngangula by building a two-room house. In *Bairro* Boa Esperança (Kikolo), it is more difficult as there is little space to build, and it costs about 150 kwanzas to rent two rooms. People tend to rent a room until they can buy a plot in a *bairro* which is further out, and there seems to be a similar trend in Huambo and Lubango. In Huambo settling down is more difficult because people are poorer than in the other cities. Some interviewees had lived in relatives’ houses for more than two years because they lacked the resources needed to leave with apparently serious consequences for internal family relationships.

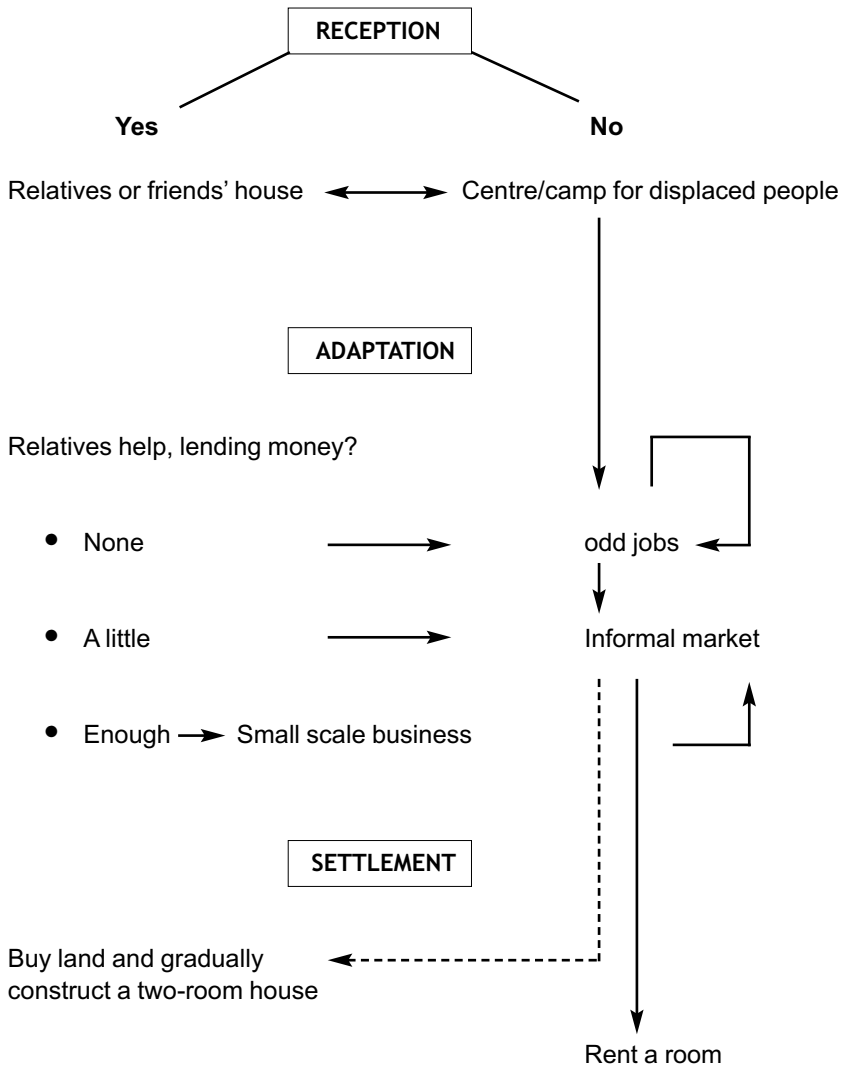
At the end of the 1990s it took longer to settle in peri-urban *bairros* than it used to in the 1980s as the cities have more inhabitants. The best a displaced family could hope for would be to settle within six to eight months (in a rented dwelling, or in a temporary structure in a “poor” *bairro*) but may easily take more than a year.

People end up renting or building a house wherever they can. This is one of the main reasons why the peri-urban *bairros* are so heterogeneous. People go to live where it is cheapest or where there is space, and this is not necessarily in the *bairro* where they first went to or where live their relatives, friends and other people originally from their area. The important consequences this has for the social dynamics of the peri-urban areas will be discussed later.

DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW A DISPLACED PERSON SETTLES IN THE CITY

The displaced person arrives in the city.

→ Any relatives, friends or acquaintances in the city?







IV . CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREAS

CONTENTS

IV CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREAS

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1. SPATIAL ORGANISATION

1.1 The structure of urban Luanda, Huambo and Lubango

Urban and peri-urban

There has never been any significant public investment in Angola's peri-urban areas. The colonial State directed most of its investment into the provision and maintenance of services to the urban centre, and a similar pattern has continued after independence. In the final years of the colonial period and the early years of independence there were some attempts to channel social investments into peri-urban areas. So some of the older peri-urban zones have services which do not exist in the newer areas (or they have the infrastructures needed for provision of these services, at least). For example, some parts of the Luanda Comunas of Hoji ya Henda and Ngola Kiluanje, occupied before 1985, have state schools, although not many of these; and there used to be some communal water taps in this area. Nothing comparable exists in the areas further from the centre of the city. Such investment as existed mostly went into infrastructures that were low quality and constructed in a hurry. Usually no-one planned budgets or systems to ensure they would be maintained¹, nor were future increases in demand taken into account.² To be fair, we must remember that the state reduced its investment in city centre infrastructures as well. But private, often individual, investment in these downtown areas (water tanks, mechanical pumps, private schools and clinics, mobile phones, and private vehicles) makes up for some of the deficiencies in public services. So, although the centres of cities and their services have become degraded, there is still a gap between these and the peri-urban zones.

In each of the three cities the peri-urban zones grew around the urban area. The growth of Luanda and Lubango was rapid, and took place further and further from the respective city centres as the years passed. At the same time, available space in the peri-urban areas was being used more intensively. In Huambo population density increased in a similar fashion, but the area did not expand so much.

¹ The surface water pipes broke easily, and no-one was given responsibility for the public taps. The schools still exist, partly thanks to the efforts and contributions of parents. Interviewees said they were more willing to contribute to maintaining a school because the results can be seen clearly, and there is no need for negotiations with many parties. By contrast, maintaining water supply systems depends on various bodies and individuals, and co-ordinating this is difficult.

² Due to population growth in these areas, and because after independence there was greater demand for school education.

The peri-urban areas of Luanda

Particularly after 1945, Luanda's growth meant that the "border" between the *musseques* and the cement city became fragmented and difficult to delineate (although it was still there). Messiant (1989) has described this expansion as "wild", and wrote:

*(...) the musseques surround the cement city, but they also infiltrate and cut into it. This continues during the growth of the 1950s, but no longer in the heart of the downtown where modern buildings prevail from then on. Musseques are banished from the central areas, and the old overlap is now in the new neighbourhoods, where the way construction advances is basically wild. New Portuguese arrivals settle with no consideration for the initial city plans; the actual city expands mainly in the form of tentacles along circulation routes.*³

During the colonial period some "pockets" of *musseques* persisted in the urbanised parts of Luanda, and *musseques* came right up to the edge of the cement city.⁴ Despite this, urban growth tended to accentuate the gap between the city and its periphery "in a break whereby the first (mainly white) group pushed the second (mainly black) group further out, without creating intermediary points or elements (such as transportation or infrastructures)" (Torres, 1989). This split still exists, although it has lost its former racial connotation. The physical boundaries between the peri-urban areas and the centre of the city may appear to be fluid, but the residents of the *musseques* have a clear perception of the difference – on one side is the downtown, on the other are the "*musseques*".

In Luanda the *musseques* are far from uniform. Their morphology is complex, with areas of houses from various periods as well as inhabitants who have different characteristics. In the areas we studied, people built new dwellings inside the old Rangel, Sambizanga, Mota and Lixeira *musseques*. The Petrangol *musseques* was started in 1970, but is now a narrow band sandwiched between newer *musseques* which appeared in the 1980s. Pockets of older houses remain in the middle of new *musseques* – for example, timber houses which were built by the coffee companies before 1974 along the old Catete road in Val Saroca, and are now surrounded by newer houses built with concrete blocks.

Population density rose considerably after 1992. In Luanda it reaches 800 people per hectare in the older *musseques* near the city, and around 500 people per hectare in the new *musseques* further out but rising as any space becomes occupied.⁵

³ Page 130. The text is in French.

⁴ In contrast to Johannesburg or Harare where non-whites had to retreat to planned areas away from the city.

⁵ Figures from the report by Berger, 1998; these were confirmed in 2000 when INE and Development Workshop counted the number of houses per block in Ngola Kiluanje, Kikolo and Hoji ya Henda while mapping those communes. An area of 36 hectares contains (on average) 2660 houses which, assuming 7 people per house, have 18,620 inhabitants. Some of the city's planning documents give a population density lower than 500 people per hectare. The figure is calculated on the basis of municipal averages which include industrial and commercial areas, as well as schools, roads and other public areas (Berger, 1998, p.2).

"The *musseque* is dynamic and changes" (Torres, 1973). In some of them roads and housing plots were not laid out according to an initial plan, space is occupied irregularly and, as it is more intensely used, the morphology changes. In some areas plots and roads had been marked out in the colonial period, but nothing else had been done. At present people are in the process of occupying other areas (for example in Cacuo and Viana Municipalities) where plots and roads are being demarcated. Inhabitants adapt "urbanisation" to their resources and needs (Rogério, 1997). Some people from the north of Angola who live in sectors 10, 11, 11A, 13 and 14 of Hoji ya Henda Commune respect the boundaries of the plots, build walls around them and construct houses plus several outbuildings (members of the extended family live in these). But in Sector 15 of the same commune, people originally from other parts of the country do not follow the original plot boundaries – the roads, although they are kept, are almost closed off in places.

In addition to this absence of initial planning, in many cases people have built in an uncontrolled way, a process which is called "anarchic". So some neighbourhoods hardly have any roads ("you can't even take a coffin through!"). Unplanned occupation of space impedes the construction of services and shared infrastructures such as schools, health posts or markets.

The peri-urban areas of Huambo

The nature of the founding of Huambo, and the way it grew, meant that the division between its urbanised part and peri-urban areas was always clearer than in Luanda. The colonial administration always kept "native villages" far from the centre, thus leaving space empty for expansion of the white part of the city. Moreover, Huambo never grew in the frenetic way Luanda expanded after the Second World War.

There is a very visible boundary between the urbanised and peri-urban parts of the city. The type of construction changes visibly from one to the other. In some places there is a band of eucalyptus trees which delimited the two kinds of area in the colonial period. It was cut down in 1993 - 94, during the 55 day war and UNITA's occupation of the city⁶, but the Government subsequently replanted it.

Many houses in the urbanised zone have war damage, and are still empty. In terms of house sizes, densities or spatial planning, the various peri-urban *bairros* do not differ from each other as much as in Luanda. Certain areas near the market on the road to Caála have more yards with walls surrounding them, apparently a sign of greater prosperity. However, the general economic level is low. There are some older houses with tiled roofs, built with bricks or cement in some cases. Later, in the spaces between

⁶ No other energy was available at that time.

these, people used sun-dried bricks and zinc roofing sheets to construct their houses. Although densities are lower than in Luanda, the residents say “the *bairro* is full now”.

The peri-urban areas of Lubango

Lubango is like Huambo in that the division between the urbanised and peri-urban parts of the city are clearly visible. However, Lubango’s urban area includes some patches of informal housing. Most of the houses in the surrounding peri-urban zones are built of sun-dried bricks with zinc sheeting roofs.

On the north side of the city most *bairros* have a core of older houses which, in many cases, give the *bairros* their names. For example, Bula Matadi has an old centre on the Benguela road named Bula Matadi, with a long-established population and “permanent” houses.⁷ The rest of the area administered as part of this *bairro* is much larger, and is very different: the residents were displaced from rural parts of the Central Plateau from 1982 onwards, and the houses are built of sun-dried bricks or temporary materials. Although officially it is part of Bula Matadi, the inhabitants call it “Caluva”. Similarly, the core of Nambambi *bairro* consists of houses the Catholic Church built for their indigenous teachers in the 1960s and 1970s (it was called Nambambi), now surrounded by houses of people displaced from the Central Plateau in the 1980s. These areas are still expanding, and their population densities are growing as well (“there used to be bushes between the houses, but these have disappeared as the houses have grown”).

Residents of the *bairros* to the south of Lubango (for example, A Luta Continua and Ferrovia) come from a wider range of places. In the colonial period groups of Nhaneca – Humbe people were drawn to the Lubango area by the various factories and the railway. After 1982 Nanguela people came, as well as migrants from cities and towns on the Central Plateau (who were better educated than the arrivals from rural parts of the Plateau). The *bairros* are still expanding (over the southern hills), and population densities are rising, leaving little space between the houses. Here the interviewees also said “the *bairro* is full”.

1.2 Administrative divisions

Luanda

Until 1982 the city was administered as 21 urban zones. The current division into municipalities and comunas was implemented before the 1983 census, which used

⁷ People often call the neighbourhood by its colonial name, João d’Almeida. This Portuguese soldier was active at the beginning of the 20th century, and distinguished himself in the campaign against the people of Dembos, and later in campaigns against the people of southern Angola.

this new arrangement, described in the *Jornal de Angola* of 24 September 1981. Over the years various alterations were made as the population and area of the city expanded. Although officially the zones no longer exist, some people, even some functionaries of municipalities or comunas, still refer to them. For example, on the administrative office for Hoji ya Henda Comuna is written “Administration of Hoji ya Henda Comuna, Zone 17”!

In a few cases communes correspond to former urban zones. Most of Zone 16 became Ngola Kiluanje Commune; however, a part of that zone was included in Hoji ya Henda Commune (sectors 12, 15 and 16).

Luanda’s nine municipalities are officially sub-divided into communes (between two and five per municipality). Communes are divided into sectors and *bairros*, although the arrangements for this are not uniform. The three communes we studied are sub-divided in different ways. Few maps show *bairro* and sector boundaries, these lines are poorly defined and, even worse, they change periodically.⁸

Ngola Kiluanje Commune is sub-divided into nine sectors and *bairros*; in practice, the sectors are the same as *bairros*. Most *bairros* have names that come from popular terms (Val Saroca, S. Pedro da Barra and Ossos). Each sector/*bairro* is divided into blocks. The number of houses per block varies considerably (from ten to three hundred), as does the number of blocks in each sector (from fourteen to sixty).

Hoji ya Henda Commune comprises seven *bairros*, and there are from one to four sectors per *bairro*. But there is not much talk of *bairros* in practice. People usually refer to a sector using its number, or to important existing buildings or even entities that no longer exist – for example, Óleo Queimado is an area near a former factory which reclaimed used oil, and Combustíveis is around an area where fuel used to be stored.

Kikolo Commune comprises twelve *bairros*, and these are divided into sectors (from six to ten in each neighbourhood). The size of *bairros* and sectors varies a great deal. Sectors are given numbers from one to ten. A place is identified by the name of the *bairro* it is in, and the number of its sector. The term “block” is not used, but most of the sectors are small.

A diverse group of people live in each of these communes, and they build in different ways. The official commune boundaries do not necessarily correspond to any physical boundaries. The boundary between Ngola Kiluanje and Hoji ya Henda Communes runs through the middle of the old Petrangol *musseque*, and through homogenous areas

⁸ When INE and Development Workshop mapped three communes, such boundaries were being drawn on paper for the first time. Their alignments were not well known, even by the administrations of the respective communes.

in Val Saroca. Most boundaries of sectors and *bairros* were not drawn to correspond to variations in types of population or differences in the type of construction. Most official figures refer to a whole municipality, and a few to a whole commune. As these are large areas containing a wide range of people, it is difficult to analyse conditions and lifestyles by type of population.

Huambo

The area of Huambo Municipality is larger than just the city of Huambo. The Municipality comprises eight communes, the boundaries of which do not correspond to the edges of the urban, peri-urban or rural areas. For example, two communes are entirely rural – one north and one south of the city – while the other six communes include urban, peri-urban and rural areas.⁹ In the urban and peri-urban areas the communes are divided into administrative *bairros*, these are divided into zones, which in turn are divided into blocks of roughly 20 to 30 houses.

Lubango

The city of Lubango is administered in *bairros*, which are quite large, and these are divided into administrative zones. Here as well, the administrative boundaries do not correspond to physical divisions, nor to lines of transition from one kind of population to another. In most *bairros* the residents are heterogeneous (in terms of their origins) and generally there are a number of categories of construction.

2. ORIGIN AND SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Most migrants want to settle down quickly, but find it difficult to obtain a cheap plot on which to build. In Chapter III we discussed how this drives many of them to live distant from the family or friends who received them. In the long-established neighbourhoods either there is no room for new buildings or land is extremely expensive. So new migrants have to live further from the centre of the city. Even some long-standing residents move further away from the city centre, because they prefer to sell their houses and buy others in cheaper areas or in zones which are less crowded. For all these reasons, the peri-urban areas of the cities we studied are very heterogeneous.

⁹ However, the boundary between rural and peri-urban areas is more visible now, since settlement in the rural zone is much more dispersed.

Luanda

In a 1989 survey by Development Workshop, half the interviewees in the Val Saroca and Ossos Neighbourhoods had previously lived in another part of Sambizanga Municipality, and another 30% of them had lived in another part of Luanda. Our own research confirms that in all *bairros* some people came directly from the countryside (at different times) while others moved in from a variety of other city *bairros*.

Homogenous groups of neighbours are not as common as we thought initially. Some of the older *bairros* tend to have residents from particular areas, although homogeneity disappeared several years ago. The core areas of older houses, where the *bairros* began, are now “lost” among newer dwellings. In addition many people move between *bairros*,¹⁰ so many neighbours originally came from different areas.

“These days, no-one can say that in this bairro people from a certain place have got together” (Hoji ya Henda, Luanda).

“We live all mixed together, and there’s everything” (Ngola Kiluanje, Luanda).

The newer *bairros* are also being populated by people of different origins, who arrive there straight from the countryside or move from another neighbourhood in the city.

“The people who make up this bairro come from different places” (Kikolo, Luanda).

The inhabitants of Luanda originated from all parts of the country, as it is a destination for people from all provinces. The newer *bairros* are more heterogeneous.¹¹ However, there are some *bairros* where the residents tend to have a particular origin.

In part of Kikolo Commune that is close to the comuna administration building (particularly Kikolo Sede and Kawelele Neighbourhoods) many residents came from the Central Plateau. Most of them were from cities or towns, and had acquired a certain amount of education. This commune’s other *bairros* were occupied in the 1990s, and have more heterogeneous populations.

In Sede de Cacuaco Commune there is a concentration of people originally from rural parts of the Central Plateau, some of who came from there directly. But others, before migrating to Luanda, had lived in other parts of the country, having already moved

¹⁰ The survey included questions about the origin of each person interviewed, and about the origin of the person’s neighbours.

¹¹ Migrating from more distant provinces to Luanda became more common in the 1990s than previously. For example, some inhabitants of the new Viana neighbourhoods came from Moxico or Kuando Kubango.

in the colonial period as “contracted workers”.¹² In Hoji ya Henda Commune, in the north-east part which borders on Kikolo Commune (Sectors 10, 11, 11A, 13, and 14) many of the inhabitants were originally from northern Angola. Most of them lived for many years after 1961 in Kinshasa, and then returned to Angola after independence¹³.

Huambo

Almost all the residents of Huambo's peri-urban *bairros* come from the Central Plateau (from Huambo or Bié Provinces) and belong to the Ovimbundu ethno-linguistic group. A few people are of Nganguela or Ambundu origin. But even in *bairros* where the residents are all of Ovimbundu origin, groups of neighbours are not “organised” by origin. In each neighbourhood the inhabitants come from a variety of places on the Central Plateau, and they say that “they do not live together”.

“[displaced people] look for a house or a plot they can build on. Maybe it is not near the dwelling place of their relative or the person from their area. That's why there are not many groups of houses of people from the same area. Often a displaced person, when he leaves his friend's house, finds a house or plot in another neighbourhood”.

“People from the same region don't live near one another in the bairro. Here in the city, where you see a house for you – that's where you live.”

In the Kasseque camp for displaced people on the outskirts of Huambo one finds an exception to this trend. People live there in groups according to their village of origin, and they still have their village chiefs.

Also increasing the variety of *bairros*' origins is the fact that people move house. They do this for various reasons: to be in a calmer *bairro* or closer to the market, because the house is cheaper and so on.

Lubango

Lubango is in the area of the Ovamuila ethno-linguistic group (a sub-group of the Nhaneka-Humbe). The three main ethno-linguistic groups that share the city are:

¹² In the colonial period many men on the Plateau were forced to migrate to work on coffee, cotton or sugar plantations, in fishing, or for other industries or large estates. After 1981, war on the Central Plateau impeded the return of these migrants, and at the same time the amount of employment provided by plantations, industries and large estates diminished. They and their descendants migrated to cities, or continued to live in various parts of the country often in miserable conditions (for example at Tombwa in Namibe Province, on old coffee and sugar plantations in the north, in fishing ports and on semi-abandoned large estates).

¹³ For information about this group's history, see Chapter II (section 8.2) and the references cited.

- the Ovamuiila and various sub-groups of the Nhaneka-Humbe; they are the “original residents” of the Lubango area, although some had migrated from Kipungo, Gambos and other parts of Kunene and Huíla Provinces;
- Ovimbundu who migrated from the Central Plateau (mostly from the part which is in Huíla Province); most came after 1983 because it became unsafe (although some had made this migration earlier in search of opportunities to study or work);¹⁴
- the Nganguela who migrated from the eastern part of Huíla Province, or from Kuando Kubango.

People of various origins inhabit the *bairros* on the southern side of Lubango (A Luta Continua and Ferrovia). In the colonial period people from Nhaneka-Humbe groups who migrated to Lubango to work settled in the area. After 1982 people from the Nganguela group and some Ovimbundu from towns on the Central Plateau moved in. The Ovamuiila and the Nganguela live in small patches where neighbours come from the same area; however, in this part of the city the Ovimbundu are not distributed homogeneously. Nowadays people of Nhaneka-Humbe origin are in a minority in these *bairros*, although Lubango is in what used to be their territory.

People from rural parts of the Central Plateau live in the *bairros* on the northern side of the city, so the inhabitants are ethno-linguistically homogenous. Interviewees said that they prefer to live near relatives or friends¹⁵, but also that “neighbours don’t seem to come from the same place now because there’s no space to settle together in a group”.

3. SOME ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE PERI-URBAN AREAS

3.1 Housing

In Luanda’s peri-urban areas most of the houses are built of concrete blocks, and have roofs of zinc sheeting. The majority of the houses are not painted, and so have an unfinished appearance.¹⁶ Many of them are being built, or are permanently under construction, given that the owners take several years to put them up. It requires a huge effort for a household to manage to build its own house. In practice families start by building one bedroom or a two-room house. Over the years they add other

¹⁴ It is possible that Ovimbundu are now the majority of Lubango’s population.

¹⁵ There were more replies of this kind in Lubango than in Huambo or Luanda.

¹⁶ A group of people who are more marginalised and vulnerable, and who never manage to establish themselves, live temporarily in improvised houses or in the remains of abandoned houses.

rooms to this. In some cases building a house takes more than ten years, or even as long as twenty years.

In older Luanda neighbourhoods there are still some houses built before independence of timber, or even wattle-and-daub. At that time, these were the materials used for house construction in those areas.¹⁷ Starting in the 1980s, many such houses were rebuilt using concrete blocks. One reason for this may have been that by then timber was difficult to obtain. And it could be that concrete block houses appear to be more permanent and prestigious, although we have no firm information about this.

In Huambo and Lubango cement is more expensive, so almost all houses in the peri-urban areas are built with sun-dried bricks, and the roofs are made of zinc sheeting. Tiles or plastered walls are a sign that the house is part of a core of older houses.

In the three cities there is a property market for houses and plots of land, and a housing rental market. The highest prices for plots of land and the steepest rents are found in Luanda, particularly in the *bairros* closest to the city centre, markets, commercial areas or the main transportation corridors. Interviewees in Luanda gave these figures:

Rent for a two-room house:

- Kikolo, Compão zone – 40 Kwanzas per month¹⁸;
- Kikolo, Boa Esperança – 100 Kwanzas per month;
- Hoji ya Henda – 200 to 250 Kwanzas per month;

Price of a plot for a small house:

- Kikolo, Augusto Ngangula – 200 - 300 US dollars;
- Hoji ya Henda – 2000 to 3000 US dollars or more.

Even in a commune or a neighbourhood there are sometimes big differences in the cost of housing. In some areas of Hoji ya Henda Commune rents are higher, presumably because, compared to other parts of the commune, there are more commercial activities. These revolve around the “Senegalese warehouses” (in the old industrial area near the Nocal and Cuca factories), outlets selling imported articles in bulk (and consequently those who are very active in distribution of these products) and the terminal for buses and lorries to the north and Kinshasa with its freight and travel agencies. So that part of

¹⁷ The existence of houses built with these materials is a sign that the area is an older one. For example, houses of this type distinguish the old Petrangol musseque from the neighbouring areas of Ngola Kiluanje and Hoji ya Henda Neighbourhoods.

¹⁸ Exchange rate (March 2000): 1 USD = 5.5 Kwanzas.

Hoji ya Henda is very busy and therefore a desirable place to live. Housing costs vary, and this also leads to heterogeneity in the peri-urban areas – people with differing levels of poverty live in the same commune.

For migrants who arrive in Luanda to settle, the cost of housing is an important factor driving them to live at a distance from their families. Most of them do not have enough money to build in the *bairros* where their families already live. The result is that people with the same origins do not end up living “as a community”. Households tend to be big, and often they comprise three generations.¹⁹ Moreover, one family may build various houses on one plot. The residents of a compound often include the parents (owners of the house) as well as sons, daughters, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law and grandchildren.

You can buy a plot privately, in which case you have to navigate through a legalisation process. This can be onerous, and usually involves paying *gasosa* (bribes). The alternative is to obtain land from the state, a procedure with various stages which involves various levels of the administration²⁰. The first body involved is the residents’ committee, which authorises occupation of the land;²¹ the authorisation thus obtained, with a location sketch, is sent to the Comuna, Municipality and Province in succession for their approval. This process may take months and at many of the stages a small bribe is required. The requirement for an authorisation from the administration with its respective location sketch does not prevent anarchic or clandestine construction. Many people build without permission when the inspectors are not working, then start a “negotiation process” with the inspectors; if no “agreement” is reached, sometimes a house may be demolished. Despite the amount of work involved, most people consider it worthwhile in order to have a home of their own.

¹⁹ The 30 families we interviewed (people living in the neighbourhoods for more than eight years) averaged about 9 people per household. The above-mentioned study by the INE suggests that about 30% of Luanda households have more than four people per bedroom; 11% have more than six people per bedroom [p.16]. There are no up-to-date statistics showing the number of inhabitants per house or people per household, although various estimates of the cities’ populations are based on conjecture about this parameter.

²⁰ Acquiring a plot from the State is more common in those Luanda neighbourhoods which are still being occupied. In most parts of Luanda that are already heavily populated, the administration does not have the option of exercising control over the land in this way. In Huambo and Lubango the authorities do not control the plots in peri-urban neighbourhoods – although they think they ought to.

²¹ The interviewees told us that plots are “granted” to people who already live in the neighbourhood, for example to those who are staying with relatives, as a priority (according to some, exclusively). The interviewees spoke of “buying” the land from the administration, even though legally it does not sell the land, rather it authorises occupation; the payments are administrative costs, not the price of the land.

3.2 Work and employment

According to the interviewees, in all three cities the unemployment rate (in the formal job market) is very high, and there is also a great deal of underemployment.²² People bemoan lack of work and very low salaries. In certain areas that used to have some industries some long-standing residents are ex-professionals – metalworkers, carpenters or mechanics. The factories where they worked are now inactive. Unemployment is particularly high in Huambo, where there is very little industrial or commercial activity now. Of the 256 industrial firms in existence, only 16 are functioning at present²³. The Benguela Railway is still not operating.

Many employment openings are irregular, so residents of peri-urban areas must be ready to accept whatever work appears. People say “I have several professions”, and this is probably the reason – so they can adapt to any task that is available. Even people who still hold down a fixed job do other work in parallel. For example, teachers may also have a small-scale business, or might work as a market porter, nicknamed *roboteiro* (robot) in Luanda or *Tio António* (Uncle Antonio) in Lubango.

Most people find that the solution is “general commerce” in the informal market. Informal trade is a crucial source of income; people, particularly women, sell what they can where they can. The type of business they become involved in depends on the amount of capital the household has, or is able to borrow. Poorer families sell small quantities of merchandise at the front of their house, or from small bowls which they carry round the city streets or hawk from house to house (*zungueiras* in Luanda). People who are not so poor sell from a market stall. Those who have more capital travel outside the city to barter industrial goods for agricultural products or fish. Women sell paraffin, charcoal, prepared food, drinks, vegetables etc. If men are involved they sell other kinds of product: construction materials, spare parts for vehicles, clothes and so on.

Particularly in poorer families, several members of the same household work. The women’s income, mainly from small-scale trading, is a very important contribution to household income. In many families the husband has a job in the formal job market (women say “my husband works downtown” or “my husband gets a salary”). Meanwhile the wife, daughters, and/or daughters-in-law sell things on the corner, at their front gate or in a neighbourhood market. Some of the interviewees were well-educated, secondary

²² According to the *Relatório de Desenvolvimento Humano, 1999* (UNDP, 1999) estimates of the unemployment rate in Luanda vary from 35% to 40%; this report mentions that the INE gives a national employment rate of 55.3%, with employment in the informal sector at 37%. However, these figures do not show the quality of the employment – in practice many state employees are underemployed, so they supplement their earnings in the informal market.

²³ Statement by the Provincial Delegate for Industry to the Voice of America, quoted in “*Angola Cronologia*”, November 1999.

level teachers or head teachers, who passed 12th class (school leaving) or even went to university; in their families as well, while they are teaching, the women are engaged in some kind of business – selling beauty creams, eggs, clothes or whatever it may be.

Particularly in Lubango, where access to fertile land is easier, some families earn a contribution to their household income from agricultural activities. And Lubango is the only one of the three cities where a significant number of households are engaged in barter between family members in the countryside and the city. Even there the Ovamula group, who have more access to land, are much more involved in such exchanges than the Ovimbundu group (people displaced from the Plateau who now live in the “territory” of the Ovamula, seen as the “landowners”). In Luanda some families talked of having a small field (in Bengo or Futungo – Benfica Neighbourhood) where they produce food and other products which they sell.

Another commonly sold product is water (about which more information is given in Section 3.3). In the peri-urban areas residents with sufficient resources build tanks²⁴ in their yards. Fortnightly they buy a supply from water lorries which fill these receptacles, and then they resell it to neighbours.

The interviewees gave the impression that generally the income from informal trade is not high.²⁵ A recent study (INE, 2000) shows that 64.1% of their expenditure of the first quintile of Luanda households is on “food, drinks and tobacco”. Adding in payments for health and water the percentage rises to almost 70%, a figure which shows severe poverty. Another problem is the uncertainty of informal trade. Many interviewees told stories about losing money because “the business went wrong”, so they had to shift to another area of commerce which required less capital and produced more income.

Despite this unreliability and the low profits, most people think that *o negócio* (business) is the most secure income source. People who are unable to assemble enough capital to start a commercial operation do odd jobs and become increasingly poor and vulnerable. When one’s salary is late or “business isn’t doing it” the only ways out are to ask for a loan (from a relative or friend) or sell an article of clothing or some furniture.

²⁴ The tanks have volumes from 2000 to 8000 litres.

²⁵ People mentioned amounts in the range one to five US dollars per day; but such figures must be viewed with care, since people are resistant to providing accurate information about their incomes.

3.3 Access to services

Water and sanitation

In peri-urban neighbourhoods, particularly in Luanda, one of the biggest problems is obtaining access to water.²⁶ The exact circumstances vary from one neighbourhood to another²⁷, but there are few zones where water is easy to obtain or cheap. According to a report by the INE (*Instituto Nacional de Estatística*, National Statistics Institute) in the first quintile of households in Luanda 5.2% of expenditure goes to pay for water [INE, 2000: 23]²⁸. The high price of water in these areas has another consequence. Often residents ration how much water they use, and do not even use enough for their basic needs. In Luanda, according to this report [INE, 2000: 30], people get their water from:

- a neighbour's water storage tank – 37.9% of the population;
- the public system supplies taps in the house – 25.3%;
- a tap at a block of flats or neighbour's house – 25.1%;
- a communal water tap – 5.2%;
- a water lorry – 4.2%.

Water from a neighbour's storage tank, the most common source, usually has to be purchased. In the areas we studied there is very little access to taps in homes, at neighbours' houses or at blocks of flats. It is very probable that the most common ways of getting water are the other three listed above. One estimate gives 21 US dollars as the average amount a household spends per month buying water from informal sources [INE, 2000: 36].

In the three cities there are NGO projects (DW, ADRA, ACORD, and CARE) which aim to improve access to water by improving the capacity of community and municipal institutions to manage and maintain water supply systems. In Lubango and Huambo there is underground water, so consumers can organise their own water supply by means of wells and boreholes. Luanda does not have underground water, and water must be brought from the Bengo or Kwanza rivers, both far from the city.²⁹ Moreover, the water supply systems were built, in the colonial period, for an urban area smaller

²⁶ In the other cities underground water and rivers which are nearby are other possible sources of water for residents.

²⁷ For example, water is easier to get in Kawelele Neighbourhood (Kikolo), which is crossed by a water conduit, than in Cambalacho Neighbourhood (in Cazenga); the latter has no water source nearby, so water lorries provide the only supply to the area.

²⁸ During the period when we conducted interviews a lorry load of water cost about 120 US dollars, and one bucket cost between 10 and 40 cents.

²⁹ Ever since the city was founded in the 16th century, residents have confronted this problem created by Luanda's location.

than today's. Nowadays water reaches the city in large pipes and/or lorries, and improving the supply requires important physical and institutional investments. Therefore the water problem in peri-urban areas is very complex and hard to solve. The water supply network is in poor condition, and its main pipes have numerous clandestine links. There are not many communal water taps, and the flow to these few is so weak and irregular that using them (and therefore maintenance) is difficult.³⁰

Networks of sewers serve only the urbanised parts of the three cities, and most of them are in poor condition. Some peri-urban houses (even some houses in urbanised areas) have septic tanks, but most have neither sewers nor septic tanks. Certain NGOs have latrine programmes³¹, but the residents do not always take advantage of these initiatives.

Municipal rubbish collection services only serve the urbanised parts of cities, and in peri-urban neighbourhoods such activities are almost completely the responsibility of the inhabitants. The interviewees mentioned clean-up campaigns which the residents' committees organise from time to time – most of the participants are women or children. Some *bairros* do not organise events of this kind, and it may be difficult for people to collaborate to clean up, so "everyone cleans their own part". Residents of other areas told us "our problem is rubbish". Since the city administration does not remove rubbish, clean-up campaigns only pile up rubbish somewhere in the neighbourhood – usually in an abandoned house, a gully or another place where it will be out of sight.³²

Electricity

Only a few scattered houses in Lubango's and Huambo's peri-urban *bairros* have an electrical connection, while most of Luanda's have no electrical distribution network. Just a few of the older neighbourhoods (in some parts of Sambizanga and Cazenga Municipalities, for example) have areas on the electricity grid.

In Luanda there are numerous clandestine *puxadas* (*puxada* means "drawing off", here it is a euphemism for a connection). Another arrangement reported in some neighbourhoods is a transformer (*um PT*) which residents buy and use as a group. In other places an individual buys a transformer, sells connections to it, and then resells electrical energy. For example, in Kikolo a connection currently costs between 220 and 230 US dollars, and then the monthly bill will be 8 to 10 dollars per month.

³⁰ The NGOs involved have extensive documentation about water problems in Angolan cities.

³¹ The NGOs involved have extensive documentation about latrines and sanitation in Angolan cities.

³² If rubbish were picked up regularly, the residents would deposit it in a place from which the collection service could easily remove it. When removal is non-existent or very irregular, it is easier to hide the garbage – even though, if rubbish collection subsequently starts, getting this waste out of these "hiding-places" will then be more difficult.

Education

The interviewees said that existing schools in their areas are overcrowded, and available statistics confirm this. In each school the number of pupils is far in excess of its planned capacity. Moreover, some of the teachers and head teachers we interviewed said that, because there are so many such requests, they sometimes have to hide from parents who want their children to be accepted. The classrooms are already chronically full.

Most schools were built in the colonial period or during the years immediately after independence, and the majority were in the city centre or certain older neighbourhoods. Many schools built in peri-urban areas are inadequate; some were adapted – they were originally shops, chapels or houses – so the rooms are small and have poor natural lighting. We have already mentioned the intense spatial pressure in these zones, and this impedes construction of new school buildings (Oxfam, 1999). Every day in Luanda three shifts of pupils use each classroom and in some cases the same is true in the other two cities, although more often the arrangement there is two shifts.

Only a small proportion of the children in the Luanda municipalities we studied enrolled from 1st year through to 4th year. The estimated percentages are:

Sambizanga – 11%
 Cazenga – 28%
 Cacuaco – 6%
 [Oxfam, 1999: 31]

Most children stay outside the education system or look for alternatives – as the public system is weak, there are now some private schools. In the urbanised part of the city these institutions are reasonably good but are expensive, while in the peri-urban part they are mostly schools linked to religious bodies or are *explicações* (classes given in private houses or in their yards).

Official figures show that it is still true that most schools are public.
 At first year level educational services are provided as follows:

	Luanda	Other urban areas
Public education	82.6 %	98.6 %
Private education	12.8 %	0
Other private (NGO's, churches)	4.5 %	1.4 %

It is important to note that private peri-urban schools, which exist in significant numbers, are probably not included in these figures. One of the interviewees currently runs a private school linked to a church in one of the neighbourhoods of Kikolo Commune. The school opened in 1996 with 286 pupils; in 1999 it had 875 students, and others had been turned away because it was full.

The *explicação* schools have shifts of 20 to 30 pupils who study for 2 to 3 hours per day. They have sprung up as a kind of alternative school for poor people who, for various reasons, do not have access to public teaching [Oxfam, 1999: 28]. Such schools do not lead to diplomas that are recognised, but poor families find them financially more flexible and less demanding – they can pay by the day, the school does not require a lot of material nor special smocks and pupils can attend when they are able to.³³

The INE report sees the *explicação* schools more as a service which complements the schools registered in the normal way with the Ministry of Education and the services they provide. The figures show that in higher education, and for families with more income, *explicações* (literally “explanations”) are in practice a complementary service. But there are poorer people who live in neighbourhoods with very few schools and want their children to complete at least the first year of schooling. These families use the *explicação* schools. In these cases such schools provide a service which is not complementary – it is the only one available.

Nowadays, even in public schools, in practice education is paid for – 95,6% of Luanda pupils, and 76.8% in “other urban areas”, stated that they had paid money directly to schools, including to public schools. In terms of educational payments, the categories “registration process, admission and/or bribes” and “school fees and other direct payments” were large outlays for the families. In some cases total expenditure on school materials during the year was not far behind, even for public schools [INE:2000, 67].

Health

In peri-urban neighbourhoods the provision of health services, like education, is weak. There are some public health posts and centres, but these are concentrated in the older areas. In addition, now there is private provision – linked to NGOs or churches, or organised by health professionals. These individuals are trained to various levels; some are nurses, but others run facilities which the interviewees called *postos aventureiros* (“risky health posts”), a small room at home with “we give injections and IV infusions” or something similar written on the door.

³³ Admission into a state school requires significant payments which must be completed at one time at the start of the school year. These amounts, which may be official or informal, are difficult for the domestic economies of families that live by the day.

Residents of the study areas use health services as follows [INE, 2000: 87]:

	Luanda	Other urban areas
Public health post centre	27.1%	27.1%
Private clinic	14.8%	5.8%
Private nurse	19.3%	17.3%
Self – diagnosed	22.3%	19.4%
Government hospital	7.1%	15.6%

Whereas residents of city centres use private clinics, inhabitants of peri-urban neighbourhoods resort to private nurses or buy medicines without consulting a health professional. Many people do not use the public health system because of the travel and waiting time that would be involved.

3.4 Social life and culture

In Chapter II we described how the colonisation process caused profound changes in the social life of Angola. The countryside also suffered these transformations, particularly in the centre and coastal areas, which are inhabited by the Ambundu and Ovimbundu ethno-linguistic groups. The instability and disorder that have swept the country since independence impacted rural areas in particular, so it is probable that rural social change has intensified. People who migrated into the cities over the last two decades came from a rural environment which had seen rapid transformation of its “traditions”, as well as changes in the nature and role of its “traditional leaders”.

The various social arrangements changed even more on contact with “the city”, particularly in Luanda where traces of rural or traditional life are rare. However, in Luanda the people of the Bakongo group from northern Angola, who lived for a time in cities in Zaire, differ in this respect from other residents. They emigrated from the northern countryside and had their first contact with modern life in Zaire. There the prevailing colonial ambience differed from the Angolan context, and not as much cultural assimilation was necessary in order to take the various routes to social advancement. Moreover, after Zaire’s independence, these Angolans continued to live there for several years, and this affected their view of African culture and their ideas about how an urban Angolan might live.³⁴

³⁴

For more information about this group see also Chapter II (Section 8.2) and the references cited.

Languages

In Luanda Portuguese is used almost universally, at home and in the street, although people have sometimes introduced words from the local languages as well as recently created terms. The exception to this domination by the Portuguese language is the group of people from northern Angola who sometimes use *lingala*.

In Huambo and Lubango linguistic usage is changing – in some circumstances people speak Portuguese, and at other times they speak local languages. Portuguese is the language used for instruction in schools, so young people speak it most of the time.

“Local languages are spoken, but we speak more Portuguese as time passes” (Lubango).

“Mostly older people are the ones who speak local languages, but they understand the children who learn Portuguese at school. And the children understand what the old people say in a local language, even though they talk in Portuguese” (Lubango).

In Lubango people said that the presence of a variety of ethno-linguistic groups is another reason for greater use of Portuguese nowadays. At the same time, as people of differing ethnicity mix, they seem to learn words from other languages to facilitate their communication.

“People understand the language of others, and they mix languages in a conversation between people of different groups” (Lubango).

Traditions

Nowadays few traces of rural traditions remain in the social life of Luanda’s peri-urban areas. In Huambo and Lubango practices considered to be traditional are changing, particularly in the Ovimbundu ethno-linguistic group.

“In 1983, when I arrived in Lubango, there were still traditional festivals; but now they’re done without much enthusiasm for the tradition” (Lubango).

In the countryside the Ovimbundu’s two most important traditional institutions were the *evamba* (boys’ initiation and circumcision ceremony) and the funeral rite. Funerals are still important, although less so than in the rural environment. The *evamba* has become rare in the city.

“Traditional festivals like ovinganji, olundongo, and evamba are almost non-existent” (Huambo).³⁵

"In the old days we held many festivals, but not now. Traditional circumcision – they went to the bush, when they returned there was a party. Now, when babies are three months old they take them right away to the hospital. Masked dancers hardly ever appear."(Huambo)

It seems that two ethno-linguistic groups in Lubango have changed less: the Nhaneka-Humbe (the Ovamuila are part of this group), and the Nganguela. They were less affected by colonial occupation, the subsequent wars, and the influence of churches; also they keep in contact with their areas of origin, where such traditions persist. Interviewees from these groups said that traditional festivals were still important, and few of them mentioned changes to these ceremonies. The Nhaneka-Humbe still commonly practice the *efiko* (girls' initiation rite) and the *ekwendje* (boys' initiation rite). It seems that the funeral rite was never as important for the Nhaneka-Humbe as it was for the Ovimbundu. The Nganguela appear to still practice the *kawemba* (for girls when they reach puberty) and the *ovama* (initiation and circumcision ceremony for boys); during these rites masked dancers called *kangandji* appear.

"You see more traditional activities among the Nhaneka (Ovamuila). Traditions circulate in this group. They have fiko and circumcision. The Ovimbundu are not so united now to have these traditional activities." (Lubango).

"The locals (Ovamuila) have more of these rituals. The Ovamuila have a Pita pondjo ceremony which is a child (baby one month old) leaving the house for the first time. They celebrate circumcision more visibly" (Lubango).

In Huambo and Lubango it seems that the Ovimbundu have reduced their practice of traditional festivals, perhaps because they were the people most affected by the war in recent decades. Their funeral rite is still important, although the process is not as intense as it used to be. Circumcision is more likely to be carried out in hospital, with much less ceremony. The reasons given for the weakening of traditions are the influence of churches; the death of certain individuals who maintained the traditions; the cost of holding festivals; the difficulty of adapting traditions to the urban environment; and the dispersion of people from the same region.

"They hardly exist...because the churches condemn festivals" (Huambo).

"After the chief died in 1998, almost everything traditional was lost. His son inherited nothing, he learnt nothing, so he practices nothing" (Lubango).

"Now they don't hold traditional festivals, due to the cost of living. They still do circumcision, but it's not like before" (Lubango).

"Traditional festivals – this changed. There were festivals in the village³⁶, obscure activities, in the bush. With people coming to the city, there's nowhere to hide. And with the church message, people recognised that the ceremonies were obscure, backward, and they're stopping. There were masked dancers at the kimbo, June and July; they held kimbombos for circumcision. Now circumcision is done in the hospital and they can't take drinks and masked dancers into hospitals" (a religious leader, Lubango).³⁷

Interviewees mentioned another reason why certain traditional institutions are becoming weaker – the prevailing lack of security which prevents people going into the bush in the required way. Apparently, even in the countryside, security considerations cause the enfeeblement of certain traditions.

The *ondjango*³⁸, an important institution in the countryside, continues to exist in the peri-urban parts of Lubango and Huambo, although its components appear to have changed. In rural areas the *ondjango* is an institution, but also a place, a space where the chief can meet other respected villagers. At night it is where there is a gathering of "older people talking and telling stories, and the youngsters can attend this and hear the tales". The structure is open: "anyone can see and hear what's going on inside through large openings in the walls". In peri-urban areas the *ondjango* has changed in form and content: those we visited in Lubango and Huambo are inside the chief's house or yard; only a few people can meet there; others cannot hear or see what is happening in the *ondjango*; and they are not used for talking and telling stories that young people can hear. Social life revolves around other places.

"in the kimbo there was a jango, the old men, women told riddles, gave advice in evening sessions³⁹. It was replaced by the television; if you don't have a television at home the children go to another house to see it. The current jango is television" (Lubango).

³⁶ The interviewee used the word kimbo, a Portuguese corruption of imbo which means "village" in the local languages.

³⁷ All the religious leaders we interviewed had negative opinions about traditions; they link them to shadowy and backward activities, and are pleased that they are disappearing. They gave the impression that the churches encourage the disappearance of traditional festivals.

³⁸ The Nhaneka-Humbe have an equivalent which is the otchoto, a meeting place in the village which is sacred; it continues to be important in the peri-urban environment.

³⁹ Jango is a Portuguese corrupted version of the Umbundu word ondjango.

Associations, sports' clubs and recreational clubs

Local associations and clubs are mentioned more often in the *bairros* of Luanda. The majority of these local associations and clubs are for sport and recreation. A few of them try to "provide social services" for the *bairro* but state that they do not manage this because of "financial problems".

The majority of these clubs are sporadic and precarious. Residents rarely mention them as being important points of reference. This is different from the situation in peri-urban *bairros* in the colonial era when the associative movement was quite strong and when some of them, even of notably regional in character, formed channels of assistance for their members (Monteiro, 1973) (Messiant, 1989).

In Huambo and Lubango the majority of *bairros* have a football team; but the poorest *bairros*, particularly in Huambo, do not have a team because "there is no-one who has the money to buy a football". In some of the *bairros* of the three cities there are teams in the "Gira Bola" competition among *bairros*, though this competition at present seems linked in some way to the State Administration or local political power and is not an initiative of the residents. It is a recent initiative, and it is as yet difficult to understand if the teams will take root in their *bairros*.

It can also be seen that in some peri-urban *bairros*, particularly at Christmas, New Year and Carnival, young people join together at a street corner to sit, converse and listen to music. These places are known as "*Paradas*" and have a clear mark of modernity and youthfulness as the names (painted on the walls, often in English) indicate: "*Parada of the bad boys*" for example. "*Paradas*" are groups that are purely temporary.

Churches, as we will see, have a strong presence in peri-urban areas. They are described in detail in Chapter VII.





V . SOLIDARITY
AND MUTUAL AID

CONTENTS

V SOLIDARITY AND MUTUAL AID

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1. THE CONCEPT OF “SOLIDARITY”

1.1 A word with many meanings

The word “solidarity” has a multiplicity of meanings, varying from one user of the word to another, so it is very difficult to define it. We faced this difficulty when trying to transform the word into a concept we could work with; what, in fact, is solidarity? At the start of the research, even in the exploratory phase, our informants referred frequently to solidarity but they struggled to explain clearly exactly what they meant.

One thing is certain, solidarity involves a relationship. People do not show solidarity in isolation, in a vacuum, and their solidarity is in relation to at least one other person. Therefore solidarity can only exist in a social relationship. Also, it cannot be investigated directly, neither by counting (as profit can be, for example) nor by directly observing a quality called solidarity. We were told that “solidarity is a feeling”. It might be more correct to say it derives from a feeling or, even better, from a moral and ethical position which expresses itself in attitude and is a result of the socialisation process of the people concerned. Solidarity cannot be measured nor observed, but it manifests itself through a series of characteristics of the relationships among individuals.

In NGO discussions people talk of “solidarity and mutual aid” as two similar and interchangeable concepts. But mutual aid among several people is more properly a **sign** of the solidarity which exists among them. If people help each other it is because they are in solidarity, because the person who helps feels solidarity towards the person that they assist, someone who is facing an unfavourable situation. Group solidarity manifests itself in each member's inclination to perform actions that benefit others. We suggest, therefore, that the expression of solidarity is such “beneficial actions” exchanged among people, regardless of the nature and purpose of these actions that can take various forms (time, real objects, symbolic objects, money and others). What is important is that the action is seen as a gift from the person who “offers” it, and that the recipient values it positively.

1.2 Reciprocity in solidarity

In our exploratory discussions about the concept of solidarity, several times we came across the opinion that solidarity involves acts of generosity, that it involves a gift without necessarily any recompense and without calculation about the reward. It was said that people give without expecting any repayment. This position is held by people who want to distance **solidarity**, the capacity to give, from economic rationality and self-interested acts. They defend the position that solidarity should be characterised by actions that are generous to others but outside any calculation of self-interest, even in the long term:

they involve acts of generosity for which no recompense is requested. But this led us to wonder what “generosity” actually is, and led us to try to develop another concept.

We are not going to examine here the moral question: do unselfish favours exist, or are all good Samaritans “disinterested because they are interested” (Bourdieu, 1979). For the purposes of this research, acts of solidarity are those that involve exchanges of favours that take place within the framework of a set of social relationships linking the participants. This framework of social relationships means that such exchanges always imply reciprocity: as anthropologists put it, the favour implies a favour in return.¹ However, this does not necessarily mean that solidarity is influenced by calculation. The time that passes between the two reciprocal exchanges (between the first favour and the favour in return) eliminates the possibility that the people concerned are only acting out of utilitarian motives. Time means that the recipient of the sympathetic favour can experience it (sincerely) as a freely bestowed act, although there is the risk that the other person does not see it the same way (Bourdieu, 1994). Moreover, the process of socialisation means that those who exchange favours are socially predisposed to favour solidarity and to enter “into the game of exchange without ulterior motives, without utilitarian calculations” (Bourdieu, 1994: 184). Social relationships are intense in a fairly closed social group, such as a small community, so the risk that there will be no reciprocity is minimal. As well as acquired social attitudes, reciprocity (the requirement to return a favour) is a rule with associated social sanctions, even if these are implicit.²

The time that elapses between reciprocal acts also means that there is a difference between two kinds of reciprocity:³

- balanced (or specific) reciprocity, which occurs when two people simultaneously exchange objects with the same value, or to which they attribute the same value
- generalised (or diffuse) reciprocity, which refers to “a continuous relationship of exchange which at any time may be out of balance or may not correspond, but which assumes mutual expectations that a favour done today will be repaid in the future”.

¹ Mauss (1950) points out that a favour, which might appear to be free when seen as an isolated gesture, is always followed by a favour (more or less equivalent) in exchange when analysed through time. According to Levi-Strauss, good deeds are acts within a structure of reciprocity which transcends the exchange, whereby a favour leads to a favour in return [quoted by Bourdieu, 1994:179].

² Various authors demonstrate how the cycle of favour and return of favour, and the feeling of indebtedness associated with these gestures, are part of the basic structure of communal societies. Being a building block of the functioning of such societies, this cycle is protected by sanctions on all those who want to refute this cycle. See various texts on this theme in Marie (1997).

³ Putnam (1993) quoting Sahlins (1972).

If the return of a favour is not deferred, if the repayment follows immediately the initial gift, there is in effect an ephemeral relationship “strictly utilitarian and contractual that ends immediately and that does not lead to a deeper obligation, such as happens in an economic transaction *stricto sensu*” (Marie, 1997).

Exchanges which we classify as expressing solidarity are those which take place within the framework of social relationships of the “generalised reciprocity” type. The norms and rules of reciprocity contribute strongly to fortifying communities and groups, particularly the norms and rules of generalised reciprocity that “reconcile self-interest with solidarity” (Putnam, 1993).

*“In a reciprocal system, in general one can regard every individual act as a combination of what could be called short-term altruism and long-term self-interest: I help you now with the (possibly vague, uncertain and unpremeditated) expectation that you will help me in the future. Reciprocity is created by a series of acts which, on their own, are altruistic in the short term (each act benefits another at the altruist’s cost); but taken together they **normally** benefit all the participants.”*
[Quotation from Taylor, 1982 in Putnam 1993, p.182; emphasis in the original]

Our research into solidarity consisted of looking for, understanding and analysing the forms, times and locations of reciprocal exchanges among residents of the neighbourhoods we studied.

2. HETEROGENEITY, GROUPS OF NEIGHBOURS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS OF SOLIDARITY

2.1 Considerable heterogeneity in peri-urban *bairros*

An initial hypothesis of our research was that the peri-urban *bairros* of the three cities had “patches of homogeneity”; in other words, that particular parts of these *bairros* are inhabited by people who share the same regional and ethnic origins. We even thought that some such people would have come from the same village. Our hypothesis was based on the idea that the residents of these small areas had arrived in the city together or that, if they arrived separately, they joined relatives or people from the same area who had already lived in the city for some time. We have already seen that our research very rarely confirmed the first part of the hypothesis; people had migrated as a group only in very special cases.

Although the research confirmed that displaced people, when they arrive in the city, are received by relatives or friends (from their villages or towns of origin), it is rare for them to subsequently settle in the same neighbourhoods or zones as these people (see Chapter III). When we asked about this, people said they would prefer to stay together according to regional origin rather than ethnicity; but even in the case of

Huambo, where most migrants are *Ovimbundu*, people feel that they are dispersed and not “together”.⁴

According to the interviewees, it would be better to stay together “because it is easier to socialise, communicate and get help in case of illness”.⁵ But we found that they clearly do not achieve this proximity, and there is considerable heterogeneity in peri-urban *bairros*. Chapter III has examined the various factors which have caused this: at different times the three cities received various waves of displaced people, with a variety of characteristics and coming from different places; lack of space in the neighbourhoods, or the high price of land, forced people to build further out (in “new” areas where plots are cheaper) thus moving them away from the families that had received them. This phenomenon is most pronounced in the case of Luanda since there were more “waves” of displaced people from a wider variety of places than their equivalents in the other provinces. Moreover, land pressure is greater in Luanda, so relatives, friends and people from the same area who arrived at different times find themselves living further apart than in the other cities.

Dispersion is “forced” on new arrivals, but apart from this one might imagine that older neighbourhoods such as Ngola Kiluanje or some parts of Hoji ya Henda in Luanda would be homogeneous to some extent. However, even in these long-established areas there is less homogeneity than expected. Nowadays owners of large plots, each of which contained only one house for many years, divide them into small plots to be sold. Therefore an old residential area has a mixture of new and old residents. Also inhabitants of long-established neighbourhoods close to the “downtown” area sell their houses; then they move further out to new neighbourhoods, and have some money to set up a business. For the same motives, people who have been living “downtown” move out to the *bairros* around the city centre. This spatial mobility in the peri-urban *bairros* of Luanda is stronger now than in the past but was already demonstrated in a study of the *musseques* of Luanda over 25 years ago (Monteiro, 1973); then it was more likely to be linked to positive factors (moving closer to the workplace or to a “better *bairro*”) while now it is more likely to be linked to “living wherever it is possible” or realising some capital from the move.

⁴ Although the topic was not included in our research, it is worth noting this example of the fact that “identity” (individual, cultural, social) is not an absolute, and therefore is a construction which varies when it is projected externally. The perception of your own, or your community’s, uniqueness varies according to the degree of perceived difference from the other person or body. The more different the “other” seems to be, the more alike we become. Here the situation is the reverse. In a city like Huambo where most residents belong to the *Ovimbundu* group, they can be seen by outsiders (not *Ovimbundu*) as forming a “homogenous community”; but in the absence of large differences, they perceive and attribute importance to differences which seem to us small.

⁵ We will see below that people’s difficulties giving and obtaining help when it is needed are sometimes attributed to the fact that *bairros* are very heterogeneous.

As well as the heterogeneity in terms of people's origins or the time they have lived in the *bairro*, some long-standing residents mentioned the diversity of social status in each area, using terms like "mixing of classes" or "a mix of people with different levels of thinking". This diversity leads some people to select the neighbours with whom they spend their time.

Small peri-urban areas with a homogenous population are thus the exception rather than the rule. There is some grouping by families; to house relatives who have just arrived, a family may build an outhouse in their yard. In Luanda various times people said that the *Bakongo* people tend to live together in particular neighbourhoods.⁶ In the *Comuna* of Kikolo, most of the inhabitants of *Bairro Kawelele* and some of the older areas of *Bairro Boa Esperança* are from the *Ovimbundu* group, and most residents of *Bairro Augusto Ngangula* come from Uíge. In Lubango the people who have lived there the longest, who are of Nhaneca-Humbe or Nganguela origin, live together more. We were told that "they are earlier, this land is theirs" therefore they have more control over their plots of land.

2.2 Relationships among neighbours and social networks that provide solidarity

One of the visible results of this heterogeneity is that groups of neighbours with strong social ties are rarer and smaller than we expected. When we questioned residents about the quality of their relationships with neighbours, most of them answered that they are good. But delving into the subject more deeply we found out that a good relationship means simply exchanging greetings such as "good morning", "good afternoon" and "did you sleep well". In other words, people were cordial towards their neighbours and "have no difficulties or problems with anyone". Good relationships among neighbours does not imply frequent interactions among them, which is what we had expected, nor that there are numerous spaces for socialising. On the contrary many people, particularly in Luanda and Lubango, say that they "shun familiarity with the neighbours" to avoid problems.⁷

"I restrict my friendships; it avoids creating intrigues."

"I go to my vegetable plot in the afternoon. This earns money and avoids me spending time at home or with neighbours. Other people also avoid friendships."

⁶ **Mabor in Hoji ya Henda for example.**

⁷ **Problems between neighbours crop up due to jealousies, sorcery, intriguismo (creating intrigues), rumours and slanders. Excessive alcohol consumption also increases conflict. It was mentioned by some people that now the small space between houses also causes some conflicts: "in the village the houses were less clustered together, there was not so much confusion".**

Rogério (1997) and Torres (1973) reach the conclusion, based on the existence between the houses in certain musseques of what they call semi-public and semi-private spaces (yards, small open spaces and narrow lanes), that “there is an intense communal life”. They write that recent migrants live more communally; but with the passage of time, changes in the way they use space reduce the amount of semi-public space; so their way of living becomes “more urbanised and less communal”. However, the two studies did not include data about social life. Moreover, in the study by Torres at least, the information base is now old and the situation has changed considerably. The way space is organised can change rapidly: two or three houses stand on a site where there used to be just one; open spaces tend to become even smaller; some roads become narrow lanes. The framework of interaction among residents changes. Some yards and lanes are shared by various families, but in most of these cases they did not come from the same area nor have they established strong social links.

Absence of frequent and intense neighbourly relations contributes to a lack of social cohesion, and means that social networks linking neighbours are not as numerous or strong as we initially had supposed. The concept of social network encompasses the fabric of social relationships that a particular set of people establish and experience. Social networks are a crucial dimension for analysing the structure of the interactions which take place in a neighbourhood (Costa, 1999). The content of the social network, or in other words the nature of the social relationship among network members, can take various forms. Furthermore, a social network does not necessarily correspond to a particular social space such as a group of neighbours.

In our research we investigated whether these existing social networks performed acts of mutual aid, or in other words we looked for **social networks that provide solidarity**. In line with our hypotheses, we expected that these social networks providing solidarity would coincide with **areas of neighbourliness**. However, our observations showed that generally this is not the case. The most common (and probably the strongest) social networks that provide solidarity in the context of neighbourliness are those that are **associated with kinship**. Members of the same family who live together or nearby, in some cases because they share a plot of land, help each other in times of need. Also **the longest established residents of a neighbourhood**, who have known each other for many years, show that they have more frequent and deeper relationships than the more recent arrivals:

“we don’t know very well how the relationship with the neighbours is, we of the same age, the old timers who’ve been in the neighbourhood for a long time, we get on well. With the new ones we have no relationship at all, they’re kids and they have no respect (...) In the old days it was better, there was more respect, the youngsters don’t have respect. In the past we could request a tomato, an onion from the neighbour, or give something to eat to the neighbour’s son; now if this happens the neighbour’s wife talks about it and we want to avoid conflicts. (...)”

When people of the **same ethno-linguistic origin** live close to each other in the same *bairro* or area, there seems to be more solidarity. In some Luanda neighbourhoods residents of *Bakongo* origin appear to show considerable solidarity towards each other, particularly those people who had previously lived in Zaire.⁸ Most residents of certain parts of the *Comuna* of Kikolo and some areas of Lubango's peri-urban neighbourhoods are of *Ovimbundu* origin. But in most other cases, that is when people of the same origin are scattered, there is perceived to be little solidarity among neighbours:

"people do not help each other also because we've mixed a lot. If it was the area where we left, yes, people helped each other because we lived in tribes and when someone in the tribe was sick everybody was worried."

However, according to the interviewees, the least solidarity among neighbours and the greatest reluctance to participate in communal activities are found in the *Comuna* of Kikolo, even though a high proportion of the residents in some parts of it are *Ovimbundu*⁹.

Otherwise there are fewer acts of mutual aid among neighbours than we had originally supposed. People say "the trend is everyone for himself" and "it's everyone for himself and God for everyone". It is rarely in the social networks of neighbours that *bairro* residents seek help to resolve problems, either individual ones or those experienced by the community. People only exercise mutual aid in moments of crisis, as we will see in Part 3 of this Chapter.

Despite all this, we should remember that there are some social networks in the neighbourhoods in which residents do take part. They may be physically dispersed, and therefore not necessarily local networks in particular areas. Moreover, as Costa (1999: 312) points out, social networks in cities tend not to be limited to geographically limited areas, in contrast to what happens in traditional societies.

Other examples of social networks which are strong and dynamic can be those formed by sets of people **linked to the same church**. They may not be neighbours, and the network may be fairly spread out. This type of network is very important in the peri-urban neighbourhoods, and we will describe them in detail in Chapter VI.

⁸ Migrants of *Bakongo* origin behave very differently because of their experience in exile. People who emigrated to Zaire in 1961 (then the Belgian Congo) and their descendants differ considerably from those who stayed in Angola. Most of those who went to Zaire lived in Kinshasa. They have experienced urban life for more than 30 years, which fundamentally distinguishes their behaviour from the people who stayed in the provinces of northern Angola, mostly in a rural environment (interview with Jean-Michel Mabeko-Tali in July 2000, confirmed by our observations).

⁹ Although we note this fact, we could not draw any conclusions. To be properly understood, the attitudes and behaviour of the *Ovimbundu* who are in Luanda require specific research which delves more deeply than was possible here. Probably the prospect that they may be associated with UNITA plays a part, and could inhibit organisation and participation in community activities.

There is a hypothesis that dense social networks provide solidarity among neighbours, and that these can be considered embryonic community organisations. But the weakness of neighbourly relations is an obstacle to this.

Instead of a pattern of relationships among neighbours who have frequent social interaction and enjoy strong mutual aid, one finds solidarity within (and the strengthening of) **particular groups** – a particular family, a particular ethno-linguistic group or the members of a particular religious assembly. But this fact does not reflect on the overall social cohesion of the community in the *bairro*.

There is another negative result of the relatively weak social interaction among neighbours. Less frequent and feebler social relationships among neighbours cause the level of inter-community confidence to go down; in a vicious circle this, in turn, does not favour strong relationships among people nor social cohesion (Putnam, 1993). Also weak social relationships do not encourage the exchange of favours and small services that would be the origin of reciprocal obligations on which most community solidarity is normally based.

3. SPACES AND FORMS OF SOLIDARITY AND MUTUAL AID IN PERI-URBAN *BAIRROS*

3.1 Institutions of “traditional solidarity” in the peri-urban context: the case of *ondjuluka*

Our initial hypotheses led us to investigate another question: have traditional forms of solidarity continued, even if transformed and adapted to the lifestyle of the peri-urban neighbourhoods where the displaced and migrants settled? The rural institution called *ondjuluka* in *Umbundu*-speaking areas is one which clearly involves mutual aid and a spirit of co-operation in the group.¹⁰ A large group of people (up to fifty) co-operate; in the countryside most such activities are agricultural: the group, normally from the same village, goes to work in the field of one of them at the time of heavy work (ploughing, for example). Normally, at the end of the day's work, the owner of the field who was helped offers food and drink to the group. *Ondjuluka* is based on a structure of generalised (diffuse) reciprocity. Social norms and rules guarantee reciprocity, but the possibility of returning the service in the future is not explicit. It forms part of

¹⁰ See Chapter II for more information on this mutual aid institution, and on the way it seems to have evolved in the countryside. In other areas there are similar mechanisms – called *otchikuale* in *Nganguela* areas, *kudiquatequessa* or *dikuatequessu* in *Kimbundu* areas, and *ondjambi* in the *Nhaneca-Humbe* area of influence.

a community's or group's social relationships,¹¹ and all members know that the favour will be returned (although it is an implicit knowledge linked to the process of socialisation).

No-one in Luanda mentioned to us any practices similar to *ondjuluka*. In Luanda and in Lubango some groups of vendors arrange that, if one of them is absent, others sell their products and then hand over the receipts later. And some vendors collaborate to create a joint pool of savings that each of them has the right to use in turn. Such practices may be "descendants" of institutions like *ondjuluka*, as they are based on principles of confidence and reciprocity among members of a particular group. Even so, they differ from *ondjuluka* in some fundamental ways. The groups of vendors are much smaller than those involved in *ondjuluka*, and this makes it comparatively easy to establish inter-personal relationships with confidence; each vendor knows for certain the benefit that such associating will provide, and the fact that the "service" should be refunded is perfectly explicit; and the existence of the group is based on this, which is not true in the case of *ondjuluka*.

In Lubango where, in peri-urban *bairros*, *ondjuluka* was mentioned more frequently than elsewhere, it is still practised sometimes (for work in the fields or when helping to build a house):

"Some people, but very few, tend to help work in the fields, as long as the person concerned prepares something to drink and eat and tells the others they are wanted. It hardly happens now."

"They help to make sun-dried bricks to build a house as a sort of mutual aid with a drink at the end."

In Huambo some church groups call the practice of visiting members of the community who are in hospital "*ondjuluka*". In the villages people appeal to and can count on the *ondjuluka* spirit, but in the cases described to us in the city this does not always happen. Nowadays people cannot be sure that others will participate in communal activities. There is no longer a norm which is recognised and accepted by the whole group, and rejection of which could risk the person's exclusion from the group. In peri-urban neighbourhoods participation in practices such as *ondjuluka* is voluntary. Moreover, when it does take place, there is usually an expectation of recompense which is more explicit than in the case of "traditional *ondjuluka*". It is more explicit for the group that in the future they may need this type of support from their neighbours or friends, so it is better to be integrated into this network of exchange.

In rural societies, in fact, there are two kinds of institution which appeal to the spirit of mutual aid. One is *ondjuluka*, while the other is called *ocinyemo* (or *otchinyemo*) in Umbundu¹². *Ocinyemo* activities differ fundamentally from the *ondjuluka*, as they

¹¹ Or the *habitus* of the group, as Bourdieu would express it.

¹² In Kimbundu the equivalent name is *kixikila*.

involve a much smaller group (between two and six). Moreover, although there is no immediate recompense (as with the *ondjuluka*), the undertaking covering work or a reciprocal loan is clearer – help me today and I must repay you with work or something similar.¹³ An institution like *ocinyemo* gives rise to reciprocity with more “equilibrium”, and it implies more of a “reciprocity **strategy**”. This contrasts with the “reciprocity norms” which govern *ondjuluka*.¹⁴

We have the impression that, in peri-urban *bairros*, practices that involve reciprocity are increasingly those with “equilibrium”. Often they are closer to the “reciprocity strategy”, even if “reciprocity norms” have not disappeared completely. This may be the best way to interpret the behaviour of vendors who collaborate to create a “solidarity fund”. And when friends take part in building a house, the expectation that it will be a “favour returned” is more explicit than would be the case with rural *ondjuluka*. Furthermore, some people say that *ondjuluka* does not exist “in the city”; it was village behaviour which has no place in the urban environment.

“Ondjuluka, solidarity with something [afterwards] to keep the participants happy, it doesn’t happen now. Alcoholic drinks called otchassa and otchissangua were made from debata (maize paste), but here there’s none”

Heterogeneity also encourages this erosion of traditional forms of solidarity. As we have seen, few communities have stayed together, able to maintain social norms, “traditional” institutions from their areas of origin and the rules (and situations) of “generalised reciprocity”.

Particularly in Huambo, one explanation given by interviewees for the weakening of practices such as *ondjuluka* is that people are very poor – they have nothing to give at the end of the work.

“In the village one would build a house with other people’s help, giving the participants a lunch. In the bairro this doesn’t happen; people don’t have food for the lunch.”

“There was ondjuluka, which has decreased a lot here in the bairro because people have nothing.”

“People who live in the countryside have resources to help their relatives. In the city it doesn’t happen because people don’t have that possibility.”

¹³ Two examples were mentioned in the interviews: 1. I lend my oxen this week, and another week he comes to work for me; 2. I help to cut trees today, and he comes to help me build the house another day.

¹⁴ Putnam (1993) quoting Keohane (1986).

Another factor mentioned is that, while participants in a rural *ondjuluka* would be offered food and drink, in the city many people expect to be paid with money. We heard this mainly in the peri-urban neighbourhoods of Lubango (as already mentioned, in Luanda there was not even any mention of *ondjuluka*).

In the countryside there is mutual aid for making sun-dried bricks, or to help build a house. In the bairro its not done now because people demand payment of money. They don't accept remuneration in the form of food and drink.

The sustenance provided after the work was not a fundamental aspect of *ondjuluka* in the countryside. Rather, there was the **certainty**, even if this was only implied, that any participant who one day might need work done by the others would enjoy the same kind of treatment. The food and drink were not exactly payment: they provided a moment of recognition for the group's communion and union, and a confirmation of the rules and norms that everyone accepted and obeyed. In the city the norms are not recognised and there is no guarantee of reciprocity; so the sustenance becomes payment and as such it is not enough in the urban context. People prefer money, the common intermediary element for urban transactions. Thus *ondjuluka* becomes caught up in the monetisation of urban services and goods and ... is no longer *ondjuluka*.

3.2 Solidarity in cases of sickness or death

When we asked the residents of peri-urban neighbourhoods about the occasions on which they can count on support from neighbours, almost invariably they answered "only in the case of deaths or illnesses".

People don't help each other here in the neighbourhood. In cases of deaths or illnesses yes. Whoever has a death we go there, offer condolences, help to deal with the documents at the Administration, the matter of the coffin and the cemetery. In cases of sickness, and only if they can't make it to the hospital, they are helped to go to the hospital but the cost is theirs.

In practice people are more inclined to immediately offer help when there is a death than when someone is ill, as the interviewee makes clear in the quotation above. If there were no mutual aid when a death occurs, many bereaved families would not have the capacity to pay the expenses nor to do all the work that is required in a short period.

Sometimes hope and expectation of direct recompense are quite explicit:

They help each other at times of misfortune; people give, even if only a bit, they know that it may be them tomorrow.

If there's a death, neighbours and friends help – they contribute money, they attend, dig the hole. They know the same thing may happen to them.

A funeral in a *bairro* is still sacrosanct. To be present and to help at times of misfortune is a “traditional” norm with corresponding strong social sanctions. A death means that it is “compulsory” to give, so that in the future one does not experience the shame of not receiving.

A death, which some interviewees call *uma situação de infelicidade* (a situation of misfortune), is still seen as a time of “traditional support”. It crosses the limits of kinship networks. The funeral is an institution which has resisted all social changes, although its form has been modified. It is unacceptable not to respond to it.

“When there's a death help is traditional, even people who are not family contribute. Whoever goes to funerals always takes a coin. There are even people who, if they don't have money to take, they don't go to the funeral because of shame.”

People contribute what they can – money, food or drink, moral support to the family, help dealing with bureaucratic processes, carrying the “box” or digging the hole. In Huambo some communities describe as *cisoko* the fact that “people from one neighbourhood bury people from another neighbourhood”. One interviewee said that there are rules which determine the *bairros* that will help each other. At the end of the ceremony those who dug the hole receive a drink and a chicken. This seems to be an urban application of the “tradition” called *cisoko* (or *kisoko*). This institution provides for the creation of associations which do not depend on consanguinity, and have various functions (Neto, 2001); in this case the purpose is the burial of a member of one of the “associated” communities.

In the case of a medical problem, even when it is serious, help is rarer than for a funeral. Several interviewees said that when someone is sick it is only relatives and very close friends who provide support, particularly if it involves money to buy medicines or pay the hospital.

Help only when there's a “misfortune”. Otherwise only if it's a relative, but even then a loan is difficult; today we live everyone for themselves and God for everyone.

When there's a “misfortune” the neighbours appear, but in the case of an illness you fend for yourself, there's no financial support.

Even when neighbours have a stronger and better relationship, when they are long-standing residents for example, it does not necessarily lead to mutual aid among neighbours if the support needed is “material”. Only a few institutions fall outside this

“rule”. Except in the case of a funeral, mutual aid activities are confined to certain groups of people: members of the same family and very close friends, those who belong to the same church, people from the same ethnic group or people from the same area who live close to each other.

3.3 Support for relatives and friends

Solidarity occurs within kinship networks or similar groups, such as groups of close friends more than in the context of neighbourliness. Even when someone has died, some interviewees in Luanda said “real help, help for sure – only if they are family”. And someone who needs a loan, to start trading in the informal market for example, can only count on obtaining it from a relative.

In Chapter III we mentioned that an important factor affecting whether displaced people succeed in establishing themselves is the presence in the city of relatives, friends and people from their area. The migrants can count on solidarity from them. This type of solidarity or mutual aid within a family is sometimes seen (by informants) to be a norm of “traditional culture”. As an interviewee told us:

“in our Bantu culture, it’s a duty to help family and friends.”

Chapter III showed the various forms family support can take throughout the process of settling down – not just provision of shelter, also help finding work, loans, introductions into local networks, presentation to neighbourhood authorities and so on. But this kind of support is only offered to people who are very close, namely blood relatives and intimate friends. Even in these cases, there are limits to this norm in peri-urban areas, especially in Luanda. When displaced migrants are living in a relative’s house, after a certain time the circumstances become quite uncomfortable. The displaced visitors become a burden. “It can be expensive to house another family for six months”, some interviewees told us.

Therefore the happiness of the moment when the displaced family arrives in the city (the reconciliation, knowing that they are alive) disappears a few weeks later. Some displaced people said “in your relative’s house, after two or three weeks friendship is finished”; or, remembering an *Ovimbundu* proverb “it’s easier to be a slave than a guest”. Slaves know who they are, have a role, understand what their place is, and know their duties and what is expected. Guests are passing through: it is not clear what their place is, in fact they cannot occupy any position so because of this they cannot remain. It seems that a “traditional” rule of hospitality has found itself suddenly in an environment where other rules and codes make it difficult to continue its practice. Arrivals in the city who enjoy the solidarity of relatives and friends settle down more easily and rapidly, but this solidarity is for a limited time.

Monteiro (1973) also noted the importance of the family in the integration of migrants in the *musseques* of Luanda more than 25 years ago. He also showed that there was some tension around what the author called “family parasitism”. The desire for social mobility of some families could mean that they tried to avoid being part of an extended family the costs of which might rob them of the means to rise socially. The grave economic crisis of today means that the pressure does not come from the desire for social mobility but from attempting to maintain their present standing.

However, there is still an “obligation” to help your family. One interviewee pointed out that, despite all the difficulties, many households in peri-urban neighbourhoods are large – several informants reported living in houses shared by more than ten people, members of three generations. This is particularly true in Luanda, where land pressure is greater. In the peri-urban areas of cities there are groups of families with strong cohesion, and for whom mutual aid is important, but this is not necessarily reflected in the rest of the neighbourhood.

The conclusion is that some norms still govern what solidarity is offered, and set the limits which people may not cross:

1. support to a relative or very close friend (who thus becomes an “assimilated” relative¹⁵); though even within this narrow circle a strong pressure exists on these norms
2. help when someone dies or is ill (but without incurring material costs).
3. a spirit of solidarity among members of particular groups: churches¹⁶ and some relatively homogenous communities, though even in these cases people show solidarity most commonly when there is a funeral or illness.

¹⁵ As Irae Lundin points out in relation to Maputo, kinship links are widened beyond the “true” members of the family. As a result of social relationships, and sometimes circumstances and a variety of interests, kinship links come to include “classificatory kin” – uncles, godparents and so on [Lundin, in a February 2001 interview about her doctoral thesis, Lundin, unpublished].

¹⁶ Solidarity in religious assemblies is independent of membership of a family, neighbourhood, region or ethnicity. This important phenomenon is covered in detail in Chapter VII.





VI . COLLECTIVE ACTION IN PERI-URBAN AREAS

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1. MANY PROBLEMS, BUT COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS ARE DIFFICULT

As we have described in previous chapters, the quality of life is very low for most residents in peri-urban *bairros*, and they face considerable difficulties when trying to obtain basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. Given that, at present, State institutions function poorly, people must also seek solutions to these problems beyond the possible “capacity to serve” of those bodies. This study starts from the hypothesis that neighbourhood residents could resolve some of these problems if they organised collectively for this purpose. However, collective organisation for a particular activity seems to be very difficult to achieve whether the residents are acting on their own, or are supported by an entity outside the community. NGOs say they face great difficulties working in peri-urban areas.

In some neighbourhoods people do get together to carry out communal activities of various kinds. The example of the “clean-up campaign” is often mentioned. These campaigns are fostered by churches, prominent local residents or, in Luanda, instigated by the Residents’ Committee. Normally it is the women who organise the work and who participate in it. They say that the men rarely help. Residents of peri-urban neighbourhoods give clean-up campaigns as an example of activities done together, but they also say that these events are much less frequent than they used to be (when Residents’ Committees concerned themselves more often with such tasks, for example).

In some peri-urban areas groups get together with the aim of installing electricity in their *bairro*. They buy a transformer together and then use it jointly. Another common arrangement is for an individual to own a transformer, and then sell the electricity to his neighbours.¹

Water is the most serious problem and most difficult to solve. Water is also a commodity that people cannot do without. Luanda is distant from the nearest rivers, so in some areas water can provide a source of trade and considerable power. In some *bairros* there have been initiatives that attempted to find a collective solution to the problem. With this objective NGOs such as Development Workshop in Luanda built public water fountains. However, in practice there is so much “pirating” of water from the pipe supplying water to these facilities that there is very little water at the communal taps (or it stops running altogether). So people prefer to buy their water, because they do not have time to spend hours waiting to fill their receptacle.

¹ In some *bairros* the cost of a connection can be 250 US Dollars, and the user also has to pay an additional 10 US Dollars per month.

The water problem is a typical example of the dilemma of collective action in peri-urban *bairros*. People get together to try to find a solution to a problem that everyone is facing. The solution found is for a communal water tap located in a public place, and all residents of the *bairro* must contribute to its cost. But some avoid the agreement: they do not pay because they prefer to make an illegal connection to the main supply pipe, an action which involves no risk for them. If water does not flow through their link to the pipe they will still have access to the communal water tap, which “the others” paid for. If it does run, even better, they have an exclusive water supply at home. If their connection restricts how well the communal taps work, as often happens, the situation is better still as they can sell water from their illegal connection. Clandestine connections proliferate so much that the ones that are far from the inflow into the supply pipe receive very little water. And the communal water tap, the collective solution, never works.

Dilemmas of this kind often occur, and are mentioned by the residents:

For buying the transformer the agreement was to pay an amount X, some paid others didn't, there was deadlock; a gentleman with money appeared who paid the difference, now whoever wants light has to pay this man. (Hoji ya Henda, Luanda)

When contributions of money are needed to replace taps, for example, those who appreciate the problem are disgusted when, after the problem has been solved, the others benefit from these infrastructures without paying. (Lubango)

Apparently it is easier for people to participate in an action intended to resolve a collective problem when there is an organisation that serves as an intermediary, which studies the problem and proposes a solution:

I have never seen residents do any collective work, except when they are invited by the committees [created by the ADRA/ACORD project]. Among neighbours I never saw anything. (Lubango)

There's more collective work by people in the bairro when some other organisation organises the activity and demands participation. Then people show up. (Lubango)

However, even then, participation is not always strong or easy to obtain. Why is this?

2. EXISTING COLLECTIVE ACTION ORGANISATIONS IN PERI-URBAN AREAS

2.1 Organisations stimulated by development organisations

The activities of entities from outside the *bairros* created many of the existing peri-urban organisations: grass-roots community organisations and commissions or committees

with various aims, mostly created by NGOs working in the *bairros*. Some examples of this type of organisation are:

a) Water committees.

These are organised by DW, ACORD and CARE in Luanda, by DW in Huambo and by DW, ADRA, ACORD and CARE in Lubango.

Water committees have had some success. Users' committees manage many wells and communal water taps, with few problems or conflicts. Many are transparent and accountable to the users, who manage to replace committee members judged to be incompetent. In other words, some NGOs have managed to act as intermediaries and catalysts in the search for a solution to the collective action dilemma mentioned above.

However, limits to these committees' achievements appear as soon as water pressure goes down. The pressure diminishes because the supply pipe is being "pirated", or simply because overall pressure is declining at the inlet. This shows the complexity of peri-urban collective action when it involves provision of services that have a dynamic transcending the level of the *bairro*. We will discuss these questions in Chapter VIII when examining local governance.

b) Parents' commissions

These are promoted by the Ministry of Education, and are often created by NGOs working in the neighbourhood. The parents' commissions that function have mobilised and directed contributions made to schools by the pupils' parents (financial and by doing work). During the last twenty years they have made a significant contribution to the maintenance of schools.

Unfortunately, not all peri-urban schools have parents' commissions, and the existing ones function irregularly. Some of them are somewhat subordinate to their respective residents' committees (even if informally) or are controlled by the teachers. They are most common, and obtain the best results, in Luanda, particularly at schools which are supported by NGOs.

c) Other commissions created by NGOs

Other commissions are set up when, for example, a road is being built (in Lubango) or to manage social centres or health centres. Apparently

management committees for health centres have not been as successful as parents' commissions.²

It is clear, therefore, that some commissions have had considerable success: residents do participate, and the commissions operate continuously and are relatively organised. Clear aims which the residents subscribe to, and clear benefits within a short time scale seem to be important factors contributing to the success of a commission. How much confidence the users have in commission members is another important factor (Robson, 2001a).

Health commissions may have been unsuccessful partly because they have tried to use similar kinds of structure and rules as the ones for education and water supply, while in fact people do not use the services offered by health centres uniformly; each resident makes a different number of visits to the health centre and consumes a different amount of medicines. Therefore it is more difficult to decide how much each user should contribute, so their involvement and participation varies. Moreover, it is more difficult to monitor the services provided by health centres. Members of parents' commissions can more easily evaluate the quality of a teacher's work, whereas the performance of medical staff is obscured by a difficult vocabulary consisting of "scientific words".

Thus although certain collective action initiatives by NGOs have had positive results, some development organisations working in peri-urban areas express frustration about the work in these areas, compared to their interventions in rural areas. Some staff of NGO projects say that people show less solidarity, "are more corrupted" and "are more concerned with their individual difficulties than with communal problems".

Furthermore, in some cases the NGOs do not manage to set up work groups or commissions with aims, structures and working norms which are clear to the members. Another problem can be that the target community may not find the aims of a group of sufficient practical interest.

2.2 Religious organisations and groups

Churches organise some collective activities in peri-urban neighbourhoods, although most of their initiatives are not limited to a particular geographical area. Within churches there are groups with various objectives: for recreation, social interventions, maintaining the church building and others. Church activities are important for many of the people interviewed in this research, and it seems that their groups function well. More detailed information about this type of collective action is given in Chapter VII.

²

Writings about other countries reach the same conclusion.

2.3 Organisations linked to the State administration: the residents' committees

Residents' Committees (*Comissões de Moradores*) appeared in the cities after independence although they were apparently formalised and reorganised in 1983. Even if it is not always clearly stated, these committees are an expression of the administrative system at the *bairro* level. In the 1980s they had some formal administrative power as, for example, the process of obtaining certain documents had to be started at this level; also Residents' Committees were responsible for organising people in the *bairros* to undertake certain tasks. Thus some residents say now that "in the old days there were clean-up campaigns organised by the Residents' Committee".

At the start of the 1990s, after the political opening and economic liberalisation, Residents' Committees declined and almost disappeared in some places. One interviewee said that he left the Residents' Committee of which he was a member at this time because "it was a waste of time, its aims were not clear, no-one really knew what they were doing there". In Lubango and Huambo, Residents' Committees do not exist in practice, and people hardly ever mention them. But our fieldwork suggests that, in Luanda, Residents' Committees have recovered their importance in recent years, and have (re)gained significance in the structure of local power, an aspect discussed in Chapter VII. But this increased prominence is not necessarily reflected in the organisation of collective action at *bairro* level.

2.4 Local associations and clubs

As noted in Chapter IV, there are few *bairro* associations and clubs and, when they exist, they have few resources and function with difficulty. The majority are oriented towards sports and recreation, but even these seem to develop only a low level of activity. The situation is thus different from that found in Luanda in the 1970s, for example, when there were dozens of sports' and recreation clubs in peri-urban areas. Messiant (1989) points out that, at that time also, most associations were for recreation and sports and that, although numerous, they were weak and their resources were uncertain. Nevertheless, they provided places to get together, preserve cultural values and for some political activities. In other countries, migrants coming from the countryside to live in cities often form local associations (even if these have a regional or ethno-linguistic character). Gondola (1997) shows how rural social institutions, transplanted into Kinshasa and Brazzaville in the 1960s and 1970s, lost their traditional function of social regulation and became purely mutual aid organisations:

*(...) this social formula, precious for many citizens, compensated for the lack of "traditional" forms of solidarity, given that the urban social environment was incapable of restoring the most practical functions to such arrangements.*³ [p.283]

³ The original is in French.

Monteiro (1973b) mentioned the existence of mutual aid associations in the *musseques* of Luanda at the start of the 1970s, which had the objective of helping members in case of sickness or death, and corresponded to “new social formulas that, as a reaction against individualism, try to compensate for the weakening of traditional solidarity networks [p166]. This type of association appears to exist now only within churches.

In the examples studied by Messiant and Monteiro, and in the case examined by Gondola in Kinshasa, the associations had a strongly regional or ethnic character. Is the ethnic heterogeneity of the peri-urban *bairros*, a factor that contributes to the lack of collective action and associations? Would social homogeneity, on the other hand, lead to the existence of numerous strong associations?

In *bairros* of Huambo and Lubango there are even fewer of this type of club, and in some of the poorer ones there are none. Poverty, as well as imposing limits on material aspects of life, seems to reduce the potential for activities which would help to set up new social bonds.

3. “NO-ONE HELPS, NOT MUCH CO-OPERATION”: SOME POSSIBLE REASONS

3.1 “Why not work together?”

Ethnic heterogeneity is rarely mentioned as a reason why people have difficulty in working together. It is true that there may have been an impact of the years of political discourse about “one people, one nation”, combined with the marginal ethnic undertones of the current war, that inhibits people from talking about ethnicity. But it seems that the heterogeneity to which residents refer when they say that “people don’t live together” is not only related to ethnicity but also to the fact that people do not know each other, do not know where other people came from and what their behaviour is likely to be. As mentioned in the previous chapter, even in the surroundings of Huambo where residents belong to the same ethno-linguistic group and share institutions and social practices, people speak of “not living together”. In other words, for there to be “confidence” among people, it is more important that people know each other or have at some time done things together than that they belong to the same ethno-linguistic group.

On the other hand, the reasons people most often give for not participating in communal activities, are related to the “problems of life”. Apparently there is not time for activities which take up time, especially when the benefits may not accrue in the short term and the results are not even certain. Most residents of peri-urban *bairros* live in great poverty and vulnerability; they are preoccupied with immediate daily survival. The time that they might dedicate to community activities with uncertain results can be spent, with a more predictable outcome, in petty trading. They point out that even women

and young people, who used to be more involved in voluntary activities, no longer have time to take part.

Nowadays not everyone agrees [to participate]; they are more interested in trading. The bairro used to be cleaner, neighbours used to collaborate; now they don't do it. Women don't even take part in the Angolan Women's Organisation because they have to go to the market. (Lubango)

Another reason why people do not co-operate is, apparently, that the results of collective action are uncertain, "shared things" often do not function. Various unsuccessful attempts have led people to lose confidence: in each other, in communal activities and sometimes in the organisations that try to promote it:

It's difficult to bring people together now because the first residents' committee collected money to sort out a problem and then didn't do anything, so the people lost confidence. We have had to do a lot of work, go to the markets to mobilise people and even then... (Luanda)

In some places the bairro leaders mobilised groups so as to monopolise the hand-outs for their own families. When the hand-outs finished, the groups disappeared. (Lubango)

Apparently some people do not participate because they feel that they should not take responsibility for the problems of their *bairro*, for which the government should take responsibility; they feel that the residents should not have to organise themselves to replace the State in providing these services. In spite of the clear weaknesses of State institutions in peri-urban areas, some people still hope that they will fulfil "their obligations". This view is a vestige of the years immediately after independence when the State had the duty, or at least it said it had, of "resolving the people's problems".

The relationship that we had postulated between solidarity and collective action seems to be borne out by the similarity in the reasons given for low levels of solidarity and for not participating in activities of collective interest. The research results obtained suggest that, in the peri-urban parts of the three cities, solidarity and the capacity for collective action are much weaker than we had expected, and the reasons given are mainly related to three aspects of peri-urban life, and we will discuss these in the following sections:

- many people live in great poverty and are very vulnerable;
- the growing monetisation of inter-personal exchanges, a change particularly felt by recently displaced people;
- the social heterogeneity and dispersion of social networks, though with a simultaneous strengthening of certain specific groups. A fourth reason is the low level of confidence in institutions, particularly those of the State, and in communal initiatives.

3.2 Poverty and vulnerability

As the residents of the peri-urban areas say, life there is very difficult and the people are very poor. Everything costs money, a lot of money: housing, water, electricity, school for the children. Most costs are proportionally higher than in the “formal” urban environment.

A recent study (INE, 2000) shows that, for families in the lowest quartile of expenditure⁴, the expenditure on “food, drinks and tobacco” as a proportion of their total spending is 64.1% in Luanda and 75.7% in Lubango and Huambo. The poverty and vulnerability of these people is even clearer if we add the costs of other basic services: in Luanda, 4.5% for health, 4.1% for education and 5.2% for water; in Huambo and Lubango, 3.3% for health, 2.3% for education and 2.1% for water⁵. In other words, in Luanda 77.9% of the total family expenditure is on essential goods and services, and in Huambo and Lubango this percentage is 83.4%⁶. If we add the component “rent, electricity, repairs and transportation” (and we can assume that the peri-urban population mostly spend this on rent and transportation), the total for basic goods and services rises to 91% in Luanda and 91.1% in Huambo and Lubango.

Therefore, when people say that “there’s nothing left over for lending a hand” they are stating the truth about the reality they confront every day. People who have arrived from the countryside recently (within the previous year) feel these pressures even more than the others.

3.3 Encountering the market economy

As well as the various difficulties to settling in the city that have already been mentioned, migrants come up against the market economy and the use of money. For many displaced people, this is the first time that they encounter these phenomena.⁷ It takes some time for displaced people arriving from rural villages to adapt to a context where “everything is bought, everything costs money”.

⁴ **The 25% with the lowest expenditure.** These families are probably those who live in the areas we are studying here, although these zones probably also contain people in the second quartile. The figures are not much higher. But here we are giving the figures for the first quartile as an example.

⁵ **Our interviewees confirmed that the amount residents of Luanda spend on water differs from the other two cities because in the latter (and in Benguela) people fetch water from rivers or wells as well as from public water taps.**

⁶ **If we assume that the “drinks and tobacco” component can be disregarded.**

⁷ **Andrade (2001) also mentioned monetarisation as one of the problems displaced people face when using money for transactions; however, she emphasised the practical aspects of the question, the difficulties recently displaced migrants have dealing with money.**

Using money as a means of exchange reduces the space for traditional solidarity institutions such as *ondjuluka*, within which exchanges had a symbolic value that transcended the exchange itself. Money has become an intermediary element in many transactions between individuals in which, in the countryside, it was almost non-existent.

Some interviewees expressed the shock of this encounter quite clearly. One of them, when speaking about inter-personal relationships in the countryside, remembered with nostalgia that “there we only had to go to the field and pick some maize or cassava to give to a guest; here it can’t be like that; here there is no field, only your pocket”. Another interviewee told us “here everything is different from in the provinces; everything is *gasosa* (tips or small bribes), everything is bought”. In the cities, migrants from rural areas come up against social, economic and cultural conditions that are so different that exchanges of favours and services are “out of place”, or are only appropriate in restricted social circles such as the family and among very close friends. For this reason money has become a barrier to small favours, which have become less frequent; this, in turn, has led to a weakening of the dynamic of generalised reciprocity, an important factor for group social cohesion. The less money people have, the stronger is the pressure of the market economy on social relations (Marie, 1997). The effect of money on social relations might not have been so destabilising, and might have been integrated into existing social relations, if poverty had not been so stifling. People have almost no money, but need it desperately to live.

The pressure to earn money is very strong, and to do this one must be in the market place, buying and selling. There is not much money left over for helping, nor is there much time left over. For many interviewees “time when you’re not at the market, when you’re not selling anything” is time wasted. Apparently people do not have the time to put into particular communal activities, nor to invest in forming groups; they have no time to build patterns of interaction and co-operation.⁸

3.4 Heterogeneity and the dispersion of social networks

Our research shows that ethnic homogeneity is rare in peri-urban neighbourhoods, especially in Luanda. Where there is some level of ethno-linguistic homogeneity, for example in some *bairros* of Luanda mainly populated by people of Bakongo origin, the inhabitants appear to show more solidarity with each other. Furthermore the residents of other *bairros* perceive that the residents of mainly Bakongo *bairros* show more solidarity to each other. It seems that collective action is more common, to clean and maintain streets for example, and the residents of these neighbourhoods keep control over the occupation of open spaces and areas where people can build.

⁸ In the countryside there is an “inactive season” when people can spend time on activities of other kinds, but there is no such period in the peri-urban neighbourhoods.

However there are also *bairros* in Luanda inhabited by people of Ovimbundu origin, where we encountered the most disappointment and negative attitudes about solidarity and collective action. And in a *bairro* on the northern side of the city of Lubango, which was settled from the 1980s onwards by an ethnically homogenous group (rural Ovimbundu people from the Central Plateau), there are more negative attitudes about solidarity and collective action than in a *bairro* on the southern side of Lubango where the residents are ethnically heterogeneous. In the latter, residents have managed to organise to resolve communal problems: they oversee the water supply to the *bairro* and maintenance of water pipes, and prevent these from being stolen. A group of long-standing residents took responsibility for these actions, and together they managed to establish some working rules. In the former, more homogeneous *bairro*, it has been more difficult to do this and erosion has brought the water pipes to the surface where they have been damaged by cars and children.

Ethnic heterogeneity is not always experienced in the same way, and it does not invariably produce the same results in terms of solidarity and collective action. When residents refer to heterogeneity it does not just concern ethno-linguistic aspects; rather they mean “social heterogeneity” that is the result of the dispersion of the social networks to which they belong, and the denser networks do not always correspond to groups of neighbours. The basic consideration seems to be that in *bairros* people do not know each other or scarcely know each other, and they have no common points of reference on which confidence could be built.

3.5 “Doing things together does not work”

Sometimes people justify the refusal to take part in collective activities, even if there will be a benefit to a group to which they belong, by the fact that such activities never seem turn out right, in peri-urban neighbourhoods at least. This is a view expressed by residents, and from the staff of NGOs that work in peri-urban areas.

A number of NGOs originally intended to intervene in rural areas and, perhaps because of this, there is a view of “community” strongly influenced by the characteristics of rural communities, or even of idealised rural communities. Rural communities appear to be more clearly structured, particularly when compared to the current peri-urban communities that are constantly changing. It is easier to identify the roles played by the different members of the community, as well as their common interests; and often these interests are shared by many people in the group. Moreover, local social dynamics in rural villages produce not only norms and codes that the whole community shares, and which lead to greater social cohesion, but also greater capacity to apply norms and enforce the sanctions normally associated with them.

One reason for the difficulties that NGOs experience may be a lack of knowledge about the characteristics of, and way of life in, peri-urban communities particularly in contexts as complex, unstable and difficult as some parts of Angolan cities. This impedes the identification of activities around which members of a group can mobilise and into which they would be ready to invest, when interests are apparently so fragmented (compared to rural communities).

Yet at the same time it is the case that most of the functioning water committees have an NGO (or other similar body) behind them. The NGO helps the committee to define “who does the cleaning, who collects the money, how much each bucket of water costs and how people will pay” and a series of other rules which enable the objective to be clearly defined in advance by the users and to be met more easily. This transparent process fosters confidence by the users in the committee, and in its potential for solving the problem. But it does not always succeed.

These factors suggest that solidarity within a group, and its capacity for collective action, are not determined by only one particular factor. Characteristics of the particular context and the social structure interact with each other, and affect the group’s social cohesion, the way it behaves and whether its members co-operate or not. New migrants in the city experience unemployment, vulnerability and the shock of coming into contact with a heterogeneous and instable peri-urban environment, but this does not completely explain why it is difficult to organise collective action there.

When a development organisation helps a group to structure a system and rules for collective action, this does not guarantee that the group of people show more solidarity with each other and start to collaborate more easily. Rules can be established, even principles that all members of the group understand, and still there is “something” which prevents the group from functioning. Therefore various factors influence the organisation of collective action. **Social capital** is one concept which encompasses various factors that influence the capacity for collective action.

4. COLLECTIVE ACTION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

4.1 Social capital: some elements of the theory

According to Putnam (1993), “voluntary co-operation is easier in a community which has inherited a substantial stock of social capital” (p.167). If our aim is to promote and stimulate collective action, then we probably need to know more about social capital.⁹

⁹ Nowadays various authors use the concept “social capital”, but it is always necessary to clarify the term’s meaning, given its current “fluidity”. For example, for Pierre Bourdieu it describes a particular type of “benefit” a given individual or family has; in this case social capital refers to the quality of the social

The relationship established in recent years between social capital and socio-economic development has led various social scientists and development agencies to try to answer several questions: what is this “new” form of capital, is it right to call it capital, and does there really exist a relationship with development? If collective action, and therefore socio-economic development, does grow when there is social capital, what factors does it depend on, and what aspects can make it more efficient or even make it grow? As Uphoff emphasises, the concept of social capital is still amorphous, and further empirical research is required to help define it more clearly:

- a) the elements that make up social capital;
- b) the relationships between them;
- c) the effects which can be attributed to each of these elements, and the interaction between them (Uphoff, 2000; 216-7).

Although the concept still needs strengthening, it does show the relationship between a series of social factors and can be helpful in illuminating the complexity of the phenomena connected to collective action (which we have been discussing throughout this chapter).

According to Coleman, social capital (in contrast to other forms of capital, economic or human, for example), is embedded in the structure of social relationships that exist among people: it is not an attribute of specific participants. Social capital is defined by its function and does not just constitute one entity; it is a variety of different entities with two elements in common:

- a) all are aspects of the social structure;
- b) the entities facilitate certain actions (individual or collective) by the participants within the social structure (Coleman, 2000).

relationships put together by the person or family; this may form (social) capital, in that it will give access to social benefits or will increase other kinds of capital (economic, cultural...). In a recent work with the significant title “Social Capital: a multifaceted perspective” [Dasgupta and Stiglitz (2000)] Elinor Ostrom uses the concept and defines it, following other authors, to be “the shared knowledge, understandings, norms, rules, and expectations about patterns of interactions that groups of individuals bring to a recurrent activity” (Ostrom, 2000; 176); in the same book, Richard Rose describes social capital as “the stock of formal or informal social networks that individuals use to produce or allocate goods and services. (...) social capital is about recurring relationships between individuals” (Rose, 2000; 149), a definition which is closer to Bourdieu’s. Here we use Coleman’s definition, and following from this, Putnam’s definition.

Some characteristics of the social structure are fundamental to collective action, such as “trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinating actions” (Putnam, 1993: 167). If there is a high level of social capital it is less likely that, when a group is facing a common problem, each person will choose to look for a solution which produces small short-term individual benefits and more likely that instead each will choose to seek (and try to negotiate) a joint solution that might give more attractive results for the collective and for each person concerned (Putnam, 1993) (Ostrom, 2000). Conversely, the lower the level of social capital in a community, the more difficulty it will have in dealing with the dilemmas of collective action. The more confidence exists among members of a group, or exists in the norms and rules which govern how the group functions, the more the group will be predisposed to undertake co-ordinated activities. Therefore the existence of many, wide social networks also contributes to social capital, because the many, wide relationships generate bonds of confidence, and increase the range of people who can participate in a particular collective activity.

Particularly important are social rules and systems of social interchange and civic participation such as associations, clubs, and organisations devoted to a particular interest. Systems for civic participation are a basic form of social capital – they circulate information, facilitate communication among the members of a group or of various groups, expand social interchange and promote, even sometimes create, social rules and principles for reciprocity. If a society has social rules and systems for civic participation it can take a basic step forward, when personal confidence becomes social confidence.

4.2 The peri-urban study areas: social capital under great pressure

At the start of the research we had thought that there would be a reasonable amount of social capital in the study areas: active social networks of neighbours, the continuation of traditional solidarity institutions, neighbourhood organisations and others. But the research revealed a different reality, namely a strong pressure on social capital in these areas. For various reasons (including monetisation, poverty and vulnerability) social norms and rules of reciprocity have been greatly weakened. There is not enough space for the traditional norms to continue, and the context is too “tough” for others to be invented or created. Moreover, there is less use of practices which contribute to the continuation of rules of generalised reciprocity, except in narrow circles: family, religious groups or some groups of people with similar origins.

In a study done in four different countries, Moser (1996) shows that in some circumstances where there is poverty people tend to mobilise, create strong social networks and support each other; but, Moser goes on, when poverty and social crisis cross a certain threshold and provoke great individual vulnerability, social capital

becomes so low that each family turns in on itself and stops supporting the community of which it could be part. The poverty may become so serious and so suffocating that people do not have the means to participate in exchanges under the rules of generalised reciprocity. The withdrawal of some people from the dynamics of continuous exchange relationships, or the fear that others will withdraw, introduces uncertainty into reciprocity and reduces people's confidence that others will come forward in time of need. Social relationships tend to be strong within specific, small groups, but weak outside these groups. This favours social cohesion within such small groups, but does not stimulate wider social exchanges in the *bairros*, nor encourage social cohesion at the scale of the *bairro*. Particular groups become reinforced, a process supported by strong personal relationships. Inside such small groups there is a high level of confidence, but this is not "extrapolated" outside the groups and does not develop into social confidence. In his work Putnam states that kinship and strong interpersonal bonds (consanguinity or close friendship, for example) are less important than "weak" bonds (membership of associations, for example) for maintaining community cohesion (among a group of neighbours, for example) and stimulating collective action.¹⁰

This type of social structure, with social relationships within small groups, favours the growth of bonding social capital that creates intense bonds and very high levels of confidence among members of small groups. But it does not contribute to, and may even prejudice, the creation of bridging social capital that creates bonds among members of different social groups, even though these bonds may be less intense.¹¹ In the context of urban societies, which put distinct and different social groups in contact with each other, bridging social capital is of high importance.

Associations, clubs and other "horizontal" groupings in the peri-urban *bairros* could help build bridging social capital. We have already seen, however, that most of these horizontal groupings are weak, function sporadically and lack resources: while on paper these bodies exist, in practice it is difficult for them to function effectively.

All this is happening in a context where local public institutions and services (that might have compensated for the absence or disintegration of networks of neighbours) have deteriorated as well. So one is left with the impression, so common in Luanda's peri-urban *bairros*, that people are abandoned, left to their own devices. Increasingly they feel that they can only count on themselves.

¹⁰ Putnam (1993: 175) quoting Granovetter (1973)

¹¹ See Colleta and Collen (2000). The author gives Cambodia as an example: "some forms of social capital link certain groups but exclude others and can be negative: they can be source of conflict. Pol Pot built strong bonds inside certain groups, but showed extreme violence to others outside the groups". It is possible to give examples from Africa.

Putnam (1993) argues that participation in collective action depends on the level of social capital in the society. If this is true, and given the circumstances revealed in this research, it is not surprising that organisations attempting collective action in these areas have had very little success.

In peri-urban areas social capital is low, but of greater concern is the possibility that it may be diminishing even further. Putnam (1993) points out that the different elements that comprise social capital (social relationships, confidence, norms and so on) tend to increase with use in a virtuous spiral; but with disuse, they diminish in a vicious circle. If social capital is already low in these areas, the fact that people resort to it more rarely may lead to a further shrinkage. If social capital really is under great pressure and seems to be diminishing, the question is: how can the circle be broken and the level of social capital enabled to grow?

4.3 Improve collective action using social capital?

In an attempt to systematise the concept of social capital and make it more useful, Uphoff (2000) proposes two categories of social capital, distinguishing two interrelated categories of phenomena:

- a) “structural” associated with “various forms of social organisation, particularly roles, rules precedents and procedures as well as a wide variety of networks that contribute to co-operation and specifically to mutually beneficial collective action”;
- b) “cognitive” derived from “mental processes and resulting ideas reinforced by culture and ideology, specifically norms, values, attitudes, beliefs that contribute to co-operative behaviour and mutually beneficial collective action”. While the elements of structural social capital facilitate collective action, the elements of cognitive social capital predispose people to collective action.¹²

As the author himself indicates, this categorisation, like any other, is simply an intellectual construct. In the end all elements of the two categories are cultural, in that an organisational solution to a problem and its components are the product of a particular understanding and way of acting. But the categorisation proposed by Uphoff has the merit of encouraging reflection about how to measure social capital, and how social capital might be built up.

At first sight it appears that structural aspects of social capital are easier to identify and monitor, since “social roles or, more strictly, organisational roles, rules and procedures” can be established and are explicit and observable. Discussing structural social capital

¹² See Uphoff, (2000). In the same edited volume there is a similar categorisation by Krishna.

Ostrom (1990) argues that the success of collective action depends on whether the result of the co-ordinated activity is of interest to all the individuals¹³, and relates to the “principles for collective action” which would be:

- definition of the problem in a clear and simple manner;
- clear definition of the limits of participation (who is involved and who should be excluded), of the relationships between the different participants, and of the relationship between each of them and the problem;
- the existence of rules which define the obligations and rights of all participants, so that they know how to act to obtain mutual benefits;
- the possibility for all the partners to participate in creating the rules, and in any modification of them, if experience shows this to be necessary or circumstances change;
- monitoring (by the participants or by monitors) to enable all participants to check that the agreed rules are being followed, providing them with information on performance;
- establishing sanctions which will be applied in a clear way against anyone who does not follow the rules;
- simple and accessible conflict resolution mechanisms, to be used if there are disputes;
- no interference by people who are not involved, but who attempt to impose rules, monitoring mechanisms or sanctions.

For groups and organisations that want to overcome the dilemma of collective action, the role of a development organisation would be to facilitate the process by which these “principles for collective action” emerge and are established. However, experience shows that the introduction of rules for operating principles does not always lead to participation by the people to whom these principles and rules are being proposed.

This is true even if the aim of this agreement appears to be in the interests of participants, and when the organisation concerned works in a systematic and organised way. It seems

¹³ (...) there will be an agreement not only because its existence will produce collective benefits. The agreement will work when the contributors consider that benefits it will bring, for themselves and their families, will be greater than other possibilities they could have access to” [Ostrom, 2000: 184].

that something is always missing. Could this be what we have called the elements of cognitive social capital? This subjective part, although hidden, could be decisive for the quality of social relationships and therefore for collective action. Ostrom also does seem to be aware that for various individuals to consider setting up an organisation it is necessary that “they have established enough feeling of community to take part in a wide range of close social relationships that strongly value the keeping of promises” (Ostrom, 2000: 183).

It would seem to be easier to work on the structural level of organising collective action, establishing rules and procedures which, as they can be observed, should be less difficult to rigorously plan, set up and evaluate. Training programmes covering “principles for collective action” and the facilitating role of development organisations can reinforce participants’ capacity to co-ordinate activities.

But how can work be done on the cognitive level of organising collective action? Put more simply, how can social cohesion be built up? Clearly it is not an easy task, although our research on the situation in Angolan peri-urban areas seems to point in the direction of intervention at this level, as “*bairro* communities” are losing their structure, they are very heterogeneous in various ways, social networks are dispersed, social groups tend to close on themselves, and solidarity, mutual aid and collective action are limited.

Uphoff (2000) recounts some episodes from an experience in Sri Lanka which suggest that a harsh economic, social and political context can lead people, as in the case of peri-urban Angola, to be governed by social values and norms that manifest themselves in more distrustful attitudes with less solidarity. But, despite this, values and norms which favour reciprocity and promote the common good continue to exist in latent form, and can be brought to the surface for the benefit of the community.

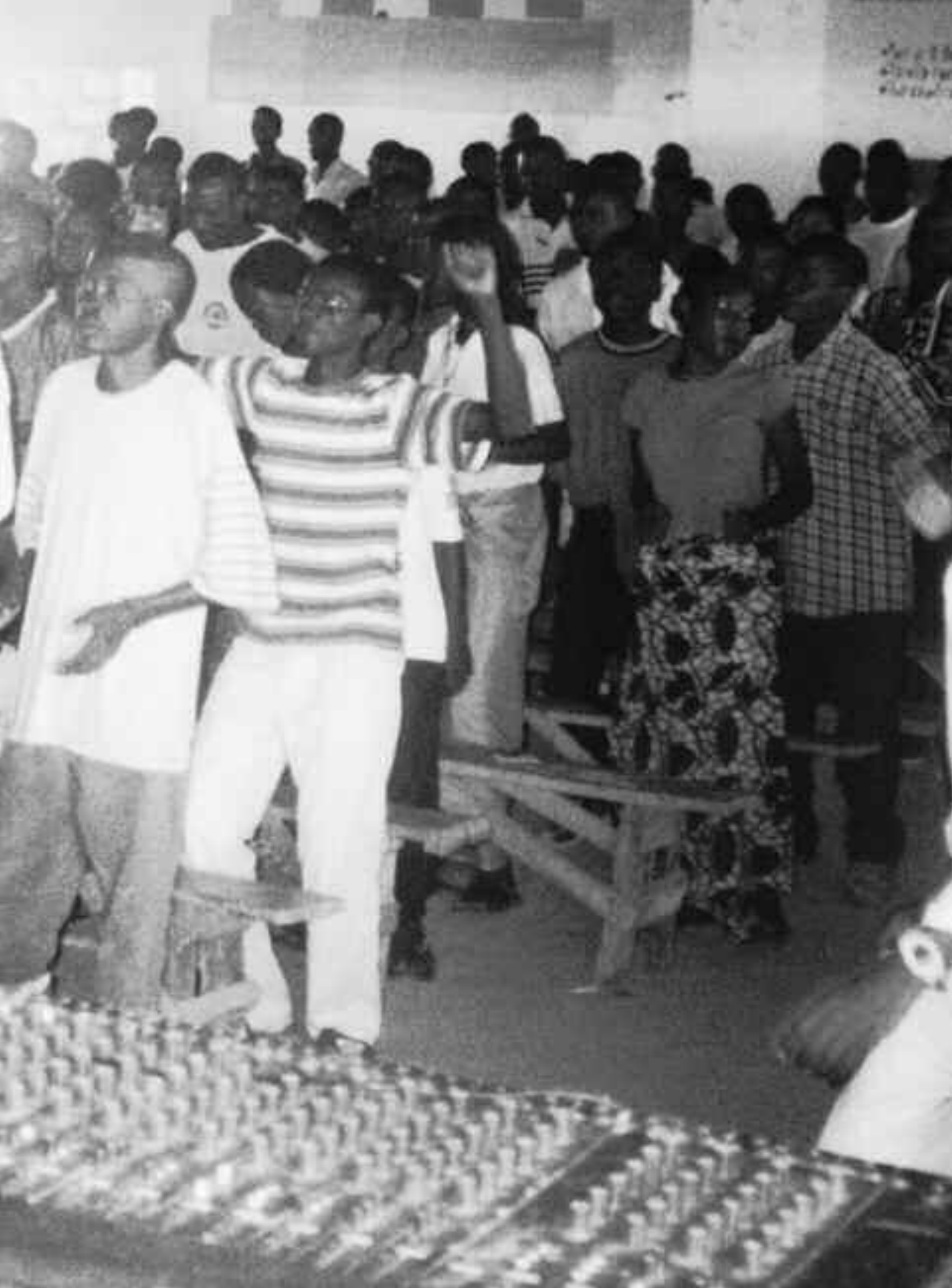
It seems that there is a link between the two categories of social capital, and that they tend to reinforce each other. A high degree of cognitive social capital encourages agreement about rules and procedures; meanwhile, the process of setting up rules for collective action (a structural level intervention) leads to moments of interaction among participants that contribute to improving social relationships and reviving “positive” norms. Social cohesion is reinforced by the experience of socialising with others, and thus distrust and fear are eroded.

But if one possibility for intervention is to start by organising collective action to create an opportunity to bring people together, it must be an “initiative which works”. Uphoff (2000) proposes “acting first and organising later”. Initial positive experiences, to gain people’s confidence, can be followed by the process of creating rules for collective action that can, in turn, create opportunities for raising the level of mutual confidence.

Putnam (1993) draws attention to the fact that social capital, being within the structure of social relations, is a public resource; and as such it seems not to benefit anyone in particular, or at least it is not the property of any individual. Therefore confidence within a group, for example, can produce benefits which are often underestimated. "This means that social capital, unlike other forms of capital, must often be produced as a by-product of other social activities" [p.170]. So should organisations that try to promote collective action in peri-urban *bairros* plan and organise social activities in order to create social capital?

In any case, the promotion of collective action in peri-urban *bairros* cannot ignore the main social actors in these areas and the structure of social relations. Particularly important is a knowledge and understanding of the structure of administrative power, its relationship with citizens, as well as the results of the presence of this administrative power in the life of the *bairro*. Do the different administrative institutions and the practice of administrative power affect the social capital of any given *bairro*?

Other institutional actors that cannot be ignored in peri-urban *bairros* are the churches, because of the large number of churches and because of the important role they play in the life of residents of these areas. Furthermore, churches are places where, apparently, social cohesion across different social groups is strong and where participation in collective action groups is important. Is the strong participation in collective action inside churches an indicator of a high level of social capital and can it serve as an example of what development organisations want to happen outside?





VII . CHURCHES

IN PERI-URBAN SOCIAL LIFE

CONTENTS

VII CHURCHES IN PERI-URBAN SOCIAL LIFE

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1. WHY OUR INTEREST IN THE CHURCHES?

Churches are “everywhere” in the peri-urban neighbourhoods, a fact confirmed by observations made during the research and mentioned by interviewees, who said that rapid growth in the number of churches started in the middle of the 1980s and continues today. Except for the spatial expansion of the peri-urban areas and population growth, this proliferation of churches is the change mentioned most often by residents of peri-urban neighbourhoods. *“Every little house on the corner has become a church”* said one resident, expressing this idea that there are churches all around.

Almost all interviewees attend a church, and some attend several religious services per week as well as spending a lot of time in the activities of groups created by churches. Examples taken from our interviews illustrate this:

Four women interviewed in Kikolo, Luanda: Adelina goes to church three times a week, Nela three times, São once, and Laurinda goes three times.

Three men interviewed in Hoji-ya-Henda: Joaquim is Methodist and goes to church three times a week. José is Catholic and goes to church on Sundays. Manuel is Catholic and goes to church every day.

In Huambo and Lubango “there are people who pray in a chapel every morning, and go to church every Sunday.”

To understand social life in peri-urban neighbourhoods, therefore, we have to study and interpret the phenomena that account for the increase in the number of churches.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHURCHES IN PERI-URBAN AREAS

2.1 The most important churches

Many interviewees linked the growing number of churches to the phenomena of “small churches” and “new churches”. These are religious assemblies of several types: those that have few places of worship (or just one); assemblies in the Messianic current, according to Henderson’s classification (mainly Tocoist and Kimbanguist churches); and those that have appeared Angola during the last twenty years from outside Africa (for example, the Maná Church and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God). Henderson classifies the churches by “currents” (Henderson, 1992):

- the Catholic current, which originates in urban Catholic churches and Catholic missions in rural areas;
- the current of “mission” Protestant churches, which followed on from the Protestant missions. Protestant churches arrived in Angola in the wake of evangelical movements which were strong in Europe and America at the end of the 19th Century, and they set up these missions. In this current the most important churches are:
 - Adventist churches, in various parts of Angola;
 - the United Methodist Church of Angola (*Igreja Metodista Unida de Angola* – IMUA) particularly in the Luanda – Malanje corridor;
 - the Evangelical Baptist Church in Angola (*Igreja Evangélica Baptista de Angola* – IEBA) mainly in the north;
 - the Congregational Evangelical Church of Angola (*Igreja Evangélica Congregacional de Angola* – IECA) principally on the Central Plateau;
 - a the Evangelical Church of South-West Angola (*Igreja Evangélica do Sudoeste de Angola* – IESA) particularly in the southern part of the Central Plateau near Kalukembe, and in Lubango;
- the Pentecostal current, comprising the Pentecostal Assembly of God (*Assembleia de Deus Pentecostal*) in various parts of the country, and the Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola (*Missão Evangélica Pentecostal de Angola*) in the Porto Amboim area;
- the Apostolic current, including various churches with the name “Apostolic” as well as the *Igreja Cheia das Palavras de Deus*;
- the Messianic current, mainly comprising: the Tocoist Church (Church of our Lord Jesus in the World – *Igreja do Nosso Senhor Jesus Cristo no Mundo*) founded by Simão Toco (1918 - 1984); and the Kimbanguist church (*Igreja de Jesus Cristo sobre a terra pelo profeta Simon Kimbangu* – IJCSK) founded by Simon Kimbangu (1889 - 1951) who was detained by the Belgian colonial authorities in the Congo from 1921 until 1951.

In the interval since Henderson’s book was published, other churches have appeared in Angola, such as the Maná Church (*Igreja Maná*) and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (*Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*).

Although there is a popular idea that new and small churches are in a majority, the data we collected and other studies show that in fact they are in a minority.¹

In peri-urban areas the Catholic church and the “mission” Protestant churches are the most frequented. Next come the Pentecostal and Apostolic churches, more recent than the Catholic and “mission” Protestant churches though they already existed in Angola at the time of independence. Churches of the Messianic current and new churches (churches which appeared after independence) are still a minority.

Seen in this way, the growth in the overall number of churches is more a result of the growth in the “historic churches” than of the appearance of “new churches”. In Angola’s peri-urban areas, there are fewer new churches than in other countries of Southern Africa; for example, the phenomenon of Zionist churches, present in Mozambique and South Africa, does not exist.²

When interviewees in Huambo referred to churches in peri-urban neighbourhoods, they mentioned the Catholic Church, IECA and Adventist churches most often. The next most commonly cited were the Apostolic and Pentecostal churches, while they rarely talked about any of the others. A survey by Development Workshop carried out in Huambo’s peri-urban *bairros* counted the number of churches³, which gave a similar result:

● Catholic Church	42
● Adventist Church	22
● IECA	19
● Pentecostal Church	11
● Apostolic Churches (various)	17

Interviewees in Lubango mentioned most frequently the Catholic Church, IECA, IESA and Adventist Church; they also occasionally referred to the Tocoist, Apostolic and Bom Deus churches, as well as the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Interviewees in Luanda spoke of a wider range of churches. The Catholic and Adventist churches were often mentioned, as well as the IECA, IEBA and Methodist Church. There were occasional references to the Bom Deus Church, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Maná Church, The Way, and the Kimbanguist church. Residents of Luanda come from all over the country; most Angolans who used to be exiled in Zaire live in Luanda

¹ Viegas (1999) is a useful database about the churches operating in Angola at present. Messiant (1998b), Birmingham (1998), Péclard (1998), Péclard (2000), Schubert (1999), Schubert (2000) and Neto (1991) are other works on the churches in Angola.

² See Agadjanian (1999) concerning such Churches in Mozambique and South Africa.

³ Development Workshop database on the neighbourhoods of Huambo.

and brought some churches with them when they moved back to Angola. Moreover, when religious movements arrive in Angola they probably “invest” in Luanda first, and it is the city which is most open to them.

The churches that were created on the basis of the Protestant missions are still to be found in the regions where these missions were founded. What is different now is that these churches also have a presence in the cities to which people migrated from those regions.⁴ These churches were rarely found in the cities before independence, and they only came to urban areas after 1982, brought by their members who were forced to migrate. Most migrants retained their links with the same church.⁵ Most interviewees have attended the same church since childhood. Most people from an area of the country (or a town or city) associated with one particular church do belong to that church.

The missions were built in rural areas, sometimes in remote places, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The colonial government and the Catholic Church wanted to control the Protestant missions, so the Protestant missionaries preferred to build in remote areas to avoid such restrictions, and in an attempt to keep the missions away from the “vices” of urban life. The missionaries’ aim was to build rural communities that fitted with their vision: they wanted to avoid the frenetic migration, poverty, and abrupt social changes which the industrial revolution in Europe had caused while leading the natives into modern life and away from the “obscurantism” of traditional life (Péclard, 1998) (Péclard, 2000).

2.2 Relationships among churches

In most *bairros* there are several churches. For example, in most *bairros* of Huambo and Lubango at least five churches have a presence: Catholic, IECA, Adventist, Pentecostal and Apostolic. In general these churches are descendants of the European and American missions which were set up in the region. Some of them are linked to certain parts of the country or particular ethno-linguistic groups, because of the geographical location of the original missions. And some have a connection with the municipality where the main mission was located; for example, in Lubango the IESA is linked with Kalukembe, the Catholic Church with Kakonda and the IECA with areas further north, on the Central Plateau.

⁴ Comparing data from Viegas (1999) and Péclard (1998), which includes a map showing the distribution of missions in Angola.

⁵ IESA had its origins in a mission in Kalukembe, in the Southern part of the Central Plateau; with the migration of its adherents to Lubango, it moved there as well. IECA originated in missions in the centre of the Central Plateau, and made a similar move to Luanda, Huambo and Lubango. IEBA, with origins in Baptist missions in Zaire and Uige Provinces, and the Methodist Church, with origins in Methodist missions in Catete and Malanje, both relocated to Luanda. The Adventist Church had its origins in Adventist missions in various parts of rural Angola, and set itself up in several cities.

The churches say that they are now making efforts to change the historic linkages of their identities with particular social groups. They also claim that there are good relationships among churches in the same *bairro*. They say that there is co-operation among churches, but it was not possible to obtain many examples of co-operation among churches in a *bairro*. Furthermore throughout the interviews, church leaders mentioned various examples of marked differences between churches, distinctions that are based on the different ideologies that were brought from the parent missions. The most obvious examples are the images that Protestants have assimilated and that they express about Catholics and vice-versa, especially true among people from the Central Plateau especially related to alcohol consumption and religious observances.⁶ The new churches are not outside this “battle”, as they also promote negative images of other churches.

It appears that the basis for these strained relationships is that the churches are competing strongly for members. Since in peri-urban areas almost every resident belongs to a church, the only way to attract new members is by attracting them from another church. One interviewee said that “for certain leaders this creates tension between the need to attract new members and good Christian conduct”.

3. MOTIVATIONS

3.1 Reasons for seeking a church

Residents of peri-urban areas are ready and very willing to spend time and money at church, even though they clearly lack both time and money and complain about this.

If we take the example of the IESA church built in Caluva *bairro* in Lubango during the 1990s, members of the church contributed money and time to buy the land and to construct the building. They are also responsible for maintenance and cleaning of the church and the area around it. When a member of the congregation is sick or dies, a collection is made, and certain members give some of their time to visiting and helping people in need. In addition to the main service on Sundays, bible study is held every morning and associations and clubs linked to the church meet every afternoon.

In the context of the considerable difficulties and the erosion of communal values already noted, why are people particularly inclined to support churches? As well as habit (“I always went since childhood”) interviewees gave “spiritual issues” as one reason for going to church.

⁶ If there is one matter all churches agree about, it is criticism of “obscurantism” in traditional African societies.

"In church people look for spiritual sustenance" (Lubango).

"The church is important because there are moments when I feel swamped, but with the word of God I feel calmer" (Luanda).

"The benefit is abstract, it's a hope, we have a civilisation that the church teaches us" (Luanda).

A non-spiritual reason for seeking churches is suggested by this last quotation. They provide a place where values can be acquired, particularly civic education which "teaches about living with other people". Apparently churches offer a unique place in the peri-urban environment, a space for community and friendly, cordial human relationships, one where inter-personal communication is easier. People emphasised that the churches teach about relationships among groups of people with differing feelings, identities and origins.

"Churches mobilise, inform and teach how to live with people on the basis of the bible" (Lubango).

"Churches build up the spirit, evangelise, carry the word and oversee a members' life" (Huambo).

"The benefits are union, a good attitude" (Luanda).

In addition to these strictly religious or even moral aspects, the churches and clubs and associations linked to them are very sociable places. A range of people meet regularly and frequently at church for social and religious activities: evangelisation, choir, meetings of older people or of those with a shared interest. Churches, and particularly the groups created by them, organise activities that are purely social, such as events for singing, dancing or just talking. Churches are almost the only places where residents of the peri-urban neighbourhoods can meet, discuss or take part in an activity together.

Members of a congregation establish social relationships and links of mutual confidence at church; there are few other places for this in the peri-urban environment. The church services and other church activities create social networks that are more comprehensive than the more limited ones usually found in these areas. Also, churches appear to provide points of stability in a context of rapid change. Other institutions (for example, political parties or state bodies) have changed or lost what interest they had, and there are few people with a stable job. So neighbourhood residents see churches as almost the only points of reference that have remained the same.⁷

⁷

Roche (1994), discusses how in turbulent circumstances when everything is changing rapidly, "points of stability" are important – these are institutions which become prominent because of the stability they provide in a context of general crisis. These "points" can be important for people's attempts to re-establish balance in an unstable context. Roche proposes that humanitarian organisations should identify such institutions and work with them to promote stability for people who are in very unsettled situations. Later, when the context is more stable, other institutions will gain importance and it will be possible to promote a "general" recuperation of institutions or to build up their capacities.

3.2 Choosing which church

Most interviewees have been attending the same church since they were children. They explain,

"Why change? I don't know why some people change church".

But not everyone is faithful to their original religion – a considerable number of interviewees said they had moved to a different church, and some had even changed more than once. This group includes people who had left "historic churches" to join "new churches", those who had changed several times and people who had moved from "new churches" to "historic churches". However, they do not give profound reasons for their moves:

"It's where I felt better."

"It's where the blood mingled."

Some of them had been convinced by a friend to attend a church service, and their enjoyment of it induced them to change allegiance. Others had moved church when they married, since their spouse belonged a different congregation. In Luanda distance is an important factor if a church only has one building in the city; someone who has to find transportation to go to church may decide to join a different congregation.

The peri-urban areas are heterogeneous, however, and the inhabitants of a particular neighbourhood do not necessarily belong to just one church. Neighbours are not members of the same church, except in special cases (for example, a group of houses built by the Catholic Church for its indigenous teachers which subsequently became the nucleus of Nambambi Neighbourhood in Lubango).

"Friends and neighbours, each person has their church."

In certain cases, members of the same family may frequent a plurality of churches. Although in some families everyone attends the same church, in others each person follows a different faith.

4. MUTUAL AID, SOLIDARITY AND THE CHURCHES

4.1 In churches solidarity is more common

The churches, associations connected to them and networks of friends made at church are important forms of mutual aid. We were often told that mutual aid relationships are

more frequent and visible within religious communities, and some people went as far as to say that this kind of attitude “only occurs within churches”.⁸

“The church promotes solidarity emotionally and in practice.”

“It’s at church that the order for this support is given (...) in the community this kind of help doesn’t exist.”

“We live by our wits here, everyone alone in their own house, we barely make it; but the church will bury us.”

Many interviewees said that nowadays the attitude in the peri-urban neighbourhoods is “it’s everyone for himself and God for everyone”. This saying, which was repeated so often, seems to reflect on practical and social life. In an environment where people feel abandoned, they feel that at least the churches are “for everyone”. In the opinion of certain interviewees,

“The search for churches often is linked to the help expected from them. (...)

People change to another church, for example, because of support when there’s a death.”

In some cases (but not many) the churches act as conduits for aid arriving from outside Angola. But mostly they link broad social networks of people with different social characteristics, and are genuine examples of mutual aid and solidarity, and of generalised reciprocity. The members of churches, forming social networks which include between a hundred and a thousand people, are involved in important acts of mutual aid.

4.2 Instances of mutual aid in churches

There are various instances of solidarity among church members. The most frequent manifestations occur when someone is seriously ill or dies; this is the same pattern found outside the churches, but church-based solidarity is more intense. Support may take the form of money, or can be practical: at a funeral for example, help with digging the grave, accompanying the family throughout the process, contributions of food and help with cooking; in the case of sickness, they visit the patient in the hospital or at home, contribute food or help with the work at the patient’s house.

⁸

Also some churches have schools or health posts/centres. We did not study these facilities since, in general, they are conduits for external aid or activities which generate income for that religious group.

In some churches, members who will take part in funerals and help dig graves were already chosen; in zones where Umbundu is spoken such people are described as *vakuacisoko*.⁹

Church networks are also means of assistance for displaced people. A recommendation from the priest of the home village is addressed to priests or pastors of the same church who work in the city. Sometimes churches lend money to displaced people to help them to install themselves in the city.

The actual construction and maintenance of peri-urban churches is a form of collective action. These activities are usually organised by councils and commissions of the churches and depend, in most cases, on the contributions and voluntary labour of church members. External aid for this purpose is rare. Churches organise other activities including: clean-up campaigns in some neighbourhoods, visits to detainees in prison and making sun-dried bricks and building houses to help church members. However such activities appear to be less common than support at times of sickness or death.

Church leaders give advice which is considered to be important; leaders and members mentioned this many times:

"People in churches have more skill in hearing people and giving advice. They pay more attention. They produce a word of reconciliation, of advice."

"The people are heard."

But there are also limits to the mutual aid practised in churches, similar to the constraints found elsewhere although not so restrictive:

"Within the church there's more solidarity for questions of sickness and death. (...) If it's another kind of difficulty such as a loan, destruction of a home, help is unlikely because people also don't have money, and in the church there are no funds to deal with these cases."

4.3 Mechanisms of church-based mutual aid

The mechanisms of mutual aid vary from one church to another and depend on the aims of the activity, but they are "systematised", something which is a feature of church-based

⁹ See Childs (1949: 114–115) and Neto (2001). The word once meant a brotherhood of people of different lineage and from different villages, usually people of the same age or who had been in the same initiation ceremony. By the time Childs was doing his work (the 1930s and 1940s) the *vakuacisoko* were rare on the central Plateau. He wrote that burials of people with no family or of members of the group were instances when a *vakuacisoko* was still summoned. Certain groups, among them churches, now use the term to describe a group of people who help at funerals. See also section 3.2 of Chapter V.

mutual aid. Responsibilities are defined, there are rules and ways of monitoring these rules, and sanctions can be applied when the rules are not followed. So the churches' mutual aid is organised, which is not usually the case in peri-urban neighbourhoods.

When there is a funeral to organise or a sickness to cope with (or another problem) the money comes from various sources: a special fund established for this purpose; a part of the weekly collection; or money collected after an appeal made during the service, asking for help for people who are facing a particular problem. In all cases the rules define who can benefit from help or not, depending on the seriousness of the problem and the "seniority" of the church member concerned. All members of the church contribute regularly to these support funds. People's readiness to contribute is based on a moral attitude; "it is important to contribute because one should help those who are in difficulty". But there is also the idea that "you never know when your own turn will come". Like the help provided when someone in a peri-urban *bairro* is sick or dies, support mechanisms within churches are manifestations of generalised reciprocity (defined in part 1.2 of Chapter V) which reconciles long-term self-interest with short-term altruism.

Some churches told us they operate a 10% tithe system (*dizimo*), a rule that members should contribute a tenth of their salaries to church funds ("a tenth part of what the person manages to obtain – it's biblical"). Since family income is irregular and low,

"most people make donations and not the tithe (...) we give what we can."

In most churches there is collective responsibility for managing the money and, apparently, transparency.

"It is not the priests who deal with expenses, these matters are the responsibility of a board and it decides about expenses."

Almost all churches have various clubs and associations which frequently and regularly bring together people of the same age, or who share an interest. These groups have various aims, one of which is always mutual aid among the church members ("to visit members of the group who are sick, or have not attended for some time"). Most churches also have an association which organises support among between all members of the church. For example, the Adventist Church in Huambo created an organisation called Bom Samaritano (Good Samaritan),

"a group of men who give support when there's a funeral (they help to dig the grave, accompany the family and have a aid fund to use in such cases) and in the case of sickness (organise people to give blood and food, money from the fund for buying medicines, and ask at the hospital if anything is needed)".

The IECA Church in Huambo has a “Support Commission”:

“when someone dies it’s to open up the grave together with the family and, when someone is sick, it takes note and makes a visit and brings something in (to their home or to the hospital).”

4.4 Spaces for socialising, church-based social networks and collective action

Churches are places for socialising where social relationships are created and links of mutual confidence are established among the people who attend. Churches, and the interest groups created in churches, are usually the only spaces outside the family where people can meet, establish mutual confidence and create social networks that are broader than the other social networks found in peri-urban *bairros* that are based on kinship or connect people of the same origin. In the church environment norms, values and attitudes of solidarity circulate, society in general is discussed and, according to the interviewees, there is an attempt to overcome “the different feelings and understandings” which various kinds of people have.

It seems that it is easier to organise a joint activity within the framework of a church. Religious discourse (“the word”) values altruism, and this may reduce the temptation of seeking individual short-term benefits. Moreover, religious practice tends towards defining and respecting roles, rules and procedures. The religious environment has a tradition of collective responsibility which supports the monitoring of rules and the use of funds.

Confidence in religious institutions seems to spread to the members of the church, and to be extended to the activities they undertake. People believe that the activity will benefit those who need it and that, if it is they who require help one day, the church as a group will give them a hand. They are confident that the established rules and procedures will be respected, and therefore are ready to contribute time and money, and to work collectively.

All this leads us to conclude that the level of social capital is high inside churches. There is a high level of structural social capital (rules and established procedures) and a high level of cognitive social capital (norms, values, beliefs and trust) and this is reflected in the attitudes of solidarity and cooperative behaviour of members. In a context where solidarity inside communities is weakened and in which other institutions (particularly the institutions of the State) that should offer collective spaces and services in substitution for community solidarity (employment, health and education services, assistance to the old and to children) do not exist or are so degraded and corrupt that they cannot be trusted, the churches have become the only functioning collective space.

Nevertheless, if the churches have become places where solidarity is strong, and where the members are united and cooperative, these characteristics are not reproduced in the *bairro*. In other words, although “horizontal” social networks (which cut across the various social groups) are created within churches, these are not necessarily reproduced in relationships in the *bairro*. This is because firstly, as we have already seen, the members of a church may not live in the same area. Secondly the existence of various churches in a *bairro*, sometimes with rivalry among them, does not help create links among neighbours who, in many cases, attend different churches.

The promotion of collective action to resolve problems at the level of a *bairro* (or another geographical area) can benefit from the churches’ practices. Their experience can support reflection about how confidence is created (in the institution, other members of the church, collective action and its results) and about ways for establishing rules and procedures for the conduct of collective action.

However, it is unlikely that churches and their groups can be used to promote collective action at *bairro* level, and we should examine more closely the social dynamics of religious institutions that normally favour the establishment of very hierarchical structures and vertical social relationships combined with an egalitarian ideology. As Putnam (1993) writes:

A vertical network, no matter how dense and no matter how important to its members, cannot sustain social trust and co-operation. Vertical flows of information are usually less reliable than horizontal flows (...) More important, sanctions that support norms of reciprocity against the threat of opportunism are less likely to be imposed upwards and less likely to be acceded to if imposed. Only a bold or foolhardy subordinate, lacking ties of solidarity with peers, would seek to punish a superior. [p.174]

Lastly, if promoting collective action has the ultimate objective of strengthening social co-operation and the democratisation of society, reinforcing specific groups does not help to achieve this. Within such groups interpersonal ties are strong, and they distinguish themselves from other groups (which may be powerful ones). Nor, obviously, does the “verticalisation” of social relations contribute to this objective.





VIII . COLLECTIVE ACTION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

CONTENTS

VIII COLLECTIVE ACTION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE

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1. WHY THE RESEARCH COVERED LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Collective action is potentially important for resolving practical problems in peri-urban areas, where basic services are weak or non-existent (Chapter IV, Section 3.3). But even if collective action did resolve certain problems, it cannot replace the “collective services” of the State. There are certain services that only the State has the capacity to provide, and the State has a responsibility to provide certain basic services, particularly in peri-urban areas where residents are poor and cannot afford adequate private services.¹

The present private services (*explicações*, water provided by lorries and from private water tanks, for example) are expensive and of low quality. Residents of peri-urban *bairros* consider that the State has responsibilities in these areas and are not in favour of purely private services. They also understand that private services ought to be supervised in some way by the State, though the State has no capacity for this at present.

The possibility of complementarity in service-delivery between community organisations and the State, particularly in peri-urban areas in Africa, Asia and Latin America, is raising increasing interest. There is a growing body of literature on this subject. This concept of synergy, or co-production of basic, local services (Ostrom, 1996), draws attention to the potential for cooperation between community organisations and the State. For example, water points in peri-urban areas depend on the main water pipes of the Water Companies. But Water Companies do not have the capacity to manage every single water point. The management of each water point can probably be best realised by the collective action of the residents. A community clean-up campaign that sweeps the streets does not resolve the overall question of cleanliness if there is no service to transport the collected rubbish to a tip. But, on the other hand, in the present context of the peri-urban areas of Angola and where the State's capacities are limited, it is unrealistic to expect the State to remove rubbish from every house (or even from the interior of *bairros* where the roads are narrow and in very poor condition) except if there is community-level collective action to ensure that rubbish is deposited in places from there the State service can collect it.

Part of the recent literature about “governance” also emphasises the interdependence at the local level between the State and society and the process by which the relationship is negotiated in the provision of basic services that contribute to a healthy, well-informed and functioning society (Onibokun, 1999). In this new framework, “good governance” occurs when a State provides the services the public wants, when these complement the activities of citizens and local organisations, and when the State is in close contact with

¹ Individual or collective solutions are possibly more viable in certain fields in rural areas while being more difficult in peri-urban areas.

the public (Hyden, 1992). For example, the State and residents of a bairro manage to define places from which it will remove rubbish, and when this will be done; thus the inhabitants know where and when to put out their waste². Seen in this way, governance is principally a matter of the way the State relates to citizens and grass-roots organisations at local level; how it tries to complement the activities of citizens and local organisations; and the State's endeavours to have citizens and local organisations participate and co-operate in its activities.³

The characteristics of the institutions of the State and of the type of governance are fundamental for collective action in peri-urban areas. Therefore the research addressed the following question:

What presence does the State have in peri-urban areas of Angolan cities, and how does it link (if at all) with organised forms of collective action? Does the State recognise, support, understand or show hostility to these organisational forms? In provision of services to the neighbourhoods, are there examples of synergy between state institutions and organised forms of collective action?

In the sections follow, there is a brief description of the institutions of the State and associated institutions, and an analysis of their relations with the residents and their organisations.

2. STATE INSTITUTIONS AND SERVICES IN ANGOLA'S PERI-URBAN AREAS

2.1 The presence of State institutions and services

We have already seen that for the most important services (water, electricity, sanitation, health and education, for example) the level of provision is inadequate in peri-urban areas. The institutions that provide these services (the water, sanitation and electricity companies, the Education and Health Ministries) are mainly represented in the urbanised parts of the cities, and rarely have local offices in peri-urban areas.

Even though the residents of these areas consider that the State's most important task is provision of services, they are dissatisfied with the service provided: they feel that the institutions and firms which supply services are remote from their neighbourhoods, in the real and figurative senses. It is rare to find relationships of trust, reciprocity and transparency between residents and these institutions. There are complaints about how

² Onibokun (1999) is a study of the development of the relationship between the State and citizens in various African countries in the field of solid-waste management.

³ See World Bank (1992) and Landell-Mills and Serageldin (1991) for more general definitions and discussions about governance.

difficult it is to know about their plans; for example, they carry out works or change the service without notification. The main reason for the demise of water committees in Luanda has been when the Water Company has ceased to supply water to communal water taps, while the committees had no way of contacting the Company to overcome this situation. At the same time, in these institutions there is limited recognition of the useful contribution the residents might make to service provision and not much confidence in the inhabitants' capacity to administer a communal water tap or to organise rubbish collection in a neighbourhood.

2.2 State administrative system

In peri-urban neighbourhoods the administration is the State's most visible presence. In each city the administrative system is different, although there are common aspects.

Luanda has Municipal and Commune Administrations (*Administrações Municipais* and *Administrações Comunaes*) and, below these, residents' committees for communes, sectors and blocks.

The Administration of **Huambo** Municipality is responsible for the city and a large rural area. The Municipality is divided into Communes which cover urban, peri-urban and rural areas. Residents have limited interaction with these entities; mostly their contacts are with the *Sobas* who, in practice, represent the State in neighbourhoods. In peri-urban areas there are about twenty *Sobas*, one per *bairro*, who are they are assisted by *sekulus*.

Similarly, the Administration of **Lubango** Municipality oversees the city as well as a big rural area. But there are no communes – instead the city is divided into large administrative *bairros*, each of which has an Administrator as well as a *Soba* who is supported by *Sekulus*.

2.3 Municipal and Commune Administrations

Local administrations (of Municipalities and Communes) lack resources, about which their representatives talk openly. Staff salaries are low and budgets are limited and irregular, which makes them very dependent on central government and on the provinces. The administrations feel they are just instruments of the provincial governments. Moreover, they have limited contact with the entities which provide services, and with the Ministries that have the power and control the funds for development and reconstruction. The power of the State is highly centralised, a legacy of the colonial and post-independence periods. So the administrations say that it is difficult for them to co-ordinate the actions of the State in their areas, and to serve as a communication link between residents and other state services.

There is also a lack of democratic institutions at local level. The Bicesse Accords and Lusaka Protocol included provisions for democratic institutions, but when the peace processes broke down these were not created. Centralisation of power and lack of democratic institutions contribute to a lack of transparency, and to a low level of recognition that there could be reciprocity in relationships with residents.

Residents regard the administrations as bureaucratic institutions which process papers of various kinds, particularly personal documents. The administrations in some of Luanda's peri-urban areas, although not in the other two cities, play a part in distributing plots of land. But in many cases the decision is taken at a higher level, and the documents must go from local level to the Provincial Government or to Ministries, a process which takes time.

There are at present some signs of reforms that might lead to some decentralisation in the system. Commune Administrations in Luanda are beginning to have some resources and more responsibilities.

Lower down in the system there are other entities, namely residents' committees, *Sobas*, co-ordinators of zones, heads of zones and *Sekulus* who have more direct contacts with residents and provide some link between these and the administrative system.

2.4 Sobas and sekulus

In the peri-urban parts of Huambo and Lubango there are *Sobas* and *Sekulus* who are considered as "traditional authorities" by the State and integrated in the State administrative system that pays them a salary. The words *Soba* and *Sekulu* come from terms describing Chiefs and Elders in rural, pre-colonial life. *Sekulus* are assistants to *Sobas* and do not necessarily have responsibility for a particular geographic area.

During the research it became clear that *Sobas* and *Sekulus* are a very heterogeneous group with a wide range of characteristics. Only a few of the *Sobas* whom we interviewed had held such a position in the countryside, or been members of a lineage of *Sobas* or could demonstrate that they had a thorough knowledge of "traditional" life; these few, though, were proud of traditional life and customs and tried to maintain them. Most of the *Sobas* whom we interviewed were never rural chiefs, and come from a very different background: they would find it difficult to "bring about the preservation of ancestral and cultural values of our people" (one of the official justifications for the State employing *Sobas*)⁴

4

Diário da República of 21 August 1992

The opinion of residents about the *Soba* and *Sekulus* depends largely on the personal characteristics of each one, which varies greatly. Some Sobas are perceived as being important people in the *bairro*. In other cases residents do not attribute great importance to them or sometimes do not even know that they exist.

Even in areas where the *Soba* is considered as important, his role in the peri-urban context is different from that in rural areas.

*"The Soba is more an adviser and less a judge. Now it's more on the basis of advice."*⁵

In the *bairros* of Lubango and Huambo, an important part of the work of the Sobas and *Sekulus* involves mediating in conflicts between residents, work that (they say) takes a considerable amount of time. The explanation why conflicts require the intervention of Sobas was that many conflicts involve "traditional" matters such as sorcery, adultery and problems between neighbours.

Often the residents of the zone for which the *Soba* is responsible come from a variety of places, and may even be from different ethno-linguistic groups. Most Sobas in peri-urban areas are appointed for socially heterogeneous zones. The fact that in most *bairros* live people from various ethno-linguistic groups has also contributed to the transformation of the *Soba's* role and authority as some residents have the impression that he represents the values of one group and not of all the residents.⁶

"Everyone can have a lot of respect for the chief and accept his position, even if he is Muila and the people are Nganguela, because the people migrated to other people's land and they should accept the authority of the local Soba. But they try to resolve problems within the group before they take it to the Soba."

In addition to the Sobas and *Sekulus* recognised by the State, there are some rural chiefs who have migrated to the city, but now have no official status as they are no longer recognised by the State Administration. However, other migrants from the same area still regard them as legitimate chiefs. In Lubango, among the Nganguela there are

"some chiefs who were mwene⁷ but don't have official recognition in Lubango. When Nganguela need advice, they sort out a problem among themselves, they go to these mwene."

⁵ Interview with a peri-urban Soba from a long hereditary line of Sobas, a person who knows a lot about "traditional" life.

⁶ Interviews with people from the Ovimbundu and Nganguela groups in Lubango where most of the Sobas are from the Nhaneka group.

⁷ Chief" in the Nganguela language.

In Luanda there are some *Sobas* of this type. A group that migrated together in 1992 and 1993 and lives in an area they call Kilombo Neighbourhood, close to the Cuca beer factory in Hoji ya Henda Commune, includes chiefs from their region. But this is unusual; in the three cities one rarely meets *Sobas* who came with the rest of the migrants from the village of origin. In camps for displaced people, or in smaller inland cities, it is more common to find a group that moved with its traditional leaders.⁸

Using the terms *Soba* e *Sekulu* to describe the lowest level of the State Administrative system may suggest that residents have the possibility of directly participating in collective decision-making, because in the countryside the *Soba* generally takes decisions in public, working in an *Ondjango* (communal meeting place) which allows other people to see, hear and take part. Using the terms suggests people closely in touch with the inhabitants of their areas, leaders who have ways of listening to residents' opinions and of being accountable to them. The research showed that some *Sobas* and *Sekulus* are elected, but others are nominated by institutions higher up in the administrative system; some were *Sobas* or *Sekulus* in the countryside or are important figures in one of the communities living in the neighbourhood, but others do not have these connections to the residents.

The heterogeneity of the neighbourhoods makes it difficult to connect with the residents using "traditional" mechanisms, but there are no formal or "modern" ways of being accountable to them or hearing their opinions. In the peri-urban environment the *Ondjango* is usually the *Soba's* house (we saw one which is a small building in a yard with small openings in the walls), which does not allow the residents to participate or follow the proceedings. The length of period for which a *Soba* can serve is not defined. Traditional mechanisms for defining substitution of *Sobas* are no longer used, but new ones have not been created.

The lack of clarity about the present role of *Sobas* and *Sekulus*, and their presence in a social environment (in peri-urban areas) where their original ("traditional") role is questioned, causes them some frustration and confusion. For example *Sobas* and *Sekulus* prefer, apparently, to see society and social relations in a hierarchical way. The respect that they received and the power that they exercised in the countryside is remembered with nostalgia:

"In the village, when the chief rang the signal, everyone ran, they had to obey the order."

⁸ Andrade, 2001, on displaced people from Malanje and Ganda who stayed with their former *Sobas*. Also, an interview with people who work with NGOs in Huambo about the Kasseque camp for displaced people, near Huambo.

But in practice people in peri-urban areas no longer accept being directed in this way, particularly in heterogeneous *bairros* where only some of the inhabitants originate from the same area and see these figures in a “traditional” manner. For other residents the *Soba* represents values that belong to a different group or to another context, the rural context that is now in the past. Therefore attempts at collective action (neighbourhood clean-up campaigns for example) on the basis of orders sent down through the *Sobas* are not successful.

“Years ago the whole neighbourhood cleaned up together. Now they don’t accept the idea. There’s too much democracy.”

So even if *Sobas* and *Sekulus* had authority in rural areas through which they could access mechanisms and institutions to mobilise members of the community for a particular task (or to make them obey a particular rule), they do not have the capacity to mobilise collective action in the peri-urban environment today due to the different context and the confusion about the statute of traditional authorities in this different context.

2.5 Residents’ committees

In Luanda there were no *Sobas* or *Sekulus* until 2000, when they were appointed in some areas of the city. But Luanda, unlike Huambo and Lubango, generally has residents’ committees at commune, sector and block levels.⁹

A regulation covering residents’ committees in Luanda exists, although apparently it was never gazetted in the *Diário da República*; nevertheless all members refer to it. The regulation mentions residents’ meetings and ways of functioning which are quite transparent, but in practice the members of the residents’ committees see themselves as being dependent on the local State Administration, and they manifest party influences in the committees’ work. Residents had no knowledge of the residents’ meetings or of other mechanisms by which the residents’ committees should be accountable to their constituency.

While residents knew about the existence of residents’ committees, they gave unclear replies about their objectives of residents’ committees, their work or who the members were.

⁹ In Lubango certain long-standing residents mentioned residents’ committees on occasions, but it was not possible to confirm their existence. Most interviewees who mentioned them said that they were members. Very few other people knew about such entities.

One of the roles performed by members of residents' committees, as with *Sobas* and *Sekulus*, is conflict mediation. But in Luanda, where there are residents' committees and less often *Sobas* and *Sekulus* the "traditional" origins of conflicts are not referred to. The conflicts where members of the residents' committees intervene are more often domestic conflicts, between and within households.

When there's conflict between neighbours it's resolved at the level of neighbours or the residents' committee, in more complicated cases the police are called. (Luanda)

The residents' committees are thus bodies that are partly institutionalised, with statutes and objectives and roles that have not been fully clarified. Although the draft regulations that exist suggest a democratic institution, which is transparent and close to the residents of a *bairro*, the practice in the years of existence of this institution in peri-urban *bairros* has made it more of a body dependent on the State Administration. Furthermore the residents' committees (as in the case of *Sobas* and *Sekulus*) have little capacity to intervene in the serious problems and difficulties of peri-urban areas and find themselves more concerned with problems between neighbours.

3. IS THERE SYNERGY BETWEEN STATE INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION?

Local government structures are weak. The institutional environment in peri-urban areas is fragile, with uncertain rules and little transparency. The various institutions are not coordinated and there are few mechanisms for dialogue among them. The inclusion of certain elements with "traditional" references (*Sobas* and *Sekulus*) leads to a certain confusion and ambiguity instead of reinforcing local governance. They do not have rules that were established in the peri-urban context but try to follow "traditional" norms that come from a very different context, that are not necessarily known and shared by all residents and that are not adapted to problems that only occur in the new, peri-urban environment.

Furthermore, collective action is difficult when dialogue is not possible with the institutions that ought to supply the most important services in peri-urban *bairros*. The residents of such areas have the impression that these institutions and companies are distant, both geographically and institutionally, and that contact with them is difficult. It is also true that, whether or not they have the will to do so, such institutions and companies have little experience and tradition of direct contact with the users of their service, apart from occasional collection of fees, and even less experience of working in a participative way that requires dialogue and negotiation. Neither does the administrative system provide a channel for contact between residents and these institutions and companies. The State bodies that have the most contact with peri-urban residents (local administrations, Residents' Committees, *Sobas*) are more involved

in the resolution of very localised conflicts. They do not have experience of facilitating contact with the suppliers of basic services not in encouraging the active participation of residents in the resolution of problems of the *bairro*. Even the authorities with the most contact with residents are less accountable to residents than they are to superior levels of the State hierarchy.

According to Hyden (1992) and Onibokun (1999) four linked elements contribute to "good governance". The first element is the possibility of building trust between the State and citizens. If this trust does not exist, individuals and organisations do not see the usefulness of participating in public life as they do not believe that any benefit will be derived from such participation. Similarly State institutions will not perceive any benefit in encouraging people's participation. Trust can only grow through a gradual process of dialogue and building closer relations: using the example of rubbish collection, such a process may lead residents to gain confidence that the institutions of the State will in fact remove rubbish from the agreed place at the agreed time and may lead the State institutions to gain confidence that residents will in fact leave rubbish at the agreed place at the agreed time. The second element is the possibility of reciprocity in the relations between State and citizen: the interdependence of the State and its citizens needs to be recognised by both sides, and the possibility of mutual benefit that might flow from cooperation (and the recognition of the need for cooperation) should be made clear and made use of. A mutual recognition, for example, that both the public and the State want to see rubbish removed and that both require the help of the other to do so, is a contribution to good governance. The third element is the possibility of transparency and accountability in the relations between State and citizen, and the possibility of monitoring the carrying out of agreed activities: the possibility, for example, of knowing how often rubbish was left in the correct place at the correct time, and how often it was removed from the correct place at the correct time. The fourth element is the competence and efficiency of the State institutions, the "classic element" of good governance that continues to be important. The proper internal functioning of State bodies is still a basic factor in determining if the State correctly serves its citizens and carries out its promises.

The conditions necessary for good governance are similar to the conditions required for collective action. Synergy between community organisations and State institutions can be conceived of as a form of collective action but at a higher level. The creation of this synergy depends, similarly, on the possibility of overcoming the dilemma of collective action, but at a different level. In the same way as individuals may not negotiate among themselves a collective solution when they perceive the chances of success as low, residents and State bodies may not seek cooperative solutions when they perceive the chances of success as low. The confidence in the capacity and trustworthiness of such institutions is so low that residents claim that it is not worthwhile to organise to negotiate, it is better to avoid them.

Despite all these difficulties, the work of development organisations cannot ignore the State administration and the institutions that provide services in peri-urban areas. Supporting collective action in such areas necessarily involves supporting local government bodies so that they are more effective and are able to make the link with the collective action of local residents and community organisations. This would require local government to acquire new capacities, not only administrative and management ones but also capacities for negotiation and balancing various local interests in processes that encourage the participation of citizens and community organisations. It would imply supporting the capacity of local government, helping it to work more closely with collective action organisations, as well as supporting the latter to negotiate with local government from a stronger position.





IX . CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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1. IN SEARCH OF SOLIDARITY AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

The objective of the research reported in this book was to understand better the organizational forms for collective action in Angola, and especially in peri-urban areas, and how such organizations and mechanisms for collective actions adapted to rapid social change in recent years particularly migration to the cities. At the start of the research it had been hypothesized that underlying organizational forms for collective action would be communities where forms of solidarity existed, active and dynamic among different social actors and groups.

It had been furthermore hypothesised that the existence of forms of solidarity among members of such communities would, in turn, be strongly dependent on:

- the continuation of traditional institutions where attitudes of solidarity are strongly present (for example institutions such as *ondjuluka*); these institutions, even if they had been modified by contact with the urban environment, would have adapted and continued to be the basis for local forms of solidarity
- social networks established among neighbours, with strong social bonds and with various mechanisms and forms of solidarity. This hypothesis was re-inforced by another: that peri-urban *bairros* contained zones of a certain homogeneity (ethnic, region of origin or length of residence in the *bairro*).

1.1 Impact of migration on social networks

Migration in Angola has a long history, though it has intensified and now reached proportions never known before due to war and the phenomenon of displaced people. In the colonial era, the occupation of land by colonial settlers transformed the geographical distribution of the rural population; forced labour removed large numbers of men from villages for long periods of time; taxes and forced cultivation of cash crops disturbed the rhythm of village life; *sobas* became seen more as part of the colonial administrative system and less as defenders of traditional institutions.

The growing influence of christianity during the colonial era also had a strong impact on local social organisation, as the christian missions sought to destroy forms of local social organisation and weaken traditional values so as to replace them with values and forms of community favoured by the missions.

After Independence, the various conflicts and the collapse of the rural economy led to a rapid growth in migration and to the phenomenon of displaced people. After 1983, insecurity in rural areas due to what has become known as the “dirty war” that promoted

fear and mistrust inside rural communities, disturbed local social organisation and caused an increase in migration to urban areas.

The research showed that migration after Independence by people displaced from their areas of origin took place in a variety of circumstances (Chapter III). Only a few displaced people have fled in large groups (contrary to what is sometimes thought) and, even in these cases, groups tend to break up throughout the journey. Many displaced people have been forced to flee a number of times, which has further contributed to a break up of initial social groupings. The idea that in Angola “displaced people flee in large groups and remain in these groups with their leaders and social structures intact” only corresponds to the truth in certain inland cities and in certain camps for displaced people. The displaced people who now are found in the larger cities and in coastal areas have made long journeys and been displaced many times; they are thus likely to have arrived with only their immediate family or alone.

The diversity and complexity of journeys by migrants (in terms of origin, type of migration, time and method of migration) is one of the reasons for the social heterogeneity of peri-urban areas (Chapter IV).

The fact that it is rare to find peri-urban *bairros* that are homogeneous (in terms of ethnic and linguistic group, area of origin or date of arrival) is also due to the difficulties that new migrants have in finding land or a house close to other members of the extended family, friends or people from the same area of origin in cities that are now full. New arrivals rarely have sufficient money to buy land or a house near to people from the same area of origin who are already installed in the city. Thus, as people say, “here in the city you live wherever a house appears”, or “we live all mixed together and there are people from everywhere”. People from the same area of origin do not necessarily arrive in the city at the same time nor install themselves in the same place. This is true in the three cities included in the research (Luanda, Lubango and Huambo).

A final reason for the social heterogeneity of peri-urban *bairros* is the large-scale movement of people between *bairros*. There is a dynamic market in land and houses as people move from one house to another (and from one *bairro* to another) to avoid increases in rent or to move from a rented house to one they own themselves (and where they feel more secure).

The heterogeneity of most *bairros* has not allowed the continuation of traditional rites and institutions, as they are not shared by all residents, and has also had consequences for the density and extension of social networks. Trusting social relations are not necessarily established with neighbours; relationships with neighbours are often loose with the result that local social cohesion is weak and social networks are few and fragile. Social networks exist, but they are rarely built on relations between neighbours.

There are some exceptions to this rule:

- a) older, higher density areas that have been occupied for a number of decades and where people have remained neighbours throughout this period and have been able to create stronger social bonds
- b) some areas of ethno-linguistic homogeneity (but not all) such as certain communities of Bakongo origin.

Trusting social relationships do not always exist in *bairros* of ethno-linguistic homogeneity, especially if the residents did not know each other previously. The important factor that helps to create strong social networks is not ethno-linguistic homogeneity but the fact to have come from the same village or Comuna, or to have participated in the same social networks in the rural context. It is now difficult to replicate this factor in the peri-urban context.

The densest social networks are not based on people who are neighbours, but on other types of social relations:

- a) family and extended family relationships
- b) communities of religious nature.

The assistance of members of the extended family is important for the establishment of the newly arrived migrant in the city. But even so, tensions arise when migrants stay with a family member for too long. Under pressure, migrants try to find a house (or a piece of land on which to build) as quickly as possible and often this will be in another *bairro*. Extended families are thus spread between various *bairros*.

It is rare for religious communities to be made up of residents of a certain neighbourhood. Thus they do not represent any particular geographic area though they do make up one of the few places of horizontal social relationships where people of different social characteristics meet and socialise.

1.2 Solidarity in peri-urban areas: fragile and limited

Migration to the peri-urban areas of the main cities has weakened social networks, though it is likely that traditional institutions of solidarity had already been weakened before migration, in particular in the central-western areas of Angola. The areas of the Ambundu and Ovimbundu language groups were most affected by colonisation and by the associated social transformations.

These regions were also those where migration to the main cities has been most common. It is possible therefore that many migrants brought to the cities rural institutions that were already weaker than we had originally supposed.

Another aspect with a negative impact on the continuation of traditional institutions of solidarity in peri-urban areas seems to be the transition to the use of money in day-to-day transactions. “Here in the city you don’t have a field, only your pocket” state interviewees expressing the shock of contact with a new way of life in which it is necessary to earn money. The use of money to mediate exchanges, and the expectation to earn money for small services and favours, removes these services and favours from the realm of symbolic exchanges and the dynamic of “generalised reciprocity”, which is a dynamic of continuous exchanges in which everybody knows that they will be able to count on others in future, if and when this necessary. As a result of this change, traditional forms of solidarity are rarely practised, particularly in Luanda. Partial exceptions are to be found in some communities of Bakongo origin in Luanda, whose particular experience of migration has led them to adapt some of the characteristics of traditional solidarity to urban contexts. Another exception, and example of traditional solidarity, seems to be found among the Nhaneka-Humbe residents of peri-urban Lubango who are the native population of the region, even though today they probably do not make up the majority of residents of the city.

The difficulty in earning a living is another factor that has a negative impact on solidarity in peri-urban areas. As interviewees expressed it with regret “in the city everything has to be paid for” and it is necessary to earn money. This takes up a good deal of time, to work and to be in the market-place. “Life is difficult” so little time is left over to spend time with neighbours and little money is left over to help them when required. Daily survival appears so difficult for the majority of the population that we are forced to question the existence of “survival mechanisms” that peri-urban communities supposedly have.

The toughness of life in peri-urban *bairros* places limits even on solidarity with other family members or close friends. Although it is important for displaced people to have a family member or friend who can shelter them for some time, the stay in the house of a family member or friend can only last a limited time. The “traditional” obligation to shelter a displaced family member begins to be outweighed by the fact that the latter cannot contribute to the household budget means within a few weeks, forcing the migrant to look for another place to live.

Thus expressions of the spirit of solidarity, that the research had expected to find, have been reduced to a few extreme situations: funerals and sickness, most frequently when money is not required to help. Even in these cases solidarity is most frequent when it involves a family member or a very close friend.

Whilst in the past the weakening of traditional bonds of solidarity in peri-urban areas was compensated for by the creation of mutual aid associations (Monteiro, 1973), at present it is only in religious groups where people really organise themselves for mutual aid in case of sudden, urgent need. Churches seem to be the only places in which people are ready to contribute with money or other items for the creation of funds that can be used by members of the church in times of necessity. Even so, funds are frequently only for the extreme situations of funerals and sickness.

1.3 Collective action: almost non-existent

The results of the research indicate that peri-urban residents do not organise themselves spontaneously to resolve common problems. In peri-urban areas of the cities there are no basic, public services such as water, sanitation, schools or health-posts (or they are very deficient); yet residents prefer to seek individual solutions to these problems even though they often have to pay a very high price in terms of money and time. They rarely seek collective solutions. An exception, once again, are churches some of whom have organisations that contemplate aid to their members in times of difficulty. Almost all peri-urban residents go to church regularly and some go every day. The feeling of belonging to a community and the possibility of participating in forms of collective action apparently provide strong motivations for being a member of a church.

Another exception to the failure of collective action is when it is promoted by external development organisations, which have begun to assist communities in the organisation of committees to manage and maintain water sources or primary schools. But, as already mentioned, these organisations encounter many difficulties in their work and acknowledge some frustration with peri-urban populations who appear to be “complicated” or “corrupted” and unwilling to cooperate among themselves even when a rapid and clear benefit could be obtained.

As Putnam (1993) points out, the inability to cooperate for mutual benefit, even when the advantages of cooperation seem obvious, does not necessarily mean ignorance or irrationality. The dilemmas of collective action are well known. How can each individual be sure that his or her efforts to resolve a collective problem be matched by similar efforts by other members of the community, and that the others will not try to obtain benefits without contributing? In the absence of a credible mutual commitment, each individual is afraid that the others will defect; the result is thus frequently what no-one wants, an unwillingness to cooperate.

Obtaining a credible mutual commitment is more likely when the people involved belong to the same social networks and have already had some experience of working together. People who know each other can exert pressure on each other to contribute and to be accountable. Groups of people who have this experience of working together have already created a positive expectation about the contribution of the others. In this way mutual trust grows.¹ But this depends on the wider social context: the “social capital” (in the words of Putnam) of the community, the overall level of trust and the strength of social networks.

In the areas where the research was carried out, the level of social capital is low and under great pressure: traditional norms of solidarity have almost disappeared, rules (such as rules of reciprocity) have been weakened and social networks are confined to specific groups or are very widely dispersed between *bairros*.

The situations where there exist conditions for collective action are less frequent than we had thought at the start of the research. The level of trust among people is low, as is the expectation that collective action will function, as there have been few experiences of voluntary, cooperative activities that have been successful. If there are, for example, monetary contributions to mend a water pipe, there is usually a fear that the money will disappear and a feeling that it will be difficult to demand accountability from those responsible for losing the money. Thus people are reluctant to contribute another time. Only within certain groups, and among members of churches, is there trust and a possibility of accountability for collective actions: and in its turn this helps to increase the level of confidence that voluntary cooperation will bring a benefit.

Another difficulty in peri-urban areas is that the problems that might be solved through collective action often also require the cooperation of other organisations (water companies, the Ministry of Education, other ministries and companies). For example, a community might take responsibility for managing a water point, but the treatment and distribution of water will depend on a company or other body outside the community. A community might take responsibility for the collection of rubbish inside a *bairro* but a city-level authority will have to take responsibility for transporting this rubbish to the tip.

These organisations that come from outside the *bairro* become part of the dilemma of collective action; and, as they function poorly, peri-urban residents have little expectation that they can play a positive role (Chapter VIII). The expectation that user fees for these services will actually be used to maintain the service, or that the service providers have the means, and the will, to maintain them, is low. Companies (public or private) that supply collective services have a low-level

¹ **Trust based on a calculation about the behaviour of others, not blind faith.**

of contact with peri-urban areas and are not accustomed to methods of work that involve participation of, or negotiation with, local communities.

The institutions of the State that have the most contact with peri-urban residents (local administrations, residents' committees and *Sobas do Bairro*) are normally involved in the resolution of local conflicts and other minor questions. These institutions do not have experience in facilitating contacts with service providers or in encouraging the participation of the population in the resolution of local problems. These institutions are more accountable to higher levels of the government hierarchy than to the users of services.

Organised communities might be able to demand accountability from the Ministries and Companies that should provide services. But peri-urban residents are unwilling to organise themselves when they do not expect these Ministries and Companies to respond! The expectation that there will not be a response from government institutions is one of the reasons that peri-urban residents give for not organising themselves.

2. ESCAPING THE DILEMMAS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

2.1 Is it really important to support collective action in peri-urban areas?

There are many reasons why development organisations continue to work in peri-urban areas of Angolan cities. The population of Angolan cities continues to grow and nothing indicates that this trend will change in the near future. The research showed indeed that, even with peace, the population of the cities will continue to grow due to the high rate of natural growth and to continued migration. Meanwhile the formal structures demonstrate great difficulty in supplying public collective services. The contribution of collective action by the residents of such areas is potentially important in supplying such services.

Another important reason to support collective action in peri-urban areas is that, as Robert Putnam explains, the experience of collective action contributes to building a community with a civic ethos, which is fundamental for the democratic functioning of society and a institutional performance. Citizens that have experience of working together also have, according to Putnam, a better ability to demand "good governance", transparent management of local government and the State, and accountability by the State to its citizens.²

² For example Howen (2001) proposes the use of development projects in Angola as a way of creating community institutions and, by creating dialogue around them, developing a space for participative politics that could be an important contribution for peace-building and good governance in Angola.

2.2 Is collective action possible in peri-urban areas?

A basic ingredient for collective action is social capital. Social capital is a concept that has recently been used in development studies, though with different meanings by different authors, aggregating other concepts (such as the density of social networks and associated concepts such as trust, norms, rules and modes of organisation) to help explain the difficulties on facilitating collective action. In communities where reserves of social capital are low, where trust between people is weak, and where it is difficult to create to create organisations for collective action. In the present conditions of Angola (where peri-urban residents face many difficulties and the institutional response is very low), social capital will not be created on its own: specific actions to this end will be needed.

Two kinds of social capital seem to be important: bonding social capital, that creates linkages between people within a group; and bridging social capital that allows linkages among groups and organisations.

Many authors underline the difficulty in creating social capital: it is difficult to expand social networks, increase the stock of mutual trust or create and strengthen norms and values. There are no clear paths that can be used by development organisations that want to invest in this task. The manuals of NGOs and other development organisations emphasise support to (or use of) pre-existing mechanisms and organisational forms, particularly institutions with a strong base, well-rooted in the community or “traditional”. That is they advise the use of existing social capital.

This advice is based on the supposition that such mechanisms and organisational forms exist, even if they are difficult to find (or hidden from development organisations), or that at least there exist strong social networks with stocks of mutual trust, norms and values. A criticism often made of NGOs is that they create new community organisations before looking for pre-existing organisational forms and before thinking how to use these.³

The literature and the manuals say little about situations (like peri-urban areas in Angola) where there are few organisational forms and where the social networks are restricted (along with stocks of mutual trust, norms and values). They say little about how to overcome the difficulties in adapting an organisational form to new tasks (for example adapting a rural organisational form to resolve peri-urban problems).

A community-based approach will have little success if it begins with the assumption that there exist communities, in the strict meaning of the term, with a common history,

³

See, for example, Narayan (1995) or Fowler (1997)

values and interest that can be easily mobilised. It may be necessary to devise a new community-based approach that uses specific actions to build social capital.

2.3 Some ideas for creating social capital

It is clear that creating social capital will not be easy. It will not be easy to help groups of people to work together or even create the conditions for this. It is a new area for development organisations; an area where experimentation and continuous evaluation will be necessary, which demands a lot of preparation by development organisations.

Creating social capital will also require that engagement with communities be a long-term process, not a packet-project of short duration. The most appropriate strategy seems to be to support, in parallel, two aspects of social capital: the cognitive aspect⁴ that relates to informal relations, social norms, beliefs and values; and the structural aspect⁵ that relates to rules and procedures, explicitly defined roles, capacities and knowledge. One aspect can reinforce the other; in other words a high level of cognitive social capital can help create rules and procedures, the process of creating rules for collective action (working at the structural level) can create moments of interaction between participants that contribute to improving social relations and reviving positive norms.

Social activities that create a meeting space, even if it is informal (and such opportunities rarely exist in peri-urban areas at present), can help to create informal relations and the beginning of trust between people who live close to each other but do not know each other.⁶

Similarly, practical activities of collective action, though only if well structured, can be positive experiences that contribute to improving trust and reserves of social capital. The little documentation that exists about creating social capital (Mosse, 1994) (Mosse, 1995) emphasises that there are no defined rules for creating organisational forms for collective action, only a few principals.⁷ It is a long process that must be taken step-by-step. At each step it is necessary to find out about social relations through informal contacts, which also requires development organisations to master techniques

⁴ Relational or diffuse, according to some authors

⁵ Institutional or structural, according to some authors

⁶ In an interview with the NGO Christian Children's Fund, it was said that, in many camps for displaced people, the residents ask for help in building an *ondjango*, sometimes giving it higher priority than other activities that seem to have more concrete benefits. An *ondjango* provides a space for socialisation and appears to represent the start of rebuilding normal life and social relations.

⁷ Narayan (1995) is also a useful source, despite the fact that it is based on the possibility of expanding existing social capital. Mosse (1994), on the other hand, points out that, even in rural areas, it may be necessary to create new local institutions rather than starting from the hypothesis that strong local institutions already exist.

of social analysis. The first steps of an intervention serve mainly to know and understand how people of the *bairro* relate to each other. Techniques such as Participative Rapid Appraisal appear insufficient for this type of work. First interventions should perhaps deal with the most important problems but only if the chances of success are high. The following steps can only be made when there has been success with the previous ones; furthermore it would be better to work first with simpler organisational forms, and only later with more complex ones.

Furthermore, the possibility of collective action in peri-urban areas often involves the institutions that provide services such as water or education. In the peri-urban context it will be necessary for development organisations to facilitate contacts between community forms of organisation, local government and service-providers, create space for dialogue among these parties and use this space to create trusting relationships among them.

It may be possible to make use of existing social norms (such as those within churches) for collective action. The churches are points of stability in an unstable context, though they remain isolated points at present. There are examples of collective action within churches, which demonstrates that the values and norms favouring reciprocity and promoting common good continue to exist, though these are latent and underused.

As we have seen, the level of bonding social capital is high within churches, but the level of bridging social capital between churches is low. And it is this bridging social capital that will be required to tackle the most serious problems at the level of the *bairro*, rebuild the social fabric and create a culture of democracy.

2.4 Implications for development organisations

Development organisations in Angola still have few strategies for community development in peri-urban areas. Working in such areas is going to imply that development organisations perfect their techniques of social mobilisation and for facilitating relations between community forms of organisation and formal institutions. It will also be necessary to develop mechanisms to improve accountability within community forms of organisation, and among the various organisations engaged in the same activity. Documenting, systematising and reflecting on the process of creating social capital, and developing techniques of social analysis, will allow a process of self-evaluation and learning through these experiences.⁸

This kind of long-term engagement by development organisations with peri-urban communities will demand a clear vision of the objectives of engagement and may require

⁸ Mosse (1995) describes some implications for development organisations of a new community-based approach.

seeking long-term financing. It will be necessary to convince donor organisations about the importance of escaping from the short-term emergency mentality.

"A community-based approach is very difficult on the basis of short-term, emergency projects. NGOs need to improve their work in community organisation and to orientate themselves more clearly towards this. There is still a lot to learn about the ways in which communities organise themselves at present, about the social and cultural lives of people with whom we work and understand better community dynamics. This takes time. It is necessary to work for some time, and have a long-term perspective to gain people's confidence. Humanitarian work is costing a lot of money at present but at the same time there is a lack of funds for understanding community social bases for reconstruction." Intervention by an NGO in a discussion group by NGOs in Huambo about collective action.

For the time being, external aid to Angola is mainly emergency aid on the one hand, and physical reconstruction projects on the other. There are no strategies for the rapidly-growing cities, except some attempts to rebuild what existed before Independence (even though the cities have 10 times the population that they had then). The growth of cities, the absence of basic services and the lack of strategies to tackle urban problems are characteristics of many African countries at present.⁹ The knowledge and understanding of social changes that come with the growth of peri-urban areas, and the rebuilding of social capital and the capacity for collective action, must be important components of any such strategies.

⁹

Tannerfeldt (1995) describes rapid urban growth in present-day Africa. NORAD (Norwegian Government) is similarly about to publish a document about urbanisation and international cooperation.

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Forced migration has been common in Angola for the last century, and has been experienced in the last 20 years by several million Angolans. This Occasional Paper examines processes of social change in Angola, especially recent forced migration to the peri-urban areas of the large cities, and the resulting weakening of social networks and solidarity. These changes, in their turn, make it difficult for peri-urban residents to organise collective action to resolve common problems.

This Paper argues that reconstruction in Angola must include assistance to civil society at the grassroots: to the rebuilding of networks of mutual assistance, community organisations and their links with the front-line service providers of local government. This approach to supporting governance and civil society should emphasise the creation of trust and accountability. Reconstruction is a long-term process but should begin urgently.

ISBN 0 - 9688786 - 2 - 8

