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Urban poverty in Luanda, Angola

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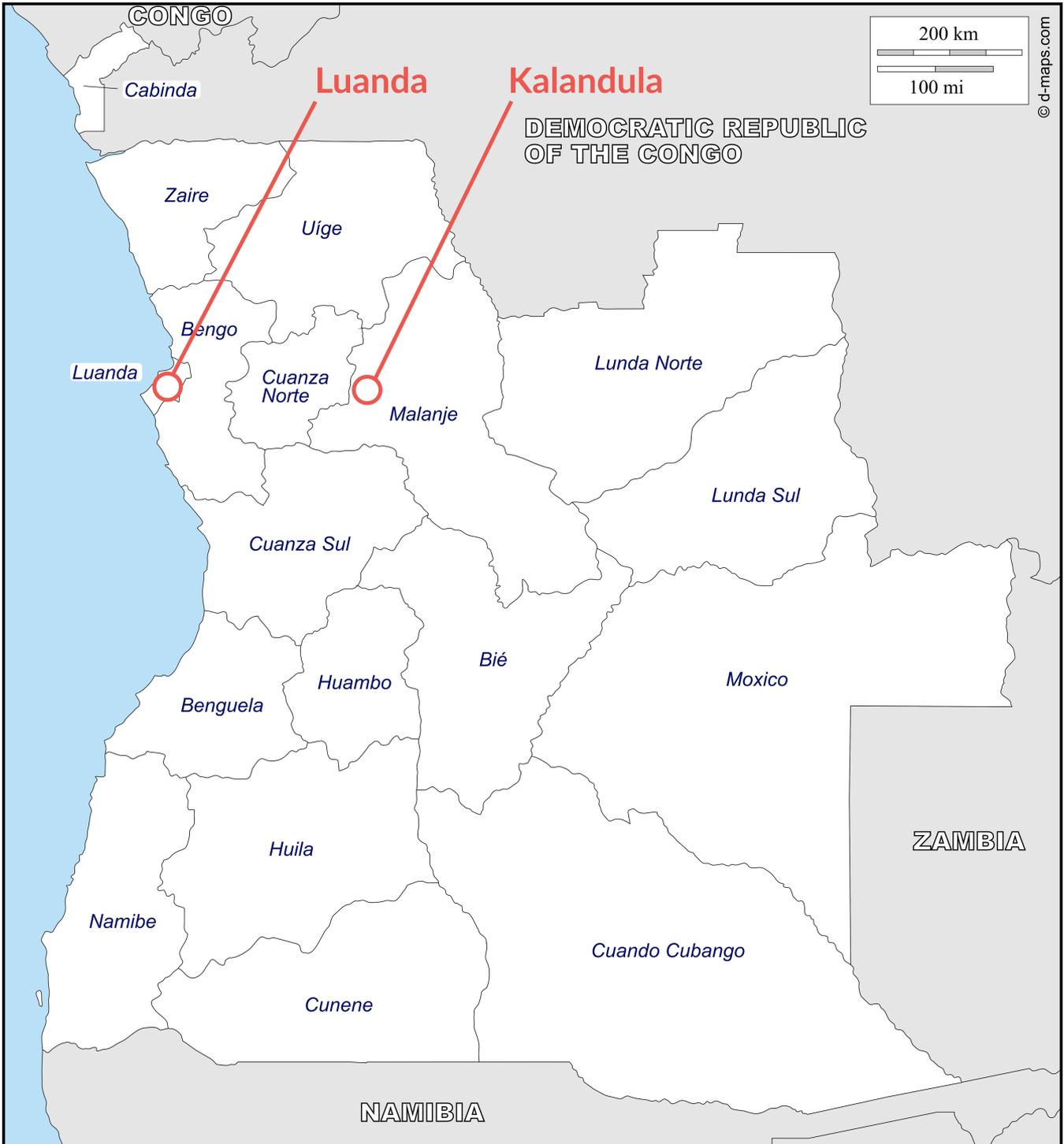
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Gilson Lázaro

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Map 1. Angola with project sites

1 Introduction

This report is part of the research programme “Cooperation on Research and Development in Angola” between Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica (CEIC) at the Catholic University in Luanda, Angola and Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen, Norway funded by the Norwegian Embassy. The objective of the programme is to increase the quality, quantity and availability of relevant research-based knowledge on Angola. The programme has several sub-projects in political science, economics and social science.¹ This report on urban poverty in Luanda is related to the social science project “Urban and Rural Poverty Dynamics”. A similar report has been published on rural poverty in the province of Malanje (Tvedten, Lázaro et al. 2017).

Doing social science research on poverty and inequality in Angola is challenging. There is a dearth of disaggregated statistical data showing the distribution of poverty over space and time,² and there are practical hindrances at the local level ranging from lack of experience of being subject to studies of this nature to logistical problems in implementing data collection. This project is based on a combination of the limited aggregate quantitative data that exist, and the collection of quantitative and qualitative primary data in carefully selected urban and rural sites centred on a ‘Reality Check’ approach.³

1.1 Poverty in Angola

Existing aggregate information indicate that despite its oil wealth and high GDP per capita, poverty in Angola is severe. Angola’s official poverty rate is 36.6 percent, with 18.7 percent for urban and 58.3 percent for rural areas (INE 2013; see also Vidal and de Andrade 2011).⁴ Still, scholars and commentators argue that that the figures are too low⁵ and conceal considerable variations between and within different provinces and urban and rural social formations.

The most common proxy for multidimensional poverty, the under-five/child mortality rate remains exceptionally high at 23 percent in rural and 15 percent in urban areas (UNICEF 2015).

¹ *Economics*: i) The distribution of income and wealth across households and regions; ii) Diversification of the Angolan economy. *Social Science*: i) Poverty and social differentiation; ii) Gender relations and human rights. *Political Science*: The role of the município in public services, participation and poverty reduction.

² The most relevant data sets are i) Household Income and Expenditure Survey or IDR, conducted in seven provinces (INE 2003) and ii) the Survey on the Welfare of the Population or IBEP conducted in 18 provinces (INE 2010). The 2014 Census (INE 2016) contains data relevant for multi-dimensional poverty (incl. education, health and material assets), but does not measure the proportion of the population that is poor along these lines.

³ A ‘Reality Check’ approach makes it part of a series of studies under the same name that share a vision that there are not one but several ‘realities’, and that it is important to capture issues of poverty both through statistics/surveys and as perceived ‘from below’ by people living in rural villages and urban slums (see e.g. Tvedten et al. 2016).

⁴ The National Poverty Line is set at 4,793 kwanzas per month, which translates into about USD 2.00 per household member per day.

⁵ The official poverty headcount declined from 62 percent in 2001 (INE 2003) to 37 percent in 2009 (INE 2010), but both are based on inadequate survey methodologies and uncertainties regarding the processing of the data.

Angola is ranked number 150 out of 188 countries in the most recent Human Development Index, despite the high GDP per capita, implying exceptionally poor scores in terms of education and health indicators (UNDP 2017).

Official Angolan data show that 30 percent of the population is illiterate and the mean years of schooling for an adult is 4.4 years; life expectancy at birth is 51.1 years; 42 percent of the population live without access to potable drinking water; and 60 percent lack sanitation facilities (INE 2016, 2013). At the same time, inequality is high in Angola with the Gini-coefficient being 0.53 (RdA 2015).

In terms of gender, Angola ranks 150 out of 188 countries in UNDP's Gender Development Index assessing income, longevity and educational attainment (UNDP 2016). And the country ranks 126 out of 145 countries in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index measuring economic participation, educational attainment, health and political empowerment (WEF 2016).⁶

Table 1 below highlights available data on differences in poverty and well-being between urban and rural areas in Angola – testifying to considerable differences between the two types of social formations. However, one of the main tenets of this study is that poverty is considerably more severe than the figures indicate taking a multi-dimensional definition of poverty into account.

TABLE 1: Living conditions in urban and rural Angola

Item	Urban	Rural
Poverty incidence (%)	19%	58%
Total population	16.153.987	9.635.037
Average household size	4.8	4.4
Proportion Female Headed Households (%)	23.6%	14.6*%
Unemployment (15-64 yrs.) (%)	30.8%	14.3%
Literacy rate (15 + yrs.) (%)	79.4%	41.1%
Child mortality rate (%)	15%	23%
Civil registry (%)	68%	30%
Cell-phone ownership (5 + years) (%)	46.8%	21.2%

Sources: INE 2013; UNICEF 2015; INE 2016

⁶ There are considerable uncertainties as to the actual proportion of female headed households in Angola. The 2014 Census sets the rate at 38 percent (INE 2016), the Integrated Survey of Population Well-Being at 19 percent (INE 2013), and UNICEF at 29 percent (UNICEF 2015). The Gender Diagnostic of Angola (EU 2015) operates with a de facto proportion of female headed households of 51.8 percent (51.4 for urban and 52.2 for rural areas).

Angola has a very high rate of urbanisation compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa at 63 percent – and of the total population of 25.8 million, as many as 6.9 million or 27 percent live in the capital Luanda alone (INE 2016). The official consumption-based poverty rate in Luanda stands at 11.5 percent, which is considerably lower than the national urban average of 19 percent (INE 2013, Tvedten, Lázaro et al. 2017).

Both urban and rural poverty are currently affected by the deep economic crisis in Angola following from sharp fall in the price of oil and poor governance, which has had immediate effects in terms of access to and prices of basic commodities (de Oliveira 2015; World Bank 2016; UCAN 2016; Inglês 2016).

This has also affected relations between urban and rural areas. From a long period of near unilateral migration from rural areas to Luanda in particular due to war and better opportunities, there are indications that this is in the process of changing with the current economic crisis in many ways hitting urban areas harder than rural and agricultural ones (INE 2016).

1.2 Analytical approach

A key premise in the current research project is that poverty is multi-dimensional. It must be understood partly as tangible measurable conditions of deprivation in the tradition of empirical positivism and partly as emic categories through which people think their worlds and act upon them in the tradition of sociocultural subjectivism (Green 2006; Addison et al. 2009; Schaffer 2013).

This means that in order to understand the dynamics of poverty and the main constraints and opportunities for upward social mobility and poverty alleviation, we must measure key aspects of being poor in quantitative terms as well as understand peoples' own perceptions and experiences of what it means to be poor in Angola.

In practical terms, multi-dimensional poverty involves the lack of employment and income needed to attain basic necessities (alleviated through a combination of increased *opportunities* and an increased *capacity* to capitalise on available opportunities); a sense of voicelessness and powerlessness in relation to institutions of society and the state (alleviated through increased *empowerment*); and vulnerability to adverse shocks, linked with the ability to cope with them through social relationships and legal institutions (alleviated through increased *security*).

In order to grasp such a notion of poverty, the analyses will be framed within a broad outline of 'practice theory' – separating political, economic and socio-cultural structures affecting peoples' lives and their own agency (Bourdieu 1990; Ortner 2006; Moore and Sanders 2014). The kinds of activities people perform are affected by their individual positions within these structures, as

determined by poverty/well-being, unequal social relations and dominant cultural discourses including those based on class and gender.

1.3 Methodologies

Methodologically, the studies have been carried out using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data (Mikkelsen 2005; Tvedten 2012; Hesse-Biber 2015). The former combines existing government data on poverty and social stratification at national, provincial and municipal levels; data from individual studies carried out by donors or (applied) research institutions; as well as an especially designed Baseline Survey carried out in selected communities as part of the current project.

The Luanda Baseline Survey 2016 has been done with careful attention to being as 'representative' of the poor bairros as possible but cannot claim to be representative for more than the areas where it is carried out in any strict statistical sense. It was implemented in four communities selected on the basis of geographical location and overall characteristics of poverty and well-being (see below), with a total of 480 interviews or 120 in each bairro. The households were selected through systematic random sampling.

The survey seeks to combine i) classical *quantitative socio-economic data* on the composition of households, income and expenditure, assets, levels of education, health and access to public services; ii) questions relating to people's *perceptions* of conditions in the household and their community with implications for their position as poor or better-off and iii) the *social relationships* (with extended family, friends, community leaders, and public institutions) in which they are engaged and that have implications for their position as poor or better-off.

The qualitative methodologies used were i) qualitative interviews with stakeholders in local government, civil society, traditional institutions; ii) systematic observation in the visited communities; iii) interviews with individual households; and iv) a set of participatory qualitative methodologies carried out in Focus Groups of approximately ten persons. These include the following:

Histograms: To ascertain the history of each site under study, with an emphasis on events and processes that have been particularly important for current socio-economic conditions of well-being and poverty. The group itself decides on what point in time of history to start.

Community Mapping: To map the physical places (buildings, roads, natural elements etc.) as well as institutions and individual community members considered most important for the life of the community – and why. The group itself is asked to define the spatial borders of what they consider "their community".

Gendered work matrix: To understand the division of labour between men and women in the community/within households. Each group will specify the daily activities they are involved in at home and in their place of work, including the time used and level of income.

Community problem matrix: To identify and rank the most important problems that affect the whole community or larger groups of people in the community. The group will first identify the major problems, and thereafter rank those on the basis of the number of people the problem affects, and the seriousness of the problem.

Wealth Ranking. The objective is to capture the communities' own perceptions of different levels and types of poverty and well-being. The group is asked to i) define what being 'poor' and 'rich' means for them, ii) identify the most important conditions that separate the poor from the less poor, iii) list the local names/idioms for different categories of poverty and well-being, and iv) identify households belonging to each category for further interviews.

The quantitative and qualitative methods described are useful tools for obtaining the information necessary for an analysis of poverty dynamics in Luanda. However, they also have their limitations. Surveys operate with predetermined (*etic*) themes and categories that do not necessarily coincide with peoples' own (*emic*) perceptions of what is important in their lives. Moreover, the interview situation in places like Luanda is challenging with people constantly on the move between their dwellings and workplace and being uncertain/fearful about how the information is to be used.⁷

Also, systematic observation and interviews in groups and with individual have challenges. Groups tend to be dominated by local powerholders/influentials, and particularly women are often reluctant to answer questions about their household without the husband being present. This is sought compensated for by separating groups by sex and selecting more marginal households/individuals for separate interviews in settings where they feel comfortable/confident.

While all this has influenced the quality/reliability of the quantitative as well as the qualitative data, we believe that this is minimized exactly by combining/triangulating the two types of approaches. To further probe the link between quantitative and qualitative information, the nine enumerators carrying out the survey were systematically interviewed in order to record i) their general impressions about poverty and well-being, and ii) households that made a particular impression for coping exceptionally well, for being exceptionally poor or for other reasons.⁸

⁷ This accounts for a part of the 'Missing' category in the data/tables to be presented – with some people simply refusing to answer questions they were not comfortable with (which of course is their right).

⁸ This is also the basis for some of the quant-qual statements in the report, for example the claim that most households have several sources of income even though this was not systematically recorded in the survey.

1.4 The project sites

The choice of municipalities/bairros in which to work was based on a combination of geographical location (inner city, peri-urban areas), history of settlement (longer-term and more recent) and socio-economic characteristics (different degrees of formality/informality, general information on levels of poverty/wealth). The bairros selected were (see Map):

TABLE 2: Bairros of study

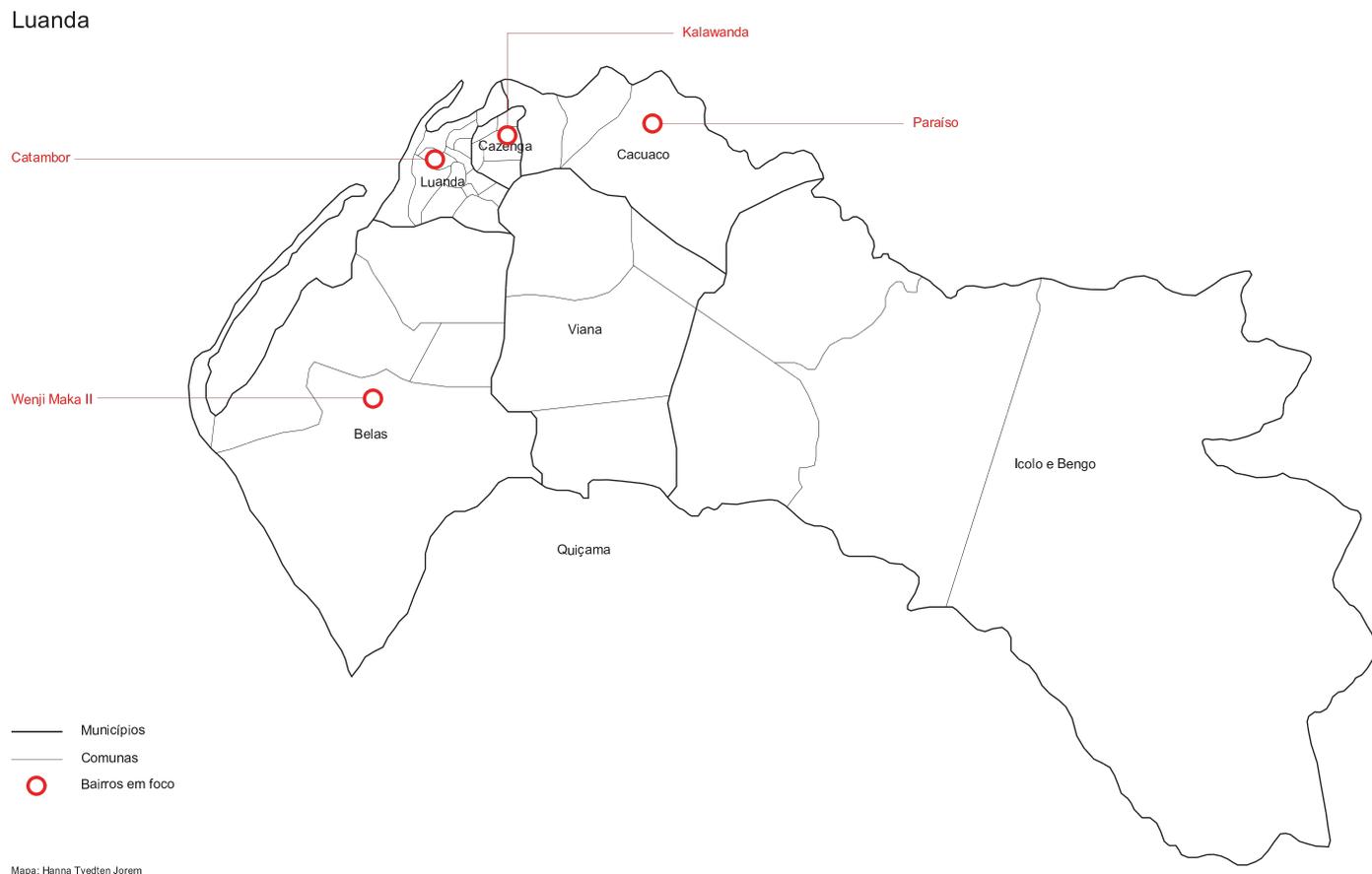
Municipality	Bairro	Estimated Population*
Belas	Wenji Maka II	22.000
Cacuaco	Paraíso	120.000
Cazenga	Kalawenda	84.300
Luanda/Maianga	Catambor	91.500

*The figures are based on a combination of the most recent census (in 2014) and records kept by the Committee of Residents (*Comissão de Moradores*).

Initial visits were made to each municipality/bairro to establish contacts with relevant authorities and secure accessibility/permission to carry out fieldwork. This did not pose any significant problems. We were generally allowed to work without direct interference from local authorities, even though we were not always given access to the documentation we requested.

The main focus of our research and this report is the bairros of Wenji Maka II and Paraíso, where we carried out both the survey and the qualitative methodologies. The survey was also carried out in Kalawenda and Catambor, with more limited qualitative work.

Map 2. Project sites, Luanda



2 Structural context

2.1 The political economy of Angola

Since independence from the Portuguese in 1975, Angola's political economy has been dominated by two factors: A devastating war lasting until 2002, and large incomes from oil and gas that have made Angola a middle-income country in GDP per capita terms – albeit with vast levels of inequality (de Oliveira 2015; World Bank 2017; UNDP 2017).

Angola has had parliamentary elections since 1992, with the MPLA being the dominant party and UNITA the main party of opposition. However, the de facto power rests with the party and the President. Eduardo dos Santos was president for forty years from September 1979 to August 2017 when João Lourenço took over the leadership – albeit with dos Santos maintaining influence as head MPLA.

Lower tiers of government consist of provinces (18), municipalities (162) and *comunas* (556). There is no formal administrative level below the *comunas*, but the *de facto* state representatives in urban neighbourhoods (*bairros*) is the Residents' Committee (*Comissão de Moradores*) and in rural villages it is the traditional leader (*soba*). Everybody in leadership positions is MPLA party member – blurring the distinction between the State and the Party.

Angola is highly dependent on oil, which has represented an average of more than 95 percent of export incomes the past ten years. Despite huge economic potentials in the form of hydropower, fertile land and other resources economic diversification has remained very limited (UCAN/CEIC 2016). In fact, the country has imported the bulk of its consumption items – including basic foodstuffs. The government has made considerable investments in infrastructure, but rural-urban linkages have been hampered by limited productivity in agriculture.

Since the collapse of the oil price in 2011, Angola has experienced severe problems in its economy. National as well as foreign investments have been reduced, and there have been increasing hardships for its population. The delivery of social services in health and education – which in the outset has been weak – has further deteriorated. Corruption is widespread at all levels, from the political and economic elite and down to social services in villages and *bairros* (de Oliveira 2015).

Angola has an extremely centralised political economy and few if any other countries in Africa have such a concentration of political and economic power in its capital city. Luanda has a population of 6.5 million, with Benguela (2 million) and Huambo (1.9 million) being other major urban conglomerates (INE 2016). At the same time, no cities in Africa – with the possible exception of Kinshasa and Lagos – have such a volatile and poor population as does Luanda.

2.2 The City of Luanda

Luanda was established by the Portuguese in 1576. Since then, the city has gone through three major transformative periods (Rodrigues and Frias 2015:131, see also Raposo et al. 2012; Viegas 2015; Melo 2016; Gastrow 2017): The colonial spatialisation of socio-economic difference through the consolidation of a dual city in a downtown (*baixa*) and uptown (*musseque*) part; the post-independence massive expansion of the musseques and their imbrication in the colonial city; and the post-war multi-centred and extensive expansion – along with demolitions of informal musseques, the establishment of large (gated) mid/upper class housing projects and the requalification (and gentrification) of the centre.

At Independence in 1975, the population of Luanda stood at approximately 500.000 (Jenkins et al. 2010). Since then, following decades of war and the rural exodus, the population has increased from an estimated 1 million in 1980 to an estimated 4 million in 2000.⁹ The population continued to increase at an unprecedented rate also after the peace agreement of 2002 to 6.5 million in 2014, with continued urban migration and very few returning to their rural areas of origin. Considering only the central municipalities (see below), Luanda has a population density of 23,307 per km² – which is among the highest on the African continent (Rodrigues and Frias 2016).¹⁰

Administratively, the province of Luanda was divided into Luanda and Icolo and Bengo in 1980 (Jenkins et al. 2010; Croese 2016). Luanda was further divided into nine municipalities (Kilamba Kiaxi, Rangel, Maianga, Sambizanga, Viana, Ingombota, Cacuaco, Samba and Cazenga). In 2011, increasing population expansion and density was sought accommodated by incorporating Icolo and Bengo and the 9000 km² park of Quiçama and reducing/reorganising the number of municipalities to seven (Cacuaco, Belas, Cazenga, Icolo and Bengo, Luanda, Viana and Quiçama). The municipality of Luanda coincides with the former limits of the city of Luanda, which was further sub-divided into six urban districts (Ingombota, Kilamba Kiaxi, Viana, Rangel, Samba and Sambizanga).

The authorities' expansion and development of the city has been based on a 'techno-managerial and modernising' paradigm (Rodrigues and Frias 2016; see also Bettencourt 2011). From the peace agreement in 2002 until around 2010 and the onset of the economic crisis, the number of new constructions in Luanda increased significantly with over 576,000 houses licenced and nearly 440,000 projects for trade and services registered. The first large scale housing programme was the 'Nova Vida' project completed in 2005, and in 2008 the government

⁹ Until the National Census in 2014, all population estimates were projections based on the Census of 1970 (Amaral 1983) and other relevant sources of information such as voter- registrations for the 1992 national election.

¹⁰ However, projections are that the growth will flatten out with the current economic crisis and signs of people returning to/staying in rural areas for survival (Tvedten, Lázaro et al. 2016).

announced the ambitious ‘National Programme on Housing and Urban Development’ which included the construction of One Million Houses by 2012. Among the most affluent formal and middle/upper class residential areas are Talatona and Kilamba in the municipality of Belas.

Illustration 2: New condominium for the better off



Photo: Aslak Orre

At the same time, the combination of unregistered construction and demolitions affecting hundreds of thousands of people in the poor bairros or *musseques*— where an estimated 80 percent of Luanda’s inhabitants reside (World Bank 2011) – continued at an unabated pace (Gastrow 2017). With most of them still lacking even the most basic infrastructure (formal land rights, water, sewage, electricity, proper roads etc.) and with grossly inadequate social services (police/security, education, health, social protection etc.), construction is largely based on peoples’ own ‘material imaginations’ and ‘aesthetics’ within the structural constraints and massive poverty of the *musseques* (Gastrow 2017; see also Diof and Fredericks 2014).

The dual city is also reflected in Luanda’s socio-economic characteristics. The distinctions are clearly visible when visiting the formal and the informal parts of the city: The former have high-rise buildings and villas, (apparently) well-functioning infrastructures and commercial areas, parks and other symbols of the modern city (Çinar and Bender 2007).

The informal city on its part is overcrowded, with poor sandy roads, narrow alleyways and markets/small commercial outlets, and they are littered with garbage (*lixo*). In statistical terms, problems related to unemployment, dwellings, water, school attendance etc. are also primarily related to the informal settlement areas (see Table).

TABLE 3: Key data on social welfare characteristics in Luanda

Luanda	2008/09
Poverty incidence ¹¹	11,5
Poverty depth	2,4
Poverty severity	0,8
Average household size	5.4
Dependency ratio	87/100
Ratio men/women	92/100
Labour force participation (%)	60%
Dwellings with inadequate construction material (%)	69%
Access to proper sources of water (%)	51%
Access to mobile phones (%)	79,9%
School attendance 6-17 yrs. (%)	71%

Source: INE (2013, 2016)

On this background, it is surprising that the official poverty rate in Luanda is set as low as 11.5 percent. The poverty line is defined with reference to the monetary cost to a given person at a given place and time of a reference level of welfare (INE 2013: 83-92). In fact, also our own survey data show that there is money in circulation: Most people have some kind of income, and they own basic assets such as a dwelling, furniture, and cell-phones. The central argument in the coming pages is that the poverty in the areas under study is not primarily related to lack of material means except for the most destitute, but to the extreme level of vulnerability and insecurity that people experience (see the definition of poverty above).

¹¹ *The Poverty Headcount* index gives the share of the poor in the total population, i.e. it measures the percentage of the population whose consumption is below the poverty line. It takes into account neither how close or far the consumption levels of the poor are with respect to the poverty line, nor the distribution of consumption among the poor (INE 2013). *The Poverty Gap* index is the average consumption shortfall of the population relative to the poverty line. Since the greater the shortfall the higher the gap, this measure overcomes the first limitation of the gap (INE 2013). *The Severity of Poverty* index is sensitive to the distribution of consumption among the poor, a transfer from a poor person to somebody with more consumption may leave unaffected the headcount or the poverty gap but will increase this measure. The larger the poverty gap is, the higher the weight it carries (INE 2013).

2.3 Municipalities under study

Moving on to the four study sites of Belas/Wenji Maka II, Cacucaco/Paraíso, Cazenga/ Calawanda and Maianga/Catambor, there is a dearth of official and/or reliable data at the level of the municipalities, except for data on population (see Table).

TABLE 4: Population characteristics – Municipalities under study

Indicator	Belas	Cacuaco	Cazenga	Luanda
Population	1.065.106	882.398	862.351	2.107.648
Pop. density	1.018	2.828	18.169	23.307

Source: INE (2016)

There are 1,1 million inhabitants in the Belas district, with a male/female ratio of 100/96. Belas is the third most populous district in the province of Luanda. In terms of administrative division, the Belas district consists of seven sub-districts (*comunas*) – Barra do Kwanza, Benfica, Futungo, Talatona, Vila Estoril, Mussulo and Camama – which includes the bairro of Wenji Maka II.

Cacuaco district has a population of 900,000. It is divided into the three *comunas*: Cacucaco (the centre), Funda and Kikolo (housing Paraíso), which in turn are divided into 52 neighbourhoods (*bairros*). Cacucaco is a vast and diversified district that includes urban bairros as well as rural areas. Between 2000 to 2010, the Cacucaco district registered the second highest annual population growth of Luanda after Viana.

The Cazenga district has an estimated population of 850.000 people, who live in the three *comunas* Tala-Hady, Cazenga Popular (including the bairro of Calawenda) and Hoji-Ya-Henda. Cazenga is, after Luanda district, the second most densely populated district in the province.

The district of Luanda has the highest population and population density, and includes the *comunas* Ingombota, Rangel, Samba, Sambizanga, Kilamba Kiayi and Maianga, of which Catambor is a part. The district of Luanda is the most diversified in the city in terms of formal/informal areas and poor/rich population groups.

2.4 Employment

In terms of employment, official figures show that the majority of the adult population participates in the labour force (see Table). The employment rate is higher among men than among women. Among those employed the majority of men work in the formal sector, while the

majority of women are self-employed/work in the informal sector. In formal employment, most people work in the private sector, followed by the public sector/state companies.

TABLE 5: Official data on employment in Luanda (Percent)

Characteristic	Men	Women	Total
Labour force participation	72.0	49.9	60.4
Sector of employment			
Labour force in the service sector	70.0	95.0	80.0
Labour force in manufacturing	25.0	2.0	15.0
Labour force in agriculture	5.0	3.0	5.0
Type of employment			
Employed	78.0	39.0	61.0
Self-employed	22.0	61.0	39.0

Source: INE (2013)

TABLE 6: Official data on source of employment in Luanda

Source of employment	Percent
Private sector	39.5
Public administration	13.2
State company	6.6
Cooperative sector	1.3
Self-employment	38.5
Other	1.0

Source: INE (2013)

Formal employment is rare in the informal settlements/musseques, and those who have access to formal employment usually work in low-paying professions as builders or guards (men) and as domestic servants and cleaners (women). The minimum wage in Angola is 18.400 kwanzas per month, but earnings are often lower than that and/or paid out only intermittently. Other features of formal employment are the insecurity of income (there are no effective unions), and the long expensive travels to work (nearly always located outside of the bairro of residence). Still, formal employment is preferred for the predictability in incomes and the status it gives particularly for men who are expected to be the main income earner.

The informal economic activities generally take place in the large public spaces or at the informal markets, as well as in the most trafficked urban and peripheral zones. That is where one finds potential clients for the products and services offered by hundreds of thousands of people in the sector. People in the informal economy often travel long distances and subjecting themselves to a number of risks (Mendelsohn 2015).

In the middle of the 1980s, many people challenged the government's ban on informal economic activities and established huge informal markets including 'Roque Santeiro' (Lopes 2008). In the 1990s and the opening up for neo-liberal economics, the private sector was facilitated by the appearance of a class of small entrepreneurs of both Angolan and foreign origin who were owners of commercial warehouses (for retail sale of various products), service providers and – albeit to a smaller extent – productive activities including fishing.

After 2002, in times of peace, informal and increasingly precarious activities grew with astonishing speed. The number of small-scale and non-licensed traders increased in the streets—except in the formal part of the city where it became illegal – as did the number of car cleaners, self-appointed guards, baggage carriers, motorbike taxis, prostitutes and so on.

Illustration 3: Centre of Paraiso



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

2.5 Public services

Access to public services in peri-urban Luanda is insufficient and precarious. There is a gross lack of infrastructure and human resources that are indispensable for the provision of services such as health, education, civil registration, and water and energy supply. Even where the

provision of such services occurs more or less regularly, their quality and efficiency fall well short of standards and the population's expectations.

The overall perception is that access to even minimum public services is too often dependent on the purchase or exchange of favours. There is an impression that money plays a determining role in the relationship between the citizen and the state institutions. This means that while access to public services formally is universal and free, in practice these services are seen as a privilege of those who have social relationships within these public institutions or who have money to pay for them.

Education

Despite relatively favourable official data on education for Luanda (see Table), the education sector is confronted with many limitations and problems. There is a lack of adequate schools and teachers, and a great part of the classrooms that are counted in the peri-urban areas are improvised and without a minimum of material conditions. They are, in fact, 'cubes' of four walls and an improvised chalk-board fixed to one of the walls. There may be desks for two or three children to share, but in many cases the pupils have to bring small plastic or wooden chairs themselves or sit on the ground.

TABLE 7: Official data on education in Luanda (Percent)

Characteristic	Men	Women	Total
Population + 15 years who are literate	93.9	78.3	85.9
Population 15-24 years who are literate	94.9	89.9	92.3
Population 6-17 years going to school	90.8	89.9	90.4
Population 15-18 years in secondary school	45.3	43.7	44.4
Proportion 6-17 years who never went to school	4.3	4.4	4.4

Source: INE (2016)

The number of teachers that effectively work in the sector is insufficient to respond to the demand from the children at school age who reside in the bairros. Teachers are poorly paid, and teacher absenteeism is a big problem. Teachers can go weeks and even months without coming to give classes. In effect, many children in the bairros are not taught by a teacher, but by an *explicador*. They are normally educated, but without any teachers training preparing them for such an activity.

Health

Also, official data on health in Luanda do not reflect realities on the ground as we encountered them (see Table). Officially, Luanda's health facilities can be separated into main hospitals (*hospitais principais*), health centres and health posts. According to the national system division, the public health care begins at the health posts and only in serious cases are the patients transferred to health centres or to municipal reference hospitals.

TABLE 8: Official data on health in Luanda

Characteristic	Percent
Population per health facility	46.8
Population per physician (%)	6.0
Sick people with medical consultation (%)	73.0
Stunting children 6-59 months (%) *	20
Orphanage among children 0-17 years (%)	10.0

Source: INE (2016), UNICEF (2015). * Chronic under-nutrition. ** Acute under-nutrition

The major part of the health facilities in the peri-urban areas are precarious units where the attendance to the public is deficient, because of lack of medicines and qualified medical personnel. The frequency of available doctors in Luanda is very low (4 per 200.000 inhabitants), and many are of Cuban nationality who work on short term contracts. The health posts in the peri-urban bairros usually function without nurses or health technicians. This means that the major part of medical cases are left in the hands of people without adequate training.

Other services / Civil registry

The District administrations are in charge of the civil registry (IDs) and other *notarius publicus* services. To obtain a personal ID-card or carry out any other identity or property registration, the inhabitants of the four bairros need to make their way to the District centre. Together with the need to give small illicit payments, that is the main reasons why so many people are not formally registered. Many people use their electoral card (for which registration does not seem to be a problem...) instead of their citizen ID as identification when they approach public institutions – even though this is not always accepted.

TABLE 9: Official data on civil registry (Percent)

Characteristic	Men	Women	Total
Population with birth certificate	71.8	67.4	69.5
Population 0-4 years with birth certificate	31.9	31.9	31.9

Source: INE (2016)

Other key public services are most notable for their absence. This includes the police and the judiciary. Some bairros have a (semi)permanent police station, while others are served by ‘ambulating’ policemen. In both cases, the police service is affected by the low pay and status of the officers making them vulnerable to misappropriation. The judiciary is virtually inaccessible except for serious offenses where the Municipal court is engaged, in some cases leading to the establishment of vigilante groups and/or people taking the law into their own hands. There is no accessible and dependable crime statistics. 9,96

Illustration 4: Environment and Health Hazards (Paraiso)



Photo: Gilson Lazaro

3 The communities

As regards the bairros in which the study has taken place, we introduce these through the initial impressions when first entering them and meeting people (i.e. ‘walking anthropology’):

Wenji Maka II (meaning ‘problems with trade’) is a former communal agricultural area that little by little was allotted in plots and sold by the local farmers’ organization to residents and migrants. This started in 2004, and it has grown into a bairro of approximately 22.000 inhabitants of mixed socio-linguistic/ethnic background. Except for the perennial *musseque* problems of poor dirt roads, water overflows and garbage (*lixo*), the immediate impression is one of a relatively well-organized community with brick houses and yards (*quintas*); schools and health institutions (most of which are private); a number of small shops or *cantinas*; artisanal work-shops of all kinds; and some larger stores particularly along the main roads defining the borders of the bairro. There are also contrasting ‘pockets’ of larger and more luxurious two-three story-dwellings housing the well-off and precarious houses made of cardboards and iron sheets housing the very poorest. The bairro is relatively empty during the day, which is an indication that many people are working or seeking employment in other parts of the city. The *Comissão de Moradores* (a key institution for community development) together with the community-based institution SOS-Habitat work to improve conditions and land security.

Illustration 5. Rainy season in Wenji Maka II



Photo: Inge Tvedten

Paraíso (meaning ‘Paradise’) gives a different first impression. From the late 1990s the bairro was a camp for refugees and demobilised soldiers from the south and has developed into a community with approximately 120.000 people. Situated on a hill surrounded by marshland *cum* garbage dumps, there is only one entry point for cars that becomes unpassable during

periods of heavy rains. There is people and traffic all over, with men and women carrying and selling goods ranging from long iron rods to small fat-cakes. Houses are generally precarious and without *quinta* walls (a sign of poverty in the Luanda context), we detect few public school-and health institutions, and *cantinas* and shops are hardly to be seen – until we learn that they are constructed to be ‘invisible’ in order to reduce the risk of theft and robbery. Perhaps the main characteristic of Paraíso is the near total collapse of public institutions, including schools and clinics, water supply, electricity and policing – making fertile ground for excessive prices and corruption as people seek private alternatives. Individual security and unpredictability are main challenges, and people generally seem poorer and more destitute than in Wenji Maka II. In this case, the *Comissão de Moradores* seems more preoccupied with controlling the bairro population politically than contributing to the development of the community.

Illustration 6: Informal market (Paraíso)



Photo: Inge Tvedten

Kalawenda (meaning ‘in order to eat one has to walk’), comes across as with two disparate realities: One has precarious and disordered construction that does not differ much from Paraíso and with minimal access to basic services such as potable water, electricity and trash collection. The other (closer to main roads and markets) has better and painted houses with access to some

services such as running water and electricity. There is also better access to (private) schools and health facilities.

Otherwise Kalawenda is characterised by having no proper sewer network and system for garbage collection. The “Angola trench” (*Vala do Angola*) – natural ditches originally dug out by rain water and erosion – is used by the population to dispose of their human as well as solid- and toxic waste. This “mass grave” of the bairro is a very critical area for health as well as for peoples’ dignity. A large number of families have been compelled to build their houses in the immediate vicinity of this area.

Illustration 7: Getting rid of waste in “Vala do Angolano” (Kalawenda)



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

Catambor (meaning ‘barrel’) is the most centrally located of our four sample bairros. It is also the smallest and most crowded one, with houses made by zinc boards and wooden poles literally built on top of each other. Catambor is located on a hill near Alvalade and Prenda, two well-structured neighbourhoods for the well-off since colonial times and now also housing a considerable part of the Angolan *nouveau* rich – which is a stark reminder of the conditions under which people in Catambor live.

The majority of houses in Catambor are connected or separated only by very narrow paved alleyways (*becos*). These alleys also represent the dividing lines between the sub-divisions of sectors and *quarteirões*. The residencies and public spaces in Catambor come across as better off than in Paraíso and Kalawenda. At the outer rims of bairro Catambor there are commercial establishments, stores and cantinas, and there is easier access to employment and markets frequented by people with more purchasing power than in the other three bairros under study.

Illustration 8: Welcome to Catambor (Turn Right...)



Photo: Aslak Orre

3.1 A brief history

Interviews in focus groups and with individuals reveal a keen sense of history among dwellers in the communities, albeit rarely related to larger political, economic and cultural processes at the macro (international, national and city) levels. The focus is, rather, on individual incidents (often in the form of institutions or infrastructure) and their implications for the current state of affairs in the bairro.¹²

The histories of the four bairros accounted for in the Histogram exercise (see Chapter 1.4) range from the long historical roots of Catambor as part of the old uptown area of Luanda (above and Amaral 1983), to the much more recent establishment of Paraíso following the transition shared with many other bairros from farmland, via refugees/internally displaced settlement areas to an established community. The initial years of the history of Paraíso was told in the following way by a Focus Group:

- 1980 to 1990. The bairro was an area populated by farmers and used as farmland.
- 1992. The bairro received displaced people from Boa Vista. In addition, a great wave of displaced people came from the provinces of Huambo, Bié, Benguela, Kuando Kubango and Uíge.

¹² In contrast to rural areas where the soba is vested with the responsibility to account for the history of his community, older men with a long personal history in the bairro usually took on the role of 'historians' in the musseques.

- 1992. In order to give some assistance to the refugees, Caritas, the Catholic Church's relief organisation, was established in Paraíso at the spot where one now finds the Nossa Senhora da Assunção church.
- 2000. Paraíso was founded as a bairro after the visit of the provincial governor, Aníbal Rocha, who declared the end to the refugee camp and authorised the beginning of the house building.
- 2000. The new residents started to build their first dwellings which were essentially tents and huts of cardboard and zinc.
- 2000. The first bairro coordinator, Mr. Adão Cunha, appeared (appointed by the MPLA).
- 2000. A 'Comissão de Moradores' (neighbourhood committee) was established to contribute to the resolution of community problems such as criminality, lack of basic services, and lack of employment (but also to control the population as some argued).
- 2001. A self-defence (*vigilante*) group was set up that was, essentially, a group of residents that organised to guarantee security in the bairro. Its activity consisted in taking night-time rounds in the bairro.
- 2002. Augusto António was elected as a coordinator of the bairro. He remains in the position until today.

One reoccurring theme in the historical accounts of the bairros is the geographical origin of the first settlers – implicitly referring to ethnic background (Ovimbundu, Mbundu, Bakongo and West-Africans). People have clear visions of there being one dominant group in their area, arguing that people migrating to the city have tended to settle in bairros inhabited by 'their own' and thereby creating a sense of belonging in what was seen as a hostile environment. Individuals also readily shared their personal histories by emphasising their origin (*'a minha terra'*).

However, the preoccupation with geographic/ethnic origin of the bairro population also signals the importance of ethnicity for explaining the state of affairs and one's identity: There are explicit stereotypes attached to each group, such as the perceived link between being an Ovimbundu and being a 'member of the [political] opposition' and being a Bakongo and being difficult to do business with – even though the population seems to share a view that 'foreigners' (*conterrâneos*) are largely to blame for the economic state of affairs.

Mr. 'António' arrived in Luanda from Mbanza Congo 34 years ago. He quickly got a job as a builder, married and has altogether seven children. António says that he lived in "six different bairros" until he came to Wenji Maka II in 2008. He lost his job as a builder just after he arrived to the bairro. He now has a small 'cantina' where he sells soft-drinks, biscuits, detergents, note-books and other small items, but complains about competition from a 'Senegalese' who has a store nearby and 'steals my customers'. His house (*lar*) has twelve members, including his (sick) wife, two unmarried sons, and one son with a wife and five children. António insists that Wenji Maka II is a good place to live, but he is complaining about security (*bandidagem*). He still talks about Mbanza Congo as *a minha terra*. His dream is to move back with his whole family, but he does not have the money stating that a one-way bus-ticket costs 4.500 Kwanzas.

A second main theme in accounting for history is related to the importance of interventions in the form of physical infrastructure (schools, clinics, roads, water, electricity etc.). While this may reflect the fact that they are easy and 'pro-government' markers to relate to, they also show the strong emphasis given to such interventions as signs of inclusion for populations who perceive themselves as excluded from society at large and from the 'modern' city in particular. In accounting for the history after 2002 in Paraíso, all the chosen markers/events except one were related to physical infrastructure:

- 2004. Construction of the first medical post by the Fundo de Apoio Social (FAS).¹³
- 2004. Construction of two primary schools by FAS.
- 2005. Inauguration of the primary schools by FAS.
- 2007. Inauguration of the "Chinese Primary School" (until 9th grade).
- 2007. Installation of the first mobile police squads.
- 2010. Inauguration of the Centre for Professional Training.
- 2011. Inauguration of the secondary school or medium level school.
- 2013. Assassination of three police officers at a mobile police squad.
- 2014. Inauguration of the first [permanent] police station in the bairro.

A third and final reoccurring theme in the historical accounts is the issue of security. Asking people about the main difference between their bairro when they were young/children and now, they usually referred to the increasing density and insecurity. Previously they could "go wherever they wanted", "be out all night" and "everybody trusted each other". They tell stories of how the community used to work together to clean the public squares and streets and how they took care of people who made trouble. Now they claim they cannot really trust anybody except their family and "close neighbours", and that it is dangerous to walk around outside their own immediate

¹³ FAS is a government agency set up specifically to channel funds by the World Bank to social or non-commercial projects, such as infrastructure for schools, health posts and water stations.

neighbourhood (*quarteirão*). For many, their relation to security is also framed in concrete experiences/memories of war either as soldiers or internal refugees (*deslocados*).

Looking at the history of Wenji Maka II in more detail and as accounted for by an old resident who arrived from Kwanza Norte in 1978, until 1990 land was relatively abundant, the area was largely rural, and people could easily buy usufruct rights in order to cultivate. However, sometimes around 2002 a *padre* came to this area and claimed that the Catholic Church had been given 267 hectares of land (i.e. more or less the area constituting Wenji Maka II today) by the President of the Republic himself to create a *santuário nacional*. The padre was a well-known personality in Luanda with close connections to MPLA. At that time the bulk of the land was agricultural fields or *lavras*.

The farmers protested and contested the claim. However, the padre placed 95 men from the *polícia de intervenção rápida* to guard the area and started to fence it in. The farmers responded by trespassing and by starting to tear down the fence poles. They also started to organize by establishing the first farmers' association, the *comissão de camponeses* with support from the civil society organisation SOS Habitat. On the 21st of July 2004, three farmers were attacked by the guards, one died, one was injured in the leg and one in the head. This incident had a great impact on the bairro population but did not lead to further violence.

Since the padre claimed that the land had been given by the president to the Catholic Church the archbishop of Luanda was contacted. As a result, the *padre* withdrew, and rumours said he had been given some land elsewhere. At the same time a meeting with the Governor of Luanda Province was organized. Despite promises, the population never received any guarantees for the land in question. The farmers therefore decided to start to parcel out the land themselves and sell plots of 15x20 metres for habitation for 100 to 150 dollars. This represented the end of the land conflict, and the start of the bairro as it is today – with people claiming communal rights to their land while knowing well that they will be evicted should the state so wish.

3.2 Institutional landscape

Having accounted for the overall formal administrative system of Luanda above, peoples own perceptions – as recorded in the institutional mapping exercise (see Chapter 1.4) – show that they hardly relate to the overall political/administrative structures and see their communities as having very few if any well-functioning institutions.

Illustration 9: Community mapping

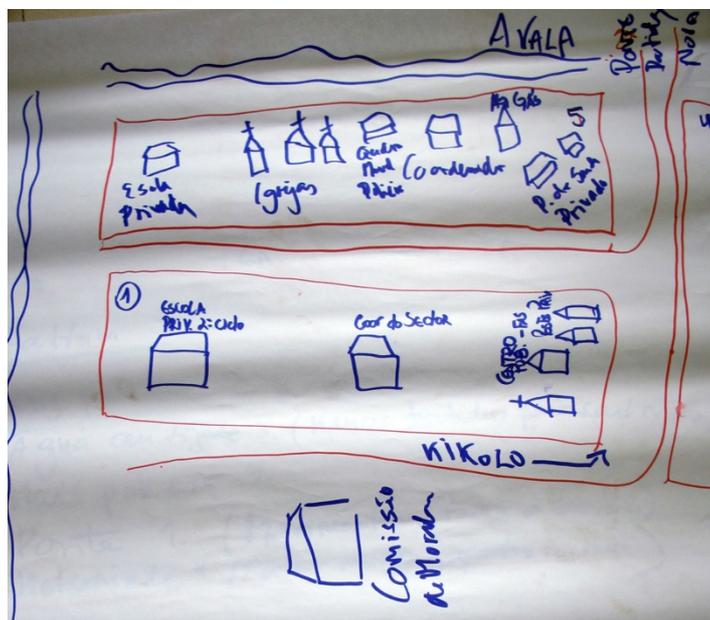


Illustration - photo: Inge Tvedten

In all four areas, the Residents' Committee (*Comissão de Moradores*) is seen as the most important institution in their daily lives – even though people disagree whether it really is a local community or government body. The committees were originally established in the early 1980s, with the objective of being links between the urban population and the state/city government and working for the well-being of the bairro (Meneses, Cardoso et al. 2008). They are typical examples of what is called “twilight institutions” (Lund 2006) characterised by finding themselves between the realms of government institutions and civil society.

Exactly how the Resident Committees function vary from case to case. In principle the members of a Committee are elected by the population from the different *quarteirões* in the bairro, but at least the leadership is appointed or tacitly approved by the (MPLA) party structures. In Paraíso, it has important functions in terms of political control and intelligence for the government and the inhabitants effectively consider the *comissão* as a prolongation of the government. In Wenji Maka II, the *comissão* is more directly related to the community and the committee's work for rights to land and services has given it some legitimacy– even though it is effectively under the control of the state and the party. The head of the committee emphasized that it was largely left to itself and only rarely called to meetings at higher levels of the city administration – which limits its impact. Moreover, members of the committees are not paid by the State, which means that their only potential sources of income are fees paid for their services which creates room for nepotism and corruption.

The second most important institution is the church. In some areas the traditional churches such as the Catholic have a relatively strong standing due to its long history and social work, but various charismatic churches such as 'Igreja Evangélica Congregacional de Angola', 'Igreja Evangélica Reformada de Angola', 'Adventista do 7º Dia e Bom Deus' and 'backyard' churches such as 'Bom Pastor', 'Deus Vivo' and 'Maria Madalena' have an increasingly strong standing in the communities – promising redemption in this - rather than in the after-life. The churches have become central social arenas beyond the services as such, not least among women. The struggle to attract members at times seems fierce: In one of the bairros a recently established church played loud rock music and kept its door open for hours before the service to attract church-goers. Most of the new churches have systems for charging membership fees, which makes some of the pastors among the better-off in the communities.

People also emphasise the importance of educational and health institutions – albeit normally adding that they do not function properly with reference to dearth of teachers, doctors and necessary equipment and high costs. As we saw in section 2.3, the inability of the State to supply schools and hospitals has led to a proliferation of private solutions in the form of '*colégios*' and '*clínicas*'. These are generally of poor standard and expensive, but there are exceptions: In Wenji Maka II, the colégio 'Amor e Paz' ('Love and Peace') teaches primary and secondary school and has been in operation since 2007 (albeit with the majority of the 700 students coming from other bairros). And in Paraíso, a former resident has opened a new clinic with qualified personnel and quality equipment for those who can afford to pay the fees.

There are also 'remnants' of state/Party institutions such as JMPLA and OMA, but they seem to have lost much of their political clout in a context where most people have lost faith in the ability of the MPLA government to deliver. OMA continues to have a role in mobilising /controlling women in the four bairros, but do not have the means to give any material support. Other political parties are present, but not openly so. We did not see any external signs of political affiliation to opposition parties (such as banners, T-shirts, hats etc.), despite individual conversations emphasising the proliferation of anti-government sentiments.

Following the oil boom and the definition of Angola as a 'middle income country', external aid and national and international CBOs and NGOs are rare in Luanda. One exception is SOS Habitat (with an office in Wenji Maka II), which primarily works as an advocate for land and housing rights including support to people affected by forced evictions. Another example is church-related civil society institutions such as Caritas. There are NGOs active in the city, including Development Workshop working on issues of land and credit, but they reach a limited part of the population in the musseques and were not present in the bairros under study.

As we shall return to in the next section, the most salient feature of institutional life in the bairros is the dearth of formal institutions and the importance of informal groups and social networks – with Catambor representing a partial exception: Being an 'informal island' in the formal part of the city, many residents use public institutions outside their immediate community. People seek

access to social services and protection by entering relations with private alternatives and their extended family, immediate neighbours, friends and other peer groups.

Illustration 10: 'Traditional, modernised and scientific' Health post (Wenji Maka II)



Photo: Inge Tvedten

4 Social relations of poverty

Urban poverty and its special characteristic have been accounted for in an increasing body of social science/anthropological literature on large African cities (Simone 2004, Myers 2011; Diof and Fredericks 2014). For Luanda, there is also a rich historical social science/anthropological literature (Carvalho 1989; Robson and Roque 2001). More recent studies have focused on particular aspects of urban development (Rodrigues 2016, Gastrow 2014), but there are few studies looking at urban poverty and gender per se (see List of Literature).

Referring back to the outline of our analytical approach presented in Chapter 1, the structural conditions presented in the preceding chapter have considerable implications for the room for agency of men, women and children in the communities under study. At the same time, the spaces for alternative strategies vary with people's economic position – that we have defined as their place on a scale of social advantage/disadvantage. Households/people with resources (in the form of labour, income, assets) and/or social relations with people in such positions are better situated for social mobility than those without it.

4.1 Perceptions of poverty and well-being

In this project, we have defined poverty as involving i) the lack of employment and income needed to attain basic necessities, ii) a sense of having no voice and powerlessness in relation to institutions of society and the state, and iii) vulnerability to adverse shocks linked with the ability to cope with them through social relationships and legal institutions.

Our own observations and peoples' own perceptions expose poverty as a multi-dimensional condition. In Luanda's musseques, *everything* has a high price and "there is money in circulation even among the poor" as a local *Padre* put it. Without money people would simply not survive, as everything has to be bought and most social relations are 'commoditised' in the sense that services and favours usually have to be paid for.

Asking men and women in Focus Groups to define what 'poverty' (*pobreza*) means to them, they list conditions that affect their daily lives and options for leading what they call a 'dignified life' (*uma vida digna*) in an urban context. "The poor don't have an oven and mattresses, and they don't have a television and a refrigerator – They only eat once a day, and then they eat *coelhos*, *jimboa* and *caboenha* (cheap vegetables) – They don't manage to pay for their children's school, and their children play in the rubbish to find something to eat – When they get sick they don't even have money to buy *paracetamol* – The children have torn clothes – One can see from the way they appear (*a forma de se apresentar*) that people are poor."

When asked to list characteristics of being rich (*rico*), the focus group exclaims: "*O rico tem tudo, não lhe falta nada!* (The rich have everything. Nothing is missing!)" "They eat well, have a nice house and a car, refrigerator, television, air-condition and tap water, they look well and use make-up – They study at expensive schools, pray, and have access to clinics (which is the private alternative to public hospitals that do not function) – They don't do their shopping in the [open] markets but in supermarkets – And they go to the beach in the weekend and on vacation during days off".

The Focus groups in Wenji Maka II also distinguished between different levels of poverty (the 'pobre-pobre' or *katikiamputu* and the 'pobre normal' or *ohukui*) and wealth – separating 'número um' who they name as Isabel (the daughter of [former] President dos Santos); the super-rich or *ricaço* and the rich or *bossangas*. In Paraíso, the local vernacular for the extreme poor is *pulungo* (in Kimbundu) or *wahepa* (in Nyaneka/Nkhumbi) and for the normal poor *Nga dia ma* and *ochihepi*. Stories told show that it is difficult to move from one category to another – except that people with means may suddenly lose everything as they "spend too much money", "are robbed" or "bewitched" (*enfeitizados*).

When asked how many people that belonged to the different categories in the immediate community/neighbourhood, there was agreement in Wenji Maka II as well as in Paraíso that out of 10 households nine are poor and one rich – a far cry from the official statistics of 11.5 percent

(INE 2013) – with Paraíso making a further distinction among the poor defining six as destitute and three as poor and Wenji Maka II defining seven as destitute and two as poor. This indicates how perceptions of poverty are relative: While we shall see that people in Wenji Maka II generally are better off than in Paraíso, the former are constantly reminded about their condition by living next door to more luxuriant bairros such as Alvalade. Concerning the rich, people argued that only people from the ‘normal rich’ category live in Wenji Maka II and Paraíso – pointing to ‘the city’ (*a cidade*) as the area of the super-rich.

Illustration 11: Wealth ranking and poverty characteristics

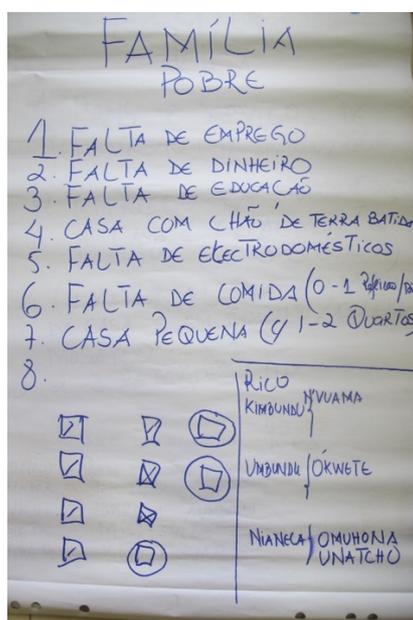


Photo: Iselin Strønen

4.2 The household

The analysis will take its point of departure in the household as a decision-making unit, in order to ascertain how people in the communities’ cope/relate to structural political, economic and socio-cultural constraints and opportunities. We define a household as “One or more persons who share and use the same resources [i.e. eat from the same pot], and who may or may not live under the same roof and may or may not be related by kin» in order to capture the complexity and permeability of household units (Randall and Coast 2015).

People/households in the four bairros have different ethno-linguistic backgrounds/roots, with their own traditions of kinship and family organisation (patrilineal/matrilineal, virilocal/uxorilocal etc.). However, dense and tense urban contexts like Luanda have strong implications for what is possible – making it necessary for households to adapt. Perhaps the most immediate challenge for the large majority of urban dwellers is that of space: From a rural context with

ample space/dwellings, people in the *musseques* have to relate to limited living space in crowded communities.

The most common form of household organisation is cohabitantship (see Table).¹⁴ While easy to establish and usually without the involvement of the extended family and bride wealth (*alambamento*), it is also less committing and easier to dissolve. The prevalence of ‘traditional marriage’ reflects the fact that many households are first generation urbanites, with the marriage having taken place in their rural area of origin. In urban contexts like Luanda, the relatively limited proportion of single headed households says something about economic hardships and the importance of multiple sources of income to survive. We met a number of women arguing that they lived in a difficult relationship but needed men for income and security.

TABLE 10: Civil status of household head

Civil status of household head	Luanda
Single	8.4
Formal marriage	6.5
Traditional marriage	31.5
Cohabitantship	40.5
Divorced/separated	4.4
Widow(er)	8.8

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

The combination of tradition and economic hardships is the main reason for the relatively large size of the household unit at an average of 6.4 members (see Table). In these households, generally headed by men, we noted the presence of their siblings’ children (nephews and nieces), in addition to the couple’s own biological children, as well as some grandchildren. The normative order of the majority of Angola’s ethnic groups with regard to the succession of power and material inheritance puts the nephews/nieces in line as legitimate inheritors from their parent-uncles/aunts.¹⁵ They are also theirs for upbringing.

¹⁴ All subsequent tables/figures are from the ‘Luanda Baseline Survey 2016’ done as part of the current project if not stated otherwise.

¹⁵ The new juridical order of Angola that emanates from the State, inspired by roman-german law, contradicts this customary law.

TABLE 11: Household composition

Household characteristic	Luanda
Average household size (number)	6.4
Men/women in households (%)	48.6/51.4
Household members 1-14 years (%)	46.5
Household members 65 + years (%)	1.8
Male/female household heads (%)	77.2/22.8
Polygamous households (%)	17.8

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

With the majority of dwellings having only one or two rooms (see below), the large size of households implies (over)crowded living. In addition to the core family with mother, father and children, there is pressure to take in additional extended family as well as non-family members.¹⁶ Many of these come from the rural areas of origin. Six percent of the household members – usually children – reside outside the dwelling but ‘eat from the same pot’.

As noted earlier, there is considerable uncertainty concerning the proportion of female-headed households in Angola/Luanda (see Section 1.2). While this partly reflect difference between *de jure* and *de facto* definitions, our case studies reveal how complex this issue is: It is very common with relations outside of conjugal unions (*amantes*, or lovers), and hence many women and men may both be married and part of another relationship. This is reflected in the proportion of male household heads saying that they have more than one wife (17.8 percent) in a context where polygamy in the formal/traditional sense is not common.

A woman generally heads the families when they are separated or divorced, widows, second wife or they have a husband who is unemployed and/or poor (*Pacheco* or *Matoso* in the local vernacular). The majority of separated or divorced women in our sample do not count on any support from their ex-husbands, as he generally has left for another female relationship. He also usually does not contribute with child sustenance, be it for food or for other social, health or educational needs of their children.

Some of the female heads of household are divorced or separated benefit from a culturally required protection: They find a place in the house of their extended family. This may be an annex of the main house where they live with their children until the families of the separated couple

¹⁶ Unfortunately, we do not have data on the more detailed composition of households in terms of core (mother, father, children), extended (parents, siblings, nephews, nieces, in-laws of head etc.) and non-family members. The argument is based on individual case studies (see below) and oral statements of the enumerators having carried out the survey.

manage to conciliate the two, or until the woman leaves for another relationship. The women who do not benefit from the protection of their extended family find it harder to provide education and sustenance for their children.

In line with findings in much recent urban anthropology (Bank 2015, Tvedten 2011), being a female household head in Luanda at least partly seems to be a matter of choice. In our survey, Catambor – which has the best socio-economic indicators among the four bairros – also has the highest proportion of female headed households at 38.1 percent. While poor women are forced to stay in difficult conjugal unions for economic reasons, women who are economically independent often chose not to marry or leave their spouse.

In Wenji Maka II we came across three cases where the women were considered the household head despite living with their husbands. The first woman affirmed this in the presence of her husband, saying she sustained the household and took care of the children. The second woman said that the husband has two wives, and that she is the one who contributes most to the needs of the family. And the third argued that she was the head because her husband is unemployed and brought no income to the family. In the last two cases, 'headship' was confirmed by neighbours.

As many as 46.5 percent of the household members are younger than 15 years of age. This reflects a high birth rate and relatively low child mortality rate in Luanda (UNICEF 2015), but also the pressure on urban households to take in young relatives such as grandchildren, nephews and nieces mentioned above (the average age of the household heads in the survey is 46.1 years).

At the same time, only 1.8 percent of the household members are 65 years or older – which coincides with the official figure for Luanda and is the lowest in the country. This reflects a combination of increasing hardships where households are not able to take care of old (unproductive) members and the improved options for returning to ones' village of origin following peace and better infrastructure.¹⁷ Both contradict traditional perceptions of how elders should be treated: with respect and the right to stay with their children and play with their grandchildren.

The marginalisation of household members is evident in the large number of youth and children who live on the street and other public spaces and survive through begging, theft, robberies and prostitution. The only 'relationship' they have is often with 'back men' (they are usually men), who facilitate/control their activities and take most of the profit. The large number of destitutes

¹⁷ We also observed a number of old people in the streets and apparently without a place to live, but these are not captures in our survey (or in any other survey for that matter).

visible in Luanda at large as well as in the bairros under study attests to the social disintegration among parts of the population.

Households as social and economic units thus display apparently contradictory characteristics: They are large and crowded with many mouths to feed, but also large and flexible and hence potentially in a position to meet the challenges of making a living in the competitive and harsh economic environment of Luanda. The extent to which they manage depends on the combination of socio-economic position/class and household composition/social networks. The following are some of the women we met during fieldwork:

- Roberta is 28 years old, single, has been residing in bairro Wenji Maka II for two years, has 2 children and works as cleaner in a public institution.
- Mingota is 30 years old, has been living in the bairro for three years, has 3 small children who do not go to school and a husband who is unemployed.
- Madalena is in a non-marital partnership and lives in bairro Wenji Maka II since 2005, has 4 children and sells in the market.
- Beatriz is 37 years old, married and has 5 children. She has been living in the bairro for nine years and is a *zungueira* (street vendor) of clothes and bread.
- Kenge Mabita is 38 years old and lives in the bairro since 2015; she is married and works as a domestic servant. She has 2 children, one of whom lives in Kinshasa (DRC) and studies Law at the University.
- Maria Ângela is 57 years old, divorced, has 5 children and 1 grandchild and is a domestic servant.
- Isabel is married and 59 years old, she lives in the bairro since 2005, has 4 children and sells outside her door.
- Mrs. Ngueve is the mother of 6 children; she is married and has been living in Kalawenda for one year. She is a trained nurse but currently works as a receptionist in a private health post.
- Mrs. Branca is 54 years old. She has been living in Kalawenda for more than 15 years. She used to live in a rented house, and then bought the plot where she lives from a farmer woman.

The well-being of individual household members also depends on intra-household relationships and the extent to which income is pooled/shared. While our survey indicates a degree of joint decision-making (see Table), numerous interviews reveal that men in male-headed household have a strong hold on economic resources – to the extent that many women do not know how much their husbands earn and how they spend the money. In cases where the husband is the main breadwinner, it is common that their wives/cohabitants are given weekly ‘allowances’ for expenses for food, education etc. (see also Sassa 2014). One woman complained that her husband

comes home and scolds her for not having more food on the table – without acknowledging that that is all she can get for the money he gives her.

TABLE 12: Decisions on use of household income

Decision maker(s)	Percentage
Household head	59.9
Spouse of Hh	10.0
Couple together	23.8
Other	5.7
Missing/Not applicable	0.6

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

There are in the outset few indications that intra-household gender relations are changing, with girls and boys still seen as having very different responsibilities (see Table). In the four bairros, it was striking how boys dominated the streets/public space with girls much more rare to be seen – except when working in markets with their mothers or alone.

TABLE 13: Household members responsible for domestic chores

Household chore	Household head	Spouse	Girls	Boys	Other*
Clean the house	8.1	33.0	37.8	4.2	16.9
Clean the yard	7.9	31.3	39.5	3.3	18.0
Cook	9.2	40.1	38.8	1.9	10.0
Fetch water	7.7	25.5	26.9	11.7	28,2
Buy food	17.8	43.2	23.2	1.5	14,3
Wash dishes	6.1	25.3	44.1	5.4	19.1

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. *Include couple together, all children, whole household, and people outside of the household.

In urban contexts like the bairros under study, the extended family tends to lose much of its traditional role. Central family members may live in other (often rural) areas, and poor people have little to share and cannot afford to have outstanding claims. Still, people struggle hard to maintain institutions such as celebrations of child births (including baptism), weddings and funerals in order to reaffirm their position in the family and in the community. In fact, the

ultimate sign of poverty and destitution in the bairros is not being able to perform any of these ceremonies.

4.3 Employment, income and assets

Luanda is one of the world's most expensive cities, and with the near collapse of rural-urban relations food and other basic commodities have largely been imported. Households have also had limited options of maintaining relations with their rural areas of origin/relatives, with war (until 2002) and high costs for transportation. Also, social relations within bairros/quarteirões have become commoditised: As practically everything has to be bought, people cannot afford to lend/have outstanding claims except with the immediate family.

This is the drama of urban poverty (Allison et al. 2009, Hickey and du Toit 2013): People who do not manage to earn an income on a regular basis do not have access to agricultural land/food and usually do not have a social safety net through family, neighbours and friends. For this reason, being poor easily leads to destitution – as can be witnesses in all the four bairros (the destitutes are hardly visible in the formal/affluent parts of Luanda, as a result of laws passed and implemented that makes this an offense).

Illustration 12: Selling and buying fish for the bairros



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

All this means that employment and income is vital for a household's coping strategy and dynamics of poverty and well-being. Even with a normal wage as a public servant or in the private sector (which is usually close to the minimum wage), a household will depend on several sources of income to survive.

Employment

The table below reveals that approximately 25 percent of the household heads work in the private sector, most commonly as builders/labourers and domestic servants for a private enterprise or for an individual (*patrão*). Approximately 20 percent work in the public service, usually as (qualified or non-qualified) labourers, teachers or nurses. The proportion of household heads working as self-employed with or without employees is lower, but most of the households interviewed have other family members (wives, sons, daughters etc.) who work in the informal sector. 8.4 percent of the households claim access to/ownership of an agricultural field, but only 1.9 percent have farming as a main occupation.¹⁸ Paraíso, as the poorest of the four bairros, also has the highest level of unemployment.

TABLE 14: Main occupation of household head (Percent)

Item	Catambor	Paraíso	Kalawenda	Wenji Maka II	Total
Public servant	22.9	13.2	23.0	18.6	20.9
Private sector	24.6	26.4	23.8	24.6	24.8
Farmer	0.8	3.3	3.3	0.0	1.9
Self-employed w/employees	4.2	2.5	3.3	5.9	4.0
Self-employed no employees	7.6	12.4	11.5	11.0	18.6
Seasonal worker	1.7	3.3	1.6	4.2	2.7
Student	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.4
Unemployed	11.0	17.4	11.5	10.2	12.5
Pensioner	7.6	2.5	1.6	2.5	3.6
Domestic	5.1	2.5	3.3	2.5	3.3
Other *	5.9	4.1	9.0	9.3	7.1
Missing/Not applicable	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.2

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. * Mainly specifications of various forms of informal trade.

¹⁸ Surprisingly – given the large number of artisanal fishermen in the area and the potential 'double advantage' of fishing for consumption and sale – only 0.6 percent of the households' practise fishing.

In line with our argument of the need for households to pursue multiple employment opportunities, the table below demonstrate the variety of income sources.¹⁹ The proportion of households with income from formal employment six months prior to the interview (38.4 percent) is lower than the proportion of household heads claiming that their main source of income came from public or private sector employment (see above). This reflects the insecurity in employment, with people frequently being laid off/without work and payment being delayed. In terms of the proportion of households involved, various types of informal occupations are by far the most common. 33.6 percent have at least one household member who is an informal trader (*vendedores*), 7.7 percent are street-level transporters (*doleiros/roboteiros*) and the bulk of the 'other' category includes other types of informal activities.

TABLE 15: Sources of income six months prior to interview (Percentage)

Source of income	Percentage
Formal employment	38.4
Truck-driving	4.6
Nursing	5.0
Coal production	3.5
Sale beverages	4.2
Shop owner	7.1
Domestic servant	11.9
Trader	33.6
Smuggler (<i>muambeira</i>)	3.8
Landlord	6.6
Builder	4.8
Mason	10.0
Carpentry	4.0
Building shop	4.2
Electrician	4.8
Taxi-driver	6.7
Street-level transporters	7.7
Other *	38.6

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. *Mainly specifications of various types of informal trade.

¹⁹ Each household could list more than one source.

There is a range of informal trade and service activities in the bairros. These include:

Street markets: Generally, less than 90 square metres, these are places where residents of the bairros carry out their informal commercial activities. They sell food items, household detergents, drinks, clothes and more, but all in small quantities. In Catambor the main market is located in Rua dos Candeeiros, in Kalawenda in Rua da Vermelha, in Paraíso in Rua da Administração and in Wenji Maka II along the main road and at the end of Rua Amor e Paz.

Doorstep vending: Some households sell mainly foodstuff at their own home's doorstep to the passers-by, including cassava porridge (*bombó*), roasted peanuts, small buns or rolls, roasted turkey, biscuits and empanadas. In Paraíso and Kalawenda the stalls we observed were very small and with poorly conserved food, compared to those in Catambor and Wengi Maka II.

Shops: Generally, these are rented spaces with a foreign merchant, usually from Mali, Senegal, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria and Mauritania (*mamadús*).²⁰ They sell basic retail products such as foodstuffs, non-alcoholic beverages, soap, toys, and more. These foreigners are the 'shakers and movers' of petty commerce in these bairros and form close networks where the locals at best are shop assistants.

Home based bars: Here people distil and sell liquors such as *capuca* and *quimbombo* to poor people so that they can forget their *malambas* [problems] in life", as one interlocutor put it. All the home-based bars that we observed in Paraíso, Catambor, Kalawenda and Wenji Maka II are precarious and do not have proper conditions for the clients.

Food stalls/quiosques (lanchonetes): These are leisurely spaces where food and industrially made beverages (beer, wine and soft drinks) as well as *aperitifs* are sold. In Paraíso and in Kalawenda the majority of the food stalls we observed did not offer proper conditions to sit down and be comfortable, as opposed to the *lanchonetes* in Catambor and Wenji Maka II.

Services – taxi. With the exception of Catambor, we observed a large number of motorbikes that transported people and goods – popularly referred to as *acaba de me matar* ('will end up killing me') since they are very old and uncomfortable. The owners are often from better-off parts of the city who hire people from the community as drivers. One of the interviewed taxi-owners said that "currently I have four motorbikes on the road. For one of them the contract with the young driver is coming to an end, by which time he will take over the ownership of the bike. He gives me 15000 kwanza a week, and our contract was for two years."

²⁰ These merchants are main agents of the current expansion of Islam in various parts of the city.

'Maria' is 30 years old, was born in Sambizanga under very poor conditions (*'com muita pobreza'*) and moved to Paraíso with her boyfriend (now husband) in 2006. They have five children (eleven, ten, eight, six and one year of age). Three of them go to public schools, and one to a *colégio*. Her husband works as an electrician (originally for Simangola but now for a private company where 'he is only paid when there are jobs'). Maria worked as a small-scale trader/ambulante when they arrived Paraíso, selling vegetables, fish and small plastic bags of water for people to drink and earned 'very little'. However, in 2009 she was introduced to a lady who sells second hand clothes at the Ecocampo market. They got along well, and Maria now has a contract with her. The trader "goes to China maybe ones a month" to buy clothes, and Maria sells them at the market claiming that she easily sells all the clothes they have. She leaves her house every morning at 05.00, and earns 15.000 kw per month, plus 1000 Kw for a taxi and 500 kw for lunch per day. Coming back around 03.00 in the afternoon, she does household chores and 'I study at night'.

Income

Survey responses on household income are usually among the most unreliable: People may not know the exact remuneration particularly if the spouse of a male household head is interviewed; they may have problems assessing average income over a specific period of time (one month in this case) in a context where this may vary significantly from day to day; or they may want to downgrade their income with the expectation that this may lead to some kind of support.

In the present survey, 61.5 percent of the households respond that they had income the past month while 38.5 percent claim that they had no income at all. The proportion of households with income is higher among male headed households than among female headed households. The average returns of those receiving remuneration is 66.648,15 kwanza per month (see Table), with the recorded income of female headed households being 55 percent of that of their male counterparts. Confirming our general impression of differences in poverty and well-being between the four bairros, the average income in Catambor and Wenji Maka II is higher than in Paraíso and Kalawenda. The average income of male-headed households is 57.514 kw as against 31.093 among female headed households.

TABLE 16: Average income by bairro of residence (in kwanza)

Item	Catambor	Paraíso	Kalawenda	Wenji Maka II	Total
Average income	84686.44	44136.78	58218.03	79551.36	66648.15

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Most people have a precarious employment situation, working as day-labourers (*biscateiros*), street vendors (*zungueiros/as*, *matocheiros* and *lotadores*),²¹ teachers, security guards, brick-layers, luggage porters, and street level transporters (*roboteiros*).²² One interviewee, who is employed in salaried work, affirmed: “I only make 25 000 kwanza a month, and when I buy food for the house there is nothing left, if not for a few spare change to have a few drinks. Hear, I thank God for the strength that I still have (to work), since if this machine stops [i.e. himself], then everything comes to a halt.”

At the same time, only 21.3 percent of the households say that they received external support at an average value of 19.287,75 kwanzas per month (mainly from the extended family, but with some receiving support from neighbours and the INSS).²³ The proportion receiving external support is higher among female headed households than among male headed households.

The recorded income for male- as well as female headed households is very low, given the price level in Luanda – and is likely not to reflect all actual income given the level of expenditures the households report (see below). Nevertheless, the responses do testify to a very difficult economic situation, and how it is to be poor and marginalised in the dense and tense context of the *musseques*.

While it is difficult to imagine how a household can survive a month with no income at all except for bartering/begging/stealing, the large number of households claiming to do so reflects the poverty and sense of marginalisation among some of the most destitute household units. We witnessed a number of households with members sitting inside or outside their dwelling/shack apparently apathetic and seemingly having given up – reflecting a ‘culture of poverty’.

Expenditures

Moving on to expenditures, practically all households (93.9 percent) spent money on food the week prior to the interview demonstrating yet again the dependence on money for urban households without access to own agricultural products (see Table). Over 50 percent also spend money on cleaning products, transport and water. This reflects the daily struggle people have to maintain sanitary/clean private space and thereby also their dignity, search for work outside their immediate *bairro*/neighbourhood where employment possibilities are very scarce, and the implications of having to buy water in a context where the public water system is either not installed (as in *Paraíso*) or largely broken down (as in *Catambor*). The large proportion of households with expenses for communication reflects the importance cell-phones have acquired

²¹ *Matocheiro* is a person who identifies himself/herself as an intermediary. In the informal market, he/she will fix clientes for the merchants/traders. *Lotadores* (or *chamadores*) are individuals who work at the taxi/bus stops to call out for passengers and entice them to step in (or rather, to fill the car with passengers).

²² A *roboteiro* works in the informal market and carries goods with a wheel-barrow. *Roboteiros* may also fetch fish at the beach and transport it to markets.

²³ National Institute of Social Protection. No household received support from a CBO/NGO.

in a context where it may be vital to be at the right place/market at the right time in order to buy the cheapest good and get the best price for the products to sell.

TABLE 17: Households with expenditure on key consumption items the week prior to interview (Percent).*

Item	Percent
Food	93.9
Cleaning products	81.0
Rent	11.9
Clothes	9.4
Water	54.3
School material	29.0
Illumination	32.8
Batteries	35.5
Medicines	35.1
Transport	57.4
Television	27.1
Domestic servant	2.7
Communication	42.8
Other	6.7

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. * Each household could list more than one expenditure.

In terms of consumption of food (see Table), rice/porridge, fish, beans and bread represent the staple food for the large majority of households in the four bairros. The fish is primarily horse-mackerel (*carapau*), which is caught outside the coast of Angola in large quantities and relatively cheap to buy. Rice is largely imported, but with the economic crisis there seems to be an increasing use of locally produced – particularly cassava – flour.

Only 31.5 and 31.7 percent of the households have eaten meat or chicken – which is the most coveted foodstuff – the week prior to the interview. The sale and purchase of food primarily takes place in large markets such as the ‘Congolenses’, where quantities are larger and prices lower (Mendelsohn 2015). Informal traders buy and transport food to the bairros, to sell it for a higher price to dwellers who are not able to leave the musseque (such as mothers with small children) or who cannot afford to go to the central markets. Also, in this case, it is expensive to be poor.

TABLE 18: Consumption of basic food items week prior to interview (Percent)

Consumption item	Percent
Meat	31.5
Chicken	31.7
Fish	91.0
Rice	92.9
Greens/beans	92.1
Bread	92.3
Milk	34.5
Eggs	39.9
Fruit	53.2

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

The households in the survey report that they spend an average of 26.972 kwanzas per week, which amounts to 107.888 per month. This is more than the monthly income reported above – which may be explained by a combination of underreporting and variations in weekly expenditures following variations in income in unpredictable informal economic activities. In any case, both income and expenditures are low compared to the high costs of living in the current economic situation in Luanda – with shortages of goods (imported as well as national) and a galloping inflation – which again underlines the precariousness of the lives of people in the musseques.

Illustration 13: Small scale trade (Paraíso)



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

Assets

Ownership of assets – as reflected in the table below – tells a tale of past and present household investments as well as the priority given to different types of material possessions. The fact that as many as 92.3 percent of the households own a cell phone and 81.1 percent own a television, for example, reveals something about the circulation of money as well as what we may term an ‘urban culture of consumption’. Both are practical items for communication and keeping informed, but also markers of urban ‘modernity’ and ‘success’. Other more expensive ‘urban and modern’ assets/markers, such as cars and motorcycles, are owned by considerably fewer households in the four bairros. Some additional ‘luxury’ items, such as gas stoves owned by 94 percent of the households, reflect the specific Luanda context with dearth of coal and firewood as more traditional sources of energy.

TABLE 19: Ownership of household assets (Percent)

Asset	Percent
Radio	55.5
Television	81.8
Video/DVD	52.4
Telephone	92.3
Watch	48.0
Bed	82.7
Chairs	89.6
Table	82.7
Electric stove	0.2
Gas stove	94.0
Iron	60.3
Refrigerator	50.9
Big chair	58.0
Bedsheets	96.9
Bag	80.8
Blanket	82.9
Basket	86.4
Curtains	93.5
Bicycle	8.1
Motorcycle	8.6
Car	17.1

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Housing

The by far largest and most important asset owned by households in the four bairros is their dwelling: It gives shelter to household members, it gives security in a physical as well as economic sense, and a proper house is probably the most important cultural marker of urban success. Peoples own (emic) definition or 'aesthetics' of a good house includes ownership/entitlement to the land, materiality (cement blocks rather than iron sheets), size (adequate size and room delimitations), a yard (for domestic and social activities) as well as a fence for protection and to secure privacy.

Illustration 14: A House well above average (Wenji Maka II)



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

62.4 percent of the surveyed households state that they have titleship to their dwelling – with the remaining renting (22.6 percent) or answering no (15 percent). There is no significant difference between the four bairros, or between male- and female headed households. However, ‘titleship’ is usually not a formal approval at the appropriate level of the province or district, but (at best) issued by bairro authorities such as the Residents’ Committee. The precariousness of *any* land title is evident from the large number of forced evictions in Luanda the past decade to make room for new real-estate ventures (see above) as well as from individual cases we encountered in the field.

TABLE 20: Institutionalised rights to land/dwelling (Percent)

Item	Catambor	Paraíso	Kalawenda	Wenji Maka II	Total
Yes	29.7	37.2	39.3	43.2	62.4
No	69.5	62.8	60.7	56.8	37.2
Missing/Not applicable	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Gastrow (2017:25) argues people in the *musseques* make a clear distinction between what they refer to as *casas de bloco* (cement block houses) and *casas de chapa* (corrugated iron houses) – with the former representing permanency, modernity and belonging and the latter temporality/provisionality, backwardness and poverty. However, global data for Luanda (INE

2016) as well as our own survey data show that the large majority of households own or rent cement-block houses (94.4 percent) – and many of the 2.1 percent who live in *casas de chapa* do that to occupy land on behalf of land owners.

Rather, the most distinguishing factors separating the better-off from the poor in terms of housing are the size of the dwelling/number of rooms and the presence or not of a yard with a fence (*muro/vedaço*). A big dwelling (preferably in a ‘modern’ style) makes it possible to house many people and fulfil economic and socio-cultural obligations, and a yard with a fence signals land ownership, extends the space for close social interaction and enhances security both by not revealing what the household owns and making it more difficult to break in. A small cement block house in an open space signals poverty and vulnerability and reduces socio-cultural status and security.

The size of dwellings in the four bairros appears in the Table below, showing that 55.8 percent of the households live in one or two rooms. With an average of 6.5 members per household, that abodes for crowded living and what that entails for living conditions and relations between men/women and different generations in the household unit.

TABLE 21: Number of rooms in dwelling (minus kitchen/guarda-fatos) (Percent)

Number of rooms	Percent
1	29.7
2	26.1
3	26.5
4	10.7
5+ *	6.7
Missing/Not applicable	0.4

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. *Largest number of rooms 10

4.4 Public/Social services

Despite favourable official data on the presence and use of public institutions/social services in Luanda (see Section 2.5), data from the four bairros under study give a different picture: Many people experience that public services are not accessible, and many of those who say they are accessible do not use them (see Table). It is perhaps particularly noteworthy that so many households experience that key institutions in health (including maternity wards), civil registry/identification and the police/tribunal are simply not available in their areas of residence.

Illustration 15: Poor and Vulnerable Housing (Paraíso)



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

TABLE 22: Accessibility/use of public institutions six months prior to interview

Public institution	Not accessible	Accessible/used	Accessible/not used	Missing information	Quality score *
Creche	67.6	3.2	28.0	1.3	3.8
Primary school (1-6)	8.1	61.3	29.2	1.4	3.5
Secondary school (7-12)	27.1	36.4	34.8	1.7	3.6
Vocational school	66.5	8.5	23.5	1.5	3.6
University	89.6	4.6	4.6	1.3	3.9
Medical post	30.3	38.9	28.7	2.1	3.5
Health centre	44.6	29.6	24.2	1.5	3.3
Hospital	33.2	40.2	25.5	1.1	3.1
Maternity	48.4	13.9	36.6	1.1	3.3
Water source	35.0	53.7	9.9	1.4	3.0
Mun. Administration	34.6	13.9	49.5	1.9	3.2
Civil Registry	66.8	9.5	22.1	1.7	3.3
Identification	62.9	9.0	27.0	1.1	3.2
Police	32.8	11.0	54.8	1.4	2.8
Tribunal	92.6	0.8	5.3	1.3	3.0

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. *Households were asked to give a quality score from 1-5 for each institution, with 1 being very bad and 5 being very good.

Moreover, households were asked to give a score for the quality of each institution from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good). While the responses are likely to have been influenced by peoples' uncertainty/fear as to how the data will be used (and therefore give higher scores than what they otherwise would), the trend is clear: i) The highest scores are given for institutions people say are hardly accessible (crèche, university), ii) education and health institutions receive intermediate scores with the former somewhat better than the latter, and iii) institutions related to security and the law (police and tribunal) have the lowest scores.

Education

Official figures for school attendance do not reflect realities on the ground in the four bairros under study (see Table). In terms of pre-school, among the 53.5 percent of the households who have children in pre-school age (3-5 years), 75.5 percent of the girls and 76.9 percent of the boys do not attend any type of pre-school/crèche. And among the 78.7 percent of the households with children at school age (6-18 years), 15.5 percent of the girls and 14.4 percent of the boys do not attend school at all. As seen from the table, the majority of those attending school go to private schools or *colégios*, with a relatively large proportion of households combining the two.

TABLE 23: Type of school frequented

Type of school	Percent
Public school in bairro/village	15.5
Public school in comuna/município centre	6.7
Private school (colégio)	39.0
Private school (comparticipada)	3.8
Combination public/private schools	16.3
Missing/Not applicable	18.8

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Looking at the level of education of the household heads – with an average age of 41 years – nearly half have no education or class 1-6, which usually implies functional illiteracy (see Table). At the same time, there are significant differences between male- and female headed households with 6.1 and 34.6 percent respectively having no education at all. This probably reflects the fact that girls have been less likely than boys to be sent to school, but also that poor women are unable to take up education at a later stage. However, our data also reveal a relatively large number of male- as well as female headed households that have members with an education of 10th grade or higher – implying that both categories of households do their best to educate their children.

Table 24: Highest level of education of household head/in household

Item	Highest level of education among household heads	Highest level of education in household
None	20.35	1.9
1-6 Grade	28.25	6.3
7-9 Grade	20	25.7
10-13 Grade	14.9	33.8
10-13 Grade	5.95	11.5
Vocational/professional	1.05	1.3
University	5.3	19.2
Missing/not applicable	0.65	0.4

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Having said this, there are serious questions to be asked about the quality of education and the extent to which it actually opens doors to employment and income. As noted in Section 2.5, classrooms in the musseques are of very poor quality, teachers are rarely properly qualified, and there is a dearth of teaching material/books. For many of the children in the four bairros under study, school is more a place to be than a place to study. Nevertheless, there are examples of people who make it through the system – as evidenced by the relatively large proportion who have gone to university (practically all households with a child at university level are from Catambor and Wenji Maka 2).

A major problem in public schools is the widespread system of petty corruption (*gasosa*), both when enrolling students for the first time and for moving them up classes. In private education, the problem is linked to the poorest families not having the financial capacity to pay tuition fees for them. As a consequence, many children from poorest families lose the possibility to study at all – or depend on attending informal schools that does not give any formal qualifications. The alternative informal teaching or *explicação* usually goes up to 3rd grade and does not automatically give access to Grade 4 even if the parents have come in a position to pay for it.²⁴ In sum, it is very difficult for children from the poorest families to get an education, which –for right or wrong – is seen as one of the few ways out of poverty.

²⁴ In another bairro (Rocha Pinto) some informal schools teach higher than the 4th grade and have a different dynamic: They cooperate with public/private schools to ensure certificates for their students, and some evolve into co-financed schools (*escolas comparticipadas*) or *colégios*.

Illustration 16: Informal school, Explicação (Paraíso)

Photo: Mateus Agostinho

Health

As many as 86.1 percent of the households had at least one member who had been sick during the month prior to the survey interview. The main illnesses are malaria and fever, but as many as 29.2 percent claim to have had cases of typhoid fever. Tooth ache and stomach ache are other frequent diseases (see Table 25). Nearly 20 percent of the households have at least one child that died before the age of five.

While there may be medical facilities in the bairros in physical terms (see Table above), they are as noted earlier in very poor conditions and usually do not have qualified personnel. There are also severe issues of corruption. For example: A Medical Certificate is often required by companies and schools. Applicants in the health centres and posts pay 1500 Kz and receive the Certificate signed by the doctor declaring that the patient has no infectious or other disease – usually without being given a proper test. The poor easily end up without the test as well as the Certificate.

TABLE 25: Diseases among household members one month prior to interview *

Disease	Percent
Malaria	40.9
Fever	66.0
Cough	42.4
Vomit	22.6
Diarrhea	21.9
Typhoid fever	29.2
Cholera	1.3
Hypertension	21.5
Vehicle accident	1.5
Tooth ace	29.9
Stomach ace	26.5
Other	21.5

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. * Households could list more than one disease.

In Paraíso there is a Health Post named “FAZ”, which only works from Monday to Friday from 9AM to 5PM. As stated by one of the interviewees, “*nothing works here*”... “*FAZ is a facade of a Post*”, “*it has nothing*”... “*it only serves for outpatient care and to write prescriptions*”. The Health Post struggles with lack of basic medicines in the pharmacy, lack of laboratory supplies, and the patients have to buy medicines and to do the laboratory tests in private clinics. The patients who have no money eventually give up.²⁵

In other bairros, there are also problems related to the operation of health units. In the Catambor Health Centre, the biggest complaint is linked to the power generator; whenever the electric power fails the patients need to do the laboratory tests in private clinics. Here the shortage of medicines is not too frequent. In Wengi Maka II and Kalawenda the pharmacies of the public health centres are badly equipped with poor access to medicines but operational.

In all these bairros, poor and vulnerable families go to the health units only when the health situation is severe – and even then, they face difficulties buying medicines. This lead them to stay away and turn to self-medication or to traditional medicine. In Paraíso and at Wenji Maka II

²⁵ At bairro Paraíso there is a Private Medical Centre – “Esperança Domingos”. The Centre has been built by a former resident, apparently as a ‘gift’. Valued at over USD 200 000, it was still waiting for authorization from the Cacucaco Municipal Health Section at the time of fieldwork.

there are cases of families that have lost relatives to death because of yellow fever, as they could not afford to get them to the hospital.

According to one interlocutor, “when there is no doctor at the health post, people go to the *kimbandeiros* (witchdoctors). The post here only has nurses and no midwives”. With the current crisis, the situation has rapidly deteriorated: “In health we were fine until the yellow fever appeared. We are in a bad situation. Deaths have increased. The medical centre did not have a doctor. It even has no space for people to stand!”

Other services

It is crucial for the people in the bairros to have a registration card (*bilhete de identidade*), both for practical reasons (including access to schools and medical facilities) and in order to feel an integrated part of society. More than half of the households (50.9 percent) do not have any registered members. As stated by one interlocutor: “A lot of people are not registered. Many children are not in school. Parents and children have no documents. Even I do not have my children in school because I do not have an identification document. That is why they are in informal school (*explicação*). I do not go for ID because I have no money. Everything is money. The registry is far away”.

There are also serious problems related to infrastructure services such as electricity, waste/garbage and water. 54.5 percent of the households use electricity for illumination (with the rest using candles and lanterns), and 91.4 percent use gas for cooking (with the rest using coal or electricity). Regarding electricity, the absence of – or frequent cuts in – its supply leads to additional economic and social problems by contributing to a reduction in the capacity to conserve food in freezers or refrigerators, decrease in access to information (radio/TV), and increase in crime as sections of the bairros are in the dark.

There are public and private distribution lines, managed by private agencies. The major problem is the technical and administrative capacity of the companies and the financial incapacity of the residents to pay for that service. The monthly tariff officially determined for suburban neighbourhoods of Luanda, including Paraíso, is up to 3 000 Kz. In addition, a big problem is the “contract” people needed in order to get access to electricity for the first time. It costs between 50 000 and 60 000 Kz, which is equivalent to a monthly income for many people.

When asked why people prefer to open a contract with a private agency rather than with the public company ENDE²⁶, the majority of the respondents answered that with ENDE the price would not be exorbitant, but the problem would be the excess of bureaucracy: ... “a lot of time is lost and almost nothing is solved. With these crooks (*malandros*) it is all very fast”.

²⁶ Empresa Nacional de Distribuição de Electricidade.

As for sanitation/garbage, 56.4 percent use a septic tank for sanitation (with the rest using traditional/ improved latrines) and 58.7 percent of the households put their waste in containers – with the rest burying it in their yards or throwing it in waste dumps (which usually means non-designated sites in the bairro). Waste (*lixo*) is seen and sensed everywhere, and has detrimental effects both on the environment, health and people’s sense of dignity.

The inadequacy of the waste collection services leads households to adapt inappropriate places for dumping their garbage. Such places include ravines, drainage ditches (open), holes, dumping grounds (open space), etc. When public authorities do not come to collect the garbage, the residents wait for it to be taken away by the rain or set fire to it – which is dangerous in dense communities as the bairros and may lead to wild-fires. The ‘*valas do Angola*’ (Angolan ditches) surrounding or criss-crossing the bairros, where most people get rid of their garbage, represent a particular health hazard.

Illustration 17: Selling water from a ‘Kupapata’ (Kalawenda).



Photo: Mateus Agostinho

The problems with water are particularly highlighted by the local population and is experienced as critical as it directly affects the economy and well-being of poor households. The majority of the households depend on sources outside of their own dwelling for water, and people pay an average of 9.319 kwanzas per month (see Table). Water is collected from rivers around Luanda and driven into the city in trucks for further distribution and is generally considered to be of poor quality and even dangerous to drink (Lindblom 2013).

TABLE 26: Main source of drinking water

Main source of drinking water	Percent
Neighbour	23.8
Tap in own dwelling/yard	33.6
Standpipe (chafariz)	15.5
Tank (tanque)	15.9
Truck (cisterne)	2.5
Other *	8.1
Missing/Not applicable	0.6

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. * Mainly 'kupapata' (ambulantes)

To remedy these irregularities in water supply, the households arrange and/or look for alternative informal services. Some of the better-off households build underground tanks (water reservoirs) in their yard and hire tanker trucks. Other people come and pay 50 Kz for each 20-litre canister. Another recent informal water service is the Kupapata: *“a three-wheel motorcycle transports up to 500 litres of water; the driver goes to every house selling water and, usually, charges 50 Kz for each 20-litre canister; when the water supply fails too much, the price goes up to 100 Kz”*.

Most households get water from standpipes (*chafarizes*) by paying 10 or 20 Kz for smaller quantities, but these often stop working for long periods of time making the price of water from the tanks increase to 100 Kz per 20-litre canister. As stated by one of our respondents: *“there must be no water shortage, if there is no water in the standpipe we will go to the ‘bull’s asshole’ (meaning they will make any sacrifice to get water)”*.

Together, the dearth/poor quality of public services represent a severe constraint in people’s daily lives and makes people feel marginalized and excluded from the State. As stated by one woman in Wenji Maka 2:

“There is a hunger crisis, a health crisis, a work crisis, only people who work live well. The markets are distant. The prices are high. The shops (*cantinas*) are being robbed”.

4.5 Community relations

The notion of ‘community’ is complex in Luanda. Most of the bairros are relatively recently established, with people coming from different parts of the country and who do not have historical ‘roots’ in the community. The bairros also exhibit different characteristics in terms of social cohesion and inequalities.

With regard to the organisation of the communities, they are in principle controlled by a “block leader” (*chefe de quarteirão*). The *chefe* reports the internal problems of their zone to the residents’ committee (*Comissão de Moradores*). Its president, in turn, reports directly to the sub-district (*comuna*) administrator or to the urban district administrator.

In practice, the residents are generally unaware of the programme or agenda of the block leader, his role as intermediary and about the connections between the community and the local administration. They are confused about the party-political agenda, partly because the *chefe* and the president of the residents’ committees usually also are the local MPLA secretaries at the level of their zone/bairro.

The block *chefe* and the president of the residents’ committees are not elected by the community inhabitants. It is their membership of the MPLA that determines their appointment. As one of the CAP (*Comité de Acção do Partido*) secretaries put it: “It is necessary to be a man that the party trusts in order to be *chefe do quarteirão* or a president of the residents’ committee”. According to a resident, “the Government governs the Government”.

Thus, the block *chefe* and the president of the residents’ committee are authentic representatives of the Party. In practice, they exercise more of a control (*bufo/informador*) function for the Party-Administration than being a real intermediary or spokesman for the local community with an interest in socioeconomic problems and developments. In fact, community problems are only rarely publicly discussed.

Looking at the four bairros/communities in more detail, 85 percent of the household heads were born in another area and only 15 percent in the bairro in which they reside. As many as 69 percent were born in other provinces (see Table), usually in rural contexts. People moved to their present bairro mainly because of the war (26.7 percent), in search of better life conditions (26.5 percent) or to join their extended family (14.6 percent). Even though people try to settle in bairros with people from their own areas/their extended family, differences in ethnic and political backgrounds and personal histories still affect the sense of community.

Table 27: Area of origin of household heads (Percent)

Area of origin	Percent
Same <i>comuna</i>	1.0
Same <i>município</i>	3.1
Same province (Luanda)	10.7
Other province	69.1
Other country	1.0
Not applicable (born in the bairro)	15.0

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

The sense of community is also affected by poverty, inequality and the daily struggle for life. African urban anthropology on the implications of political, economic and social constraints/oppression can broadly be divided into two ‘schools’, with one arguing for cohesion, innovation and creativity (Nutall and Mbembe 2006, Myer 2011; Forster 2013) and the other for the breakdown of community cohesion, an individualisation and commodification of social relations and a basic level of distrust (Rakodi 1997; Davis 2005, Diof and Fredericks 2007).

In Paraíso and the other three bairros under study, what seem to have happened is a narrowing down of what is considered to constitute the ‘community’: While the bairros as a whole are seen to be large, volatile and problematic, people primarily relate to the more immediate neighbourhood (the *quarteirão* or a limited number of streets) where they know who people are and have their relatives and friends. For many families, their bairro is not a good place for their children to grow up and if they had other alternatives they would never be there, as argued by some respondents at Paraíso: “*here it is all aimlessly*”... “*there is nothing*” ... “*it is a source of bandits*” ... “*here, they even kill the police*” ... “*After 6 PM no one enters the bairro!*”

Asked to draw a community map of Wenji Maka II, for example, a focus group drew a schematic boundary made up by main roads towards other bairros but focussed the discussion on a more limited area in the centre of the bairro where people can ‘move more freely’ (see Illustration).

As reflected in the survey, the main problems in the communities are seen to be lack of basic infrastructure (electricity, potable water, sanitation), and security (robberies, theft, delinquency) (see Table). All pose immediate challenges in peoples' daily lives: The lack of electricity has implications for domestic tasks, the ability to study and security; lack of potable water is seen as a risk to health and represent – as we have seen – a considerable expense for most households; and garbage or *lixo* is seen as a considerable risk to health as well as a symbol of the poverty and marginalisation in the bairros.

TABLE 28: Main problem in community (Percent)

Problem	Percent
Lack of employment	6.1
Theft/robberies	7.3
Land conflicts	0.4
Water conflicts	1.7
Lack of electricity	24.6
Lack of sanitation	2.5
Lack of potable water	19.6
Poor roads	3.1
Delinquency	12.5
Lack of police	0.4
Poor sanitation	11.1
Other*	10.0
Missing/not applicable	0.6

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016. *Mainly lack of education, health institutions and bridge (for Paraíso)

The security situation seems to vary somewhat between the four bairros, but is generally related to the combination of the prevalence of often serious crime and the dearth of police – or police that can be trusted. This way, the shooting of three policemen inside the bairro of Paraíso in 2014 is seen as the hallmark of the insecurity that people have to relate to. People in the bairros tend to emphasise that crime is mainly committed by people from the outside (implying that there is internal social control of criminals), but there are also stories of local gangs and individual criminals that make life in the bairros insecure.

'Rápido' (18), Daniel (23), Marcolino (16), Francisco (16) and Corneo (18) live in Paraíso and sum up the situation in their bairro: They first emphasis the difficult security situation and refer to three men who were shot dead the night before the interview. Nobody in the bairro could sleep ("*todos dormiram com cabeças quentes*"). They also complain about 'gangs' made up of '*marginais*' from Paraíso as well as from other bairros, who rob and beat up people, including 'Patrulha', 'Chiruga' and 'Zapi'. They are made up of up to 30 people, most being boys but also with a few girls.

All the boys interviewed live in the same part of the same street, arguing that they can only trust people they know well ('others may go and tell them what we say – pointing in the direction of the Comissão de Moradores). They also lament the lack of things to do/places to go for young people ("*não há divertimento*"). They do not even have a football field. The safest is to stay inside the premises of the Catholic church, where they play damm ("*não te irrites*") for hours every day. The girls they know either stay at home, or '*ficam com os marginais*', 'get pregnant' and have to 'stop studying'.

Asking for good things about living in Paraíso, they say 'there are no good things' ("*não há boas coisas*") and add that 'everything that is bad comes from the government' ("*todo mal cai lá no governo*"). They refer to the local young population as timid ("*humilde*") and not 'rebellious' ("*rebelde*"). Every time we ask people in the community about rights – to health, education, employment etc. – there is a sense of having given up: They say: "*what else can we do, we are already used to suffering, only God knows*".

Illustration 19: The other Luanda

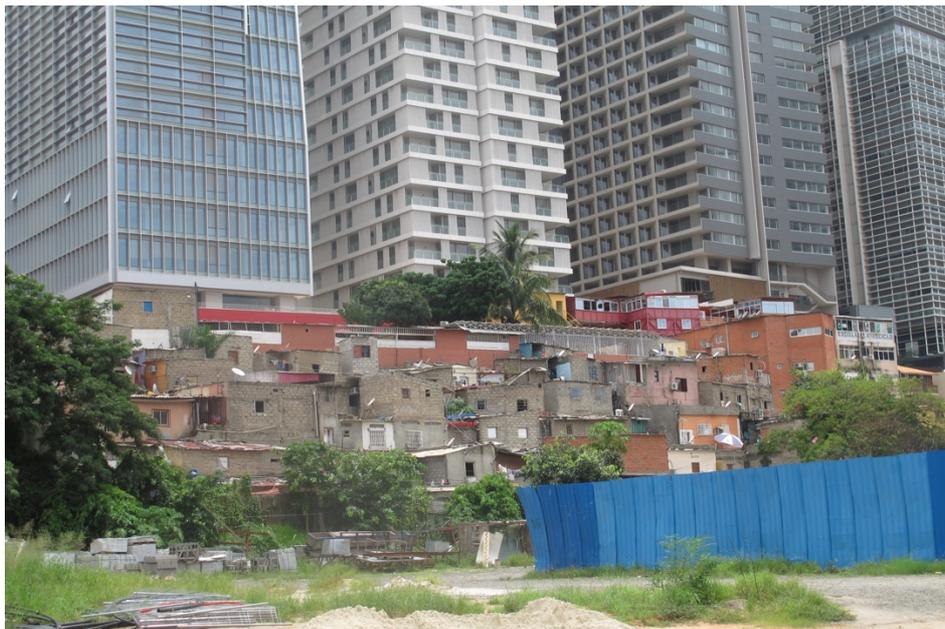


Photo: Aslak Orre

5 Dynamics of urban poverty

5.1 Main arguments

Referring back to our definition of poverty in Section 1.3, this study has shown that coping in the informal settlements in Luanda is a constant struggle for employment and income in a context where access to money is vital for survival. There is a dearth of formal employment opportunities and entering the labour market not only depends on formal qualifications but also on contacts and payoffs. For the large majority, the informal economy is the only way out and is characterised by hard work, fierce competition and fluctuating incomes.

At the same time, there is a strong sense of vulnerability to sudden changes/shocks both domestically (household disintegration, losing income, extra expenses for health etc.) and in the communities (social marginalisation, lack of social services, crime etc.). While most people relate to this by working even harder to cope, many succumb to their circumstances and become dependents or delinquents.

There is also a strong sense of not having a voice and powerlessness in relation to institutions of the state and society. People have stopped looking towards the State and the Party – largely seen as the same thing – for protection and support. And the dearth of functioning public institutions in education and health have made people depend on – often equally badly functioning – private alternatives or give up sending their children to school/revert to traditional health services.

There are differences between the four bairros/musseques under study, largely depending on the history of migration and location in relation to economic centres of power. Catambor has a long history, is largely made up of ‘Luandenses’ and centrally located in relation to employment opportunities and markets. Paraiso has a recent and volatile history of post-war and diverse immigration, is marginally located at the outskirts of the urban conglomerate and is oppressed by the authorities. Wenji Maka II has been able to establish a system of land registration that seems to improve security better than in the other bairros. However, all four bairros have a substantial share of the population living in poverty and vulnerability who have largely lost hope and see few if any options for improving their situation.

5.2 Future expectations

Ending this study with an assessment of the expectations people in the four bairros have towards the future, Luanda is one of the most dramatic cities in Africa in terms of its history, population density and inequality. The city is currently going through what the population calls ‘*a crise*’ related to the recent dramatic downfall in oil revenues and poor governance with particular repercussions for the city’s poor. There is a widespread sense among households in all four bairros that conditions have deteriorated the past five years prior to the interview, albeit with

people in Catambor and Wenji Maka II that we have shown are the best-off bairros being least pessimistic (see Table).

TABLE 29: Changes in household well-being the past five years (Percent)

Item	Catambor	Paraíso	Kalawenda	Wenji Maka II	Total
Improved	22.0	8.3	9.0	22.9	22.1
No change	17.8	31.4	18.9	20.3	15.5
Deteriorated	60.2	60.3	70.5	56.8	62.0
Missing/Not applicable	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.4

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

Some of the poor we have met through this study express frustration and anger at their condition, but there is mainly a sense of having given up on more substantial improvements and rather concentrate on getting by on a day-to-day basis. The most important way of improving the situation is seen to be through employment (see Table) – with people hoping that with higher income they may be able to get access to more of what city has to offer in terms of food, housing and social services. However, with the profound structural constraints identified in this study, and the current economic crisis, the options for upward social mobility are likely to remain an illusion for the poorest for the foreseeable future.

TABLE 30: Area in which the household would like to see change the coming five years (%)

Item	Catambor	Paraíso	Kalawenda	Wenji Maka II	Total
Employment	32.2	38.0	43.4	47.5	40.3
Education	7.6	6.6	6.6	11.9	8.1
Health	14.4	14.9	13.9	14.4	14.4
Agricultural production	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.8	1.0
Habitation	19.5	9.1	9.0	9.3	11.7
Roads	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Material Assets	8.5	6.6	11.5	3.4	7.5
Others*	12.7	21.5	12.3	9.3	14.0
None	3.4	1.7	2.5	3.4	2.7
Missing/Not applicable	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.2

Source: Luanda Household Survey 2016

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Angola's capital Luanda is a city of stark inequalities and contrasts. While it offers opportunities and wealth for the few, people in the informal musseques are effectively trapped in poverty through limited income opportunities and material deficiencies; disempowerment in relation to institutions of the state and society; and vulnerability to adverse shocks such as sudden loss of employment, disease and crime.

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