# Local responses to globalization and peripheralization in Luanda, Angola

## *Paul Jenkins, Paul Robson and Allan Cain*

Paul Jenkins is Director of the Centre for Environment and Human Settlements in the UK, which specializes in teaching, research, training and other forms of knowledge provision on human settlements in the rapidly urbanizing world. Paul has worked extensively in Southern Africa since the mid-1970s, in a variety of positions, most recently researching emerging land and housing markets in Mozambique and Angola. See http://www.eca.ac.uk/oldsite/planning/cehs.htm for more information.

Address: Centre for Environment and Human Settlements, Edinburgh College of Art, Heriot-Watt University, 79 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HJ, UK; e-mail: p.jenkins@eca.ac.uk

Allan Cain is Director of the human settlements NGO Development Workshop, which has operated in Angola for more than 20 years. Development Workshop has experience of a wide range of programmes, including community-based services provision and settlements upgrading. Allan has also worked as a consultant for various government and international agencies. See http://www.angonet.org for more information.

Address: Development Workshop, CP 3360, Luanda, Angola; e-mail: allan.dwang@angonet.org

SUMMARY: *This paper questions the likely benefits of globalization for Luanda by considering how global political and economic forces affect the lives of its 3.4 million inhabitants. Most live in informal, self-constructed settlements which lack basic infrastructure and services. Most receive little benefit from the nation's oil and diamond exports, while many have had their livelihoods eroded by the collapse of the local economy and the contraction of the state. The paper also describes how the city has always been shaped by external forces – as a port serving the slave trade or colonial export agriculture – and what the role of external forces has been in creating and perpetuating the long-running civil war. International organizations have criticized the state for not creating basic conditions of development but in fact rarely provide funds to help it do so. The key globalization issue for Luanda (and Angola) is not how to ensure a more effective trickle-down of benefits from export-led growth, but how more people can be productively engaged in the development process. In relation to this, the paper describes the growing role of civil society within Luanda and how, with appropriate support, this can help achieve the broader development objective.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE UPSURGE OF the use of the concept of globalization in development literature and political discourse frequently implies that globalization is a new phenomenon (at least in its present form), and that it is universal (albeit with differential impact in different parts of the world). The concept is also arguably focused on what is a Northern political economic hegemony – i.e. "free market" capitalism in liberal democracies.[1] Although elements of the concept are useful in analysis, the overall effect of the acceptance of globalization's purported recent and universal nature in the South seems largely to legitimize new forms of economic expansionism by transnational companies. In this, assumptions concerning the "trickle-down" economic benefits of inward foreign investment and export-led economic growth often outweigh debate on development alternatives. The objectives of this paper are to question the possible benefits of the globalization process through an investigation of the impact of this on urban areas in Angola, and to report on local actions that could be the basis for a broader development process.

Angola can be seen as an extreme case: it is situated in sub-Saharan Africa, a region of the world with most severe economic and social prob-

lems. Furthermore, Angola has been in a state of more or less continuous internal and external war over the past four decades, from the time when the anti-colonial struggle began in 1961. Because of both its location and the hostilities (up to the March 2002 ceasefire), the country is situated at the periphery of the global economy despite its potential to be a middle-income developing country.[2] Although Angola exports high-value products (petroleum and diamonds) and has significant other potential, it has been ranked 128th in the World Bank tables and, more importantly, 156th in the United Nations human development tables.

This paper investigates the impact of globalization on the capital city, Luanda, focusing on how global political economic forces affect the lives of the majority of urban dwellers. In so doing, it suggests that what is developing on the ground in the face of global peripheralization can be the basis for more proactive agency rather than reactive acceptance of the dominant structural situation. Given the dominant focus on global economics within nation-state politics at the macro level, this proactive role has, to date, been primarily developed at a local level by organizations within civil society, with international assistance. The paper argues for clear analytical understanding of both the macro- and micro-level "realpolitik" which has led to this situation as the basis for strategic action to address issues of social equity and, eventually, alternative development strategies.

The paper is divided into four main sections:
• a brief historical review of the impact of globalization on the city;
• a short description of the resulting nature of social, economic and political peripheralization in recent years;
• examples of some responses to this at local level within civil society; and
• reflections on how strategic action within civil society can affect broader development issues.

The paper draws on basic data about Angola and Luanda that is available in a complementary paper by the same authors, and hence does not repeat much of the descriptive detail here.[3]

## II. THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE CITY

### a. The early phase of globalization and peripheralization

LUANDA WAS FOUNDED in the sixteenth century in the early phase of expansion of the European nation-states, when this was led by Portugal. Luanda initially served as a port of call for ships bringing silk and spices from the Far East. When rumours of rich inland silver deposits were revealed to be unfounded, the private investment on which imperial expansion in the region was based developed a secondary role for the settlement in the global mercantile trade of the period, based on the supply of labour for other colonies – principally Brazil. It therefore remained a small slave-trading post until the end of the nineteenth century.

An important factor in this stage of globalization is the fact that indigenous state formation in the Angolan hinterland was an active component of the developing political economic structure, with the more hierarchic ethnic groups in the north and west dominating more horizontally structured ethnic groups in the east and south. The slave trade led to the

**Paul Robson is a freelance development consultant, now based in London. Paul specializes in research for development organizations on urbanization, social change and community organization. He has worked in Angola for Development Workshop as well as other international agencies. He can be contacted at: vieurobs@gn.apc.org**

1. Jenkins, P and P Wilkinson (2002), "Assessing the growing impact of the global economy on urban development in Southern African cities: case studies in Maputo and Cape Town", *Cities* Vol 19, No 1, pages 33-47.

2. The concept of the periphery came largely from the Latin American "dependency" theorists and pre-supposes that economic activity is locked into a world system dominated by the centre – generally based in the North – with Southern nation-states seen as excluded to a periphery. The main reason why this analysis is no longer used as a major analytical tool is due to the tendency of its proponents to ignore the role of agency at a national – and even more so, at a local – level. However, we would argue that the concept of periphery is still valid and, perhaps, has more importance now in the context of the focus on globalization and the effect on urban areas. However, it requires an analysis of the agents involved – both international and national – rather than assuming an unavoidable structural process.

3. Jenkins, P, P Robson and A Cain (2002), "Luanda city profile", *Cities*, Vol 19, No 2, forthcoming.

increased capacity of these kingdoms to establish relatively strong states with which the early European traders and administration established relations. In this, the role of indigenous Afro-Portuguese dynasties played an important intermediary role.

From its foundation, Luanda has thus been affected by globalization, albeit relegated to a structurally peripheral position within this, the main economic benefits flowing outside the territory and indeed the continent. This early manifestation of the close relationship between globalization and peripheralization relied significantly on international and local alliances between different groups with their specific political, social and cultural attributes. The importance of agency vis-à-vis structure in the development of globalization in the country can be traced, for instance, in the continued importance of the role of the Afro-Portuguese elite from this early period on.

## b. Consolidation and change of position in the colonial period

With the abolition of the slave trade (reluctantly accepted by the Portuguese crown in 1836 due to pressure from other nations that wanted free labour markets), Luanda went into a period of decline. From 1850 onwards, Portugal began to adapt the economic basis of the city slowly from export of labour to the use of this labour in inland plantation agriculture. This required state assistance and effective colonization of the interior, where it was necessary to dominate militarily the African kingdoms, formerly allies, as these had no interest in ending the slave trade. The Afro-Portuguese elite was also gradually marginalized as new administrative controls were developed to channel migrant labour towards the plantations and away from slaving. A further stimulus to the effective colonization of the interior was the "Scramble for Africa" and the Conference of Berlin (1884-1885), which required Portugal to control the territory of Angola that it claimed. The period from 1845 to 1919 was thus one of almost continual warfare between the colonizing power and indigenous African states.

The resulting new colonial nation-state was deliberately economically isolated from its powerful colonial neighbours in order to benefit metropolitan (that is, Portuguese) interests. In so doing, the colonial government attempted to create a new settler elite, based on an agricultural export development policy.[4] This was undermined by the volatility of commodity prices on the world market and, again, the city suffered a decline in fortunes. The economic isolation and the strong linkage with Portugal were, however, subsequently consolidated under the fascist dictatorship that took control there in 1926, through tariff structures for the country's exports and strict controls over foreign inward investment and the use of migrant labour. The role of Angola in Portuguese interests was also expressed clearly through the policy of encouraging migration from the metropolis, with preferential treatment of often illiterate migrants from Portugal and the marginalization of the more educated indigenous elite.

Lacking in resources of its own, Portugal hoped, through this colonial development policy, to appropriate Angola's actual and potential wealth by incorporating the country as a province and by denying access by other economic powers. Portugal, however, did not have the human, financial or industrial resources to maintain this situation and increasingly relied on

4. Similar to that created by the British in (then) Rhodesia.

British and American capital and technology for development. Thus, British and other European capital and skills were used to build Angola's railways, to serve the interests of the global economy's demand for copper and other products. Portugal, however, managed to keep Angola isolated from the emerging South African Rand zone and other regional markets and maintained an artificial partial monopoly of trade which was only broken at independence.

The attempt at an endogenous development policy based primarily on agricultural exports continued to be periodically undermined by the volatility of commodity prices on the world market until the Second World War. Luanda suffered the consequences of the country's marginal position in the global economy and grew slowly during this period. The city's structure changed gradually from the 1860s onwards, however, reflecting its new economic role and also the emerging colonial social structure, as the settler immigration policy resulted in the exclusion of the African population. Migration of Portuguese nationals, envisioned by the colonial state as a means of asserting state sovereignty through the occupation of rural land, led in fact to a rapid increase in the urban population, and excluded Angolans from trades and from the commercial sector through preferential access to employment.[5] The African population was also physically expelled from the central urban area, which became increasingly the preserve of a white elite as migration from Portugal developed momentum. The expelled Africans built their precarious housing on the slopes and uplands behind the central downtown Baixa, in *musseques*.[6]

While the city had remained relatively small in size (demographically and physically) throughout the booms and busts of the slave trade and initial plantation economy, metropolitan control during the fascist period and the opportunities for growth after the Second World War eventually led to a significant expansion of the city.[7] This was based mainly on coffee and was closely associated with renewed inward migration from Portugal as well as rural-urban migration of African labour. The city population thus doubled in size approximately every decade from 1940 onwards, though without an adequate level of investment in land, infrastructure or planning. Land occupation was chaotic, there was extreme under-provision of services and the majority of residential construction (formal and informal) was without regulation. *Musseques* were destroyed by the expansion of the Baixa and *musseque* dwellers were forced to found new *musseques* further from the city centre. Population densities in the *musseques* also rose rapidly.

## c. Transition after independence

The fascist dictatorship in Portugal was overthrown on 25 April 1974 and Angola (along with the other Portuguese African territories) was granted independence in 1975; however, the transition was chaotic and led to the flight of most Portuguese residents. The lack of any realistic form of managed transition to neo-colonial independence by the Portuguese state in favour of entrenched metropolitan interests was primarily due to the emerging new political economic regime being more interested in strengthening Portugal's economic ties with the rest of Europe. In Angola, the transition led to a prolonged period of conflict between internal actors with international linkages, and the country became a battleground of the Cold War as the USA supported first the FNLA and then UNITA, and the USSR and Cuba supported the MPLA government.[8] The close alliance

5. In contrast to British and French colonial experience, colonialism did not bring Africans into the new economy nor employ significant numbers and introduce new skills. The African adult literacy rate at independence was only 5 per cent, and even taxi drivers and store clerks were Portuguese immigrants.

6. *Musseque* is a local Kimbundu word describing the red, sandy soils of the slopes and uplands to which the indigenous population was forced to move.

7. Portugal did not take part in the Second World War. The war led to a boom in coffee prices, and the disruption of world trade allowed opportunities for some industrial development in Angola (processing of agricultural products, import substitution).

8. These movements were the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), the People's Movement for Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for Total Independence in Angola (UNITA). South Africa supported UNITA. The liberation movements all had bases external to the territory, but were associated with ethnic groups within the country, many of which had links with other liberation movements against the Portuguese state, including in the metropole itself.

9. Angola has become an important market for illicit arms trade and an important source of "blood diamonds" for the international gem trade. The application of restrictions by the international community on these harmful aspects of globalization has been slow, in contrast with its enthusiasm for promoting other aspects of globalization. Some Northern nations continue to see such restrictions as being against the ethos of free trade.

between the MPLA, which was led by members of the disaffected indigenous Afro-Portuguese elite, and key left-wing elements in the revolution of 1974 in Portugal led to the dominance of this group. However, it did not manage to establish political or military control over the whole territory, which then entered into a state of civil war which has lasted more or less ever since.

The chaotic nature of the transition led to the collapse of the rural economy and a growing reliance on high-value exports for the economy. Diamonds (extracted in the Lunda region of the far north-east since the 1920s) and especially petroleum (extracted close to the coast and offshore since the 1960s but expanding rapidly after independence) had come to dominate as the postwar coffee-based economic boom declined. These new export commodities were much stronger on the global market but were extremely concentrated in location and, from the start, there was significant state control over the extraction process for both, although this was generally implemented by transnational companies. The increasing reliance on these enclave-based exports was reinforced by the continued civil war and, in turn, the large income that these commodities provided allowed a significant war effort on both sides, even after the Cold War ended. Globalization has thus been a major factor in the development and the perpetuation of the war.[9]

The scale of the war led to the widespread devastation of the rural and urban economies outside the small oil and diamond enclaves, and thus to an even greater economic reliance on these. While the national economy is potentially stronger than many others in sub-Saharan Africa, the diversion of resources to fund the war has led to the collapse of many of the state's social and economic functions. It has also affected the politics of the two main protagonists who control these resources as, on both sides, highly "presidential" forms of governance were established through extensive control and patronage within narrow – and opposing – elites. For the majority, the war has been an unmitigated disaster and the population has lived through more than a generation of savage military action on all sides; many have some specific personal memory of violence as they have had to flee their homes and economic livelihoods and concentrate in urban areas.

The urban areas have thus seen massive in-migration since the period of transition to independence, with successive and intensifying waves of displaced migrants as a result of the continued destruction of rural areas and smaller urban areas. While the main cities of Luanda, Benguela, Lobito and Lubango have all grown, Luanda continues to be the dominant city, with 20 per cent of the total national population (60 per cent of the urban population) and about 3.4 million inhabitants. Little has been undertaken in terms of urban development, formal land allocation, infrastructure construction/maintenance and formal residential construction since the beginning of this period. Official thinking has been dominated by the idea that much of the population of Luanda will return to rural areas when conflict ends (an idea not shared by the majority) and that the Luanda *musseques* are therefore only temporary settlements that will disappear. The result is a massive "informalization" of both the urban fabric and day-to-day life.

The state controls the main formal-sector economy, however the main benefits from this are captured by the elites, with some highly inequitable trickle-down effect through the informal sector. This raises queries concerning the broader legitimacy of the state, which has little influence

in the social and economic activity of the majority, and it is in this context that there has been a flourishing of new manifestations of civil society. That this has been at all possible in the extreme social devastation is remarkable but by no means inevitable. As Robson and Roque argue, the tentative reconstruction of "community" is not a natural process in circumstances of fear, mistrust and rapid social change, but one that needs stimulus and support.[10] However, ironically, it has been the state's inability to provide that has led to the exploration of the opportunity to build new forms of organization within civil society. The resulting activities suggest an alternative form of development that is less dependent on global forces which, historically, have tended to favour the international and national elite in Angola's form of peripheral development in the global economy.

## III. THE NATURE OF PERIPHERALIZATION

### a. Demographic and socioeconomic dynamics

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE no reliable data, it appears that the population of Luanda has been increasing by almost 7 per cent per year throughout the post-independence period. About half of this growth is due to migration to the city, the other half due to natural increase. Migrants to the city of Luanda are young adults with no (or few) children. Older people who leave rural areas tend to stay in the inland cities: it is the younger people who make the journey to the capital and who, once there, start families, often large ones.

The main migrations to Luanda have been from rural areas of Angola, though usually passing through smaller cities on the way. Whilst in the past, migration to Luanda has been primarily from areas in its hinterland, now it is from most areas of the country. Since 1977, a significant source of migrants to Luanda has been the BaKongo people from the north of Angola, who originally fled to the Belgian Congo[11] after abortive uprisings in 1961 (and subsequent massacres)[12] and who returned to Angola after independence. Many of these have lived in the *bidonvilles* of Kinshasa or other cities and have brought with them economic survival skills and an urban civic culture that are significantly different from those of other Angolans.

Whilst the main urban migration during the colonial period happened in the context of a booming economy and labour market, after independence urban migration has been in the context of a stagnant or shrinking labour market. The main motors of the economy (oil and diamonds) provide limited employment. The flight of Portuguese settlers at independence also left Angola with a severe deficit of skills in many fields, including petty commerce, from which Africans had been excluded. The post-independence decision to take over the management of the economy at all levels was as much a reaction to the abandonment by the Portuguese as any indication of ideological position. In fact, the key petroleum sector remained managed mainly by Americans and French, who maintained their presence and their operations intact. The dominant post-independence Soviet-influenced development policies provided no model for the new state to deal with the problem of feeding the cities after Portuguese bush traders and lorry drivers departed except by direct intervention, even in small-scale activities. Private commerce was perceived as anti-

10. Robson, P and S Roque (2001), "Here in the city there is nothing left over for lending a hand", *Development Workshop Occasional Paper* No 2, Guelph, Canada.

11. Renamed Zaire and, more recently, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

12. In 1961, protests broke out against the extension of compulsory crops (such as cotton) and of plantations (mainly for coffee) in the north of Angola, in Luanda and in the east of Malanje province. The reaction of the Portuguese colonial government was extremely violent, the brutality of which, in turn, led to a massive flight of people from the northern provinces of Zarie and Uige to the Belgian Congo (later renamed the Republic of Zaire and now the Democratic Republic of Congo), where they mainly sought refuge in the cities. There, they created a new identity that emphasized mutual support, using traditional solidarity values as its reference point. The number of inhabitants in the two northern provinces of Angola decreased dramatically; from 1979 onwards, however, a large number of these exiles began to return, mainly to the city of Luanda.

social and actively discouraged. On the other hand, foreign capital was encouraged to invest in the strategic petroleum sector and, from the 1980s, in other lucrative sectors of the Angolan economy.

From the late 1980s, however, an informal economy (*candonga*) did develop to meet basic needs that the state did not provide. The state was unable to prevent its growth but continued to view it as illegal. Although it grew to include the vast majority of Angolans, its development has been integral to the development of the formal economy in the lucrative export sectors. Income from oil and diamonds thus permits the importation of food and consumer goods, which are sold and re-sold through the informal trading network. It is this informal trading sector, linked to the global economy, that allows the survival of most urban residents. Profits are, however, extremely low for most of the poor who engage in trading for survival, as they face intense competition from the ever-increasing number of migrants. This forces most family members to be involved and most women spend long hours in the market place and selling on the streets. Poverty levels are high and the gap between rich and poor is very high and growing.

## b. The impact of globalization on the economy

13. During this period, Angola was not a member of the World Bank and IMF and its government was not recognized by the USA.

Angola has experienced a series of varied and severe changes in the last 150 years, although the country, and particularly the city of Luanda, has continued to be closely linked to the world economy. As argued above, most of the changes have, in fact, arisen as a result of these links. For the last 50 years of the colonial period, relations with the world economy were mediated through the colonial power, and for the first 13 years post-independence Angola opted for a proto-socialist development path with linkages to the eastern bloc.[13] The war, and the disruption caused by the sudden collapse of Portuguese colonialism, led to a sudden collapse in the rural economy, not a gradual decline, as experienced elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. Since independence, the country has developed a highly enclave-style economy even more linked into the world system. Inward foreign investment is highly concentrated in the petroleum and diamond areas, and most economic activity is focused on Luanda, where wealth accumulates. As noted above, throughout these periods Luanda played a major role in channelling the global political and economic forces but was strongly affected by global shocks and changes due to its peripheral position.

These international links have a marked affect on overall urbanization trends. This is graphically illustrated by the fact that the bustle and traffic jams of Luanda stop suddenly at the city boundaries. Small towns less than 50 kilometres away are desolate. It is easier to send a letter to Houston, Texas, or to Paris (which have direct air links) than it is to a nearby town or a provincial capital. Any redevelopment of a truly national economy (after the destruction of war) will be a complex challenge. For instance, to rebuild the Benguela railway will require enormous amounts of capital and its original *raison d'être* (transporting copper from neighbouring countries to the coast) no longer exists: but without the railway the economy of the Central Plateau cannot be rebuilt, which raises questions about the future of the string of secondary towns and cities sited along it. The impact of peripheral globalization on the local economy is pervasive and has led to the collapse of most local production in the face of competition from imported goods. Even brush-making by local craftsmen, requiring little capital and available materials, cannot compete with

plastic brushes imported by the container-load. How can local jam production be re-established when women street traders are selling marmalade made with Spanish oranges in Brazil under licence to a Scottish company, imported through South Africa?

The rapid growth of the city of Luanda (and of its extensive population living in poverty) is thus partly the result of war but also reflects the fact that Luanda is of interest to the global economy while the rest of the country is, at present, of little interest. Yet even in Luanda, the world economy only provides employment for the majority through insecure, low-margin petty trading of imported goods. More recently, globalization has been accompanied by demands from Northern governments for good governance and poverty-alleviation strategies. There are, however, few clear ideas from Northern governments about how these can be achieved in the face of the overwhelming complexity of problems such as urban poverty in Luanda or the rebuilding of an integrated national economy.

## c. Implications for urban development and governance

Dealing with the rapid changes that Angola has undergone is a severe challenge for the state, weakened by the war that has concentrated resources and scarce qualified labour in the armed forces and the petroleum industry, as well as suffering from a continued exodus. Despite the weakness of the state, the criticism of Northern governments of Angola in the 1980s, at the moment when the country opened up more fully to the world economy, was that the state was too strong. The result has been a further draining of state capacity in the last ten years as real wages in state employment have drastically shrunk (except at the very highest levels). There are thus no clear ideas of how the state should deal with the problems of urban areas, the complexity of which outstrips the usefulness of the conventional urban development models.

The models that the state uses when considering such problems are based on the undesirability of the informal economy (and thus tend towards suppressing it or transforming it into a formal economy) and aspirations for large, formal development projects from which some benefits should trickle down to the population at large.[14] The problem of the *musseques* is seen as "...*too much anarchic construction that does not follow the proper rules of urbanization*" and "...*too much informal business that has not gone through the correct bureaucratic procedures*." Reconstruction is perceived as rebuilding what was there 25 years ago, even though this would now be irrelevant. All the models perceive the urban people as passive objects who will wait for development to be delivered.

The inability of the state to provide solutions to the pressing problems of the urban poor leads to a lack of engagement with the state at both the national and local levels. The majority of people take the "exit" option with respect to the state, as they lack faith in the state's ability to create change, although they know of no other actors who can, and this leads to apathy. The failure of the elections of September 1992 to bring peace, and the failure of Northern governments which had promoted the elections to prevent the disastrous post-election resumption of war, has created a lack of trust in voting and elections.[15] But, political disenchantment does not necessarily mean political disengagement when there is an issue of interest and relevance, and the ability of the urban poor to organize around such issues is beginning to be seen in land rights, access to information and provision of services, as is described in the following section.

14. The first draft poverty-alleviation paper was a list of large projects, with little analysis of poverty and how it could be tackled.

15. The recent (February 2002) death of UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi, with no obvious strong successor, may lead to new opportunities for peace. However, the many years of conflict and entrenched interests in the war economy, as well as possible power struggles within UNITA as the only coherent opposition, may hinder this process.

# IV. STRATEGIC ACTION WITHIN CIVIL SOCIETY

## a. The emerging role for civil society

ANY BENEFITS FROM globalization in the formal Angolan economy have been denied to the majority of the urban and rural populations. This supports evidence from elsewhere that suggests that globalization leads to (or maintains) peripheralization within cities and nation-states.[16] The poor thus continue to be pushed to the physical and the economic periphery through links between the informal economy and the world economy. These links, however, are mediated by the national elite who benefit disproportionately. The position taken by many Northern governments on globalization – that, overall, it is beneficial although something needs to be done to get its benefits to the poor – has little meaning when there is a reluctance to investigate what the problems of globalization itself are and when no realistic mechanisms for getting the benefits to the poor are specified. In the case of Angola (and many similar cases), such mechanisms are absent: the indigenous private sector is weak and pro-poor state policies are absent. However, in these circumstances it is argued that civil society can play a strategic role in developing alternatives.

Modern manifestations of civil society[17] are relatively new in Angolan society, surfacing only with the publication in 1991 of the law of freedom of association. These, however, have developed historically from several sources: the tradition of social activism of the national churches and returnees from urban Kinshasa; what remained of the tradition of political activism of the MPLA's popular roots; the rural agricultural extension movement; and associations for professionals such as lawyers. The structural impact of transnational economic forces and commodity-funded civil war is being mitigated locally by agencies within civil society, facilitated by non-governmental organizations with international support. While many international and national organizations are concerned primarily with processing humanitarian relief for the thousands affected by war, others are considering how this "parallel resource stream" can be used strategically[18]:

- How can it unlock the potential of the poor to move beyond a mere struggle for survival and create local opportunities for development?
- How can it create the conditions for effective negotiation and dialogue between the poor and the state, to transform the poor from being considered as passive objects into active citizens?
- How can it lead to a demand for more legitimate state response through realistic pro-poor policies for the development of urban and rural areas?

Civil society in Luanda shows signs of beginning to deal with these questions and urgent relief issues through the recent emergence of associations. At the grassroots, *musseque* residents have shown themselves capable of playing an active part in service provision and in negotiating with the official service providers, even though the latter originally doubted the ability of the urban poor to participate actively in this way – local residents' committees, officially perceived as mere subordinates of the local state administration, are now in fact playing an active role in negotiating with the state over evictions in the *musseques*. In addition, at a national level, national civil society organizations are participating in the debate about the poverty-reduction strategy and in the search for national reconciliation. Some of these actions are illustrated below.

16. For example, see various papers in the special edition of *International Planning Studies on Urban Governance and Poverty* Vol 6, No 4 (2001).

17. Civil society is seen here as the formal or informal organizational forms which exist between the state, the for-profit private sector and the household. It includes horizontal forms of organization such as kinship, as well as vertical organizational forms such as associations.

18. That is, a public resource stream which is not controlled by the state.

## b. Urban civil society in action

**Urban services**. Concerning urban services, a model of sustainable community-based provision is being developed by actors within civil society, in partnership with local government and service providers. The Sustainable Community Services Project (SCSP)[19] works in the *musseques* with the aim of piloting new forms of partnership in service provision but also of creating space for participative politics by poor peri-urban residents. This programme is led by the NGO Development Workshop (DW), which has operated for more than 20 years in Luanda, and builds on DW's extensive local experience in basic sanitation and water supply projects. An essential part of the programme is building up local organizational strength so that neighbourhood services committees can achieve a degree of autonomy and can successfully negotiate with the local government and service providers, such as the water company. The project helps to lay a basis for future local-level democratic governance. Local community leaders involved through the project today are likely future municipal or local government councillors. The forum created by the project provides space for negotiation on provision of services, as well as an opportunity to coordinate activities on basic sanitation and solid waste collection. The focus on practical activities that are of high interest to the peri-urban poor as a basis for this level of organizational development is fundamental, as is international support from donors – such as the British Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union and the World Bank – in ensuring this new initiative gets the attention of the local government and service providers.

**Land rights**. Organization over land rights is another example. Whilst in the past the *musseques* were often forcibly removed from the forefront of formal urbanization, this process did not continue after independence when, initially, the abandoned and uncompleted buildings provided a source of new dwellings, as did densification within existing *musseques*. In time, new *musseques* began to expand, with limited state attempts at controlling land use. However, in recent years, the real value of urban land – albeit not formalized in any way due to land nationalization – has led to the (re-)commencement of forced evictions. These have been mainly in the name of public order and environmental safety, such as on the slopes above the Luanda port at Boa Vista; however, the areas cleared are usually of high urban value and ripe for commercial or public formal development projects.

These forced evictions have been resisted not only by individual residents but also by residents' committees in the affected areas. Key members of these committees have subsequently been subject to harassment and this has led to a broadening of the resistance, with support from professional associations and the media. This has led to abrupt changes of position by the state in some cases, such as in Boa Vista, which has benefited from a high public profile. However, in other less well-publicized cases, the added value inherent in urban land, but with no form of legal expression, has been successfully captured by the elite through evictions with minimal compensation, usually mediated by the local state. The issue of urban land rights has, however, now been taken up by non-governmental organizations, some of which have been campaigning for appropriation of rural land rights for some years. A coordinated investigation of urban land issues is being promoted by the non-governmental organizations, with participation from civil society.[20]

21. The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) is an international non-governmental organization that helped set up, for the first time, many electronic networks in Africa. APC continues to sponsor numerous electronic fora and exchanges on global humanitarian and social development issues of interest to national civil society organizations. In Angola, the ANGONET project is associated with the APC.

22. The ANGONET project provides information in Portuguese on themes of interest to Angolan civil society through a series of locally managed interactive web sites and the opportunity to participate in electronic debates on poverty reduction, peace-building, justice issues and land rights (urban and rural). ANGONET's more than 250 local member organizations around the country also have access to international civil society debates and can lobby on issues including corporate responsibility, blood diamonds and human rights.

23. It is equally important to stress that, like the state and the private sector, civil society is not inherently "good", and many organizations within civil society may in fact be oriented towards elites. However, where the state is dominated by self-serving elites and the private sector is weak (and also naturally oriented primarily towards its own interests), the public role of civil society is an important element.

**Access to information**. Increasing access to information is one positive aspect of globalization in Angola. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of independent newspapers, mainly weeklies, although almost all are Luanda-based. Independent radio stations have also grown but are restricted by law to the use of relatively short-range FM frequencies, and this limitation means that urban areas have privileged access to these broadcasts. In addition, non-governmental organizations have been at the forefront throughout the developing world in pioneering the use of electronic media and the internet, bringing globalization to the local level with the aim of empowering communities with access to the new media.[21] Angola is a case in point: in 1989, the ANGONET project was started by Development Workshop to bring electronic media to Angola for the first time. Subsequently, in 1995, some technicians from the ANGONET team split off to set up Angola's first commercial internet service provider. Internet, while only accessible to areas of the country with telecommunications services, can potentially break out of the urban bias. The ANGONET project focuses on humanitarian and civil society users and is attempting to promote widespread and community-level access to interactive forms of media by setting up local-access Internet service centres, akin to "tele-centres". Local NGOs and CBOs which would not normally have access to phone lines and computers can, through community access centres, have their own e-mail and web site addresses and participate in global networks.[22]

# V. CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPMENT

## a. Lessons from the local level in Angola

THE ABOVE EXAMPLES illustrate local development actions but these are reliant on intermediaries to strengthen the role of civil society vis-à-vis the state. They clearly recognize that civil society itself cannot resolve urban problems but that these require state resources and the involvement of other actors, such as the private sector. However, they stress the important role of civil society in pushing for pro-poor policies and the need for political action to ensure this. One of the challenges facing intermediaries within civil society in this process is accountability: how to demand accountability from the state while at the same time maintaining accountability with their grassroots? Accountability is an essential part of the aims of civil society organizations, yet its achievement is not straightforward especially when it has not been part of the political culture in the colonial or post-colonial periods and when social change has been so great, breaking down old ties of community without creating new ones. It implies that civil society needs to develop a new kind of community development for such difficult circumstances, one that helps build trust, accountability and new communities of interest rather than assuming that these exist.[23]

Another challenge is the relationship with international organizations. In the absence of a supportive role of the state, support from international organizations for the activities of civil society at a local level is required. However, it is important that these do not then dictate the agenda but rather, support this at local, and crucially also at national, level. Paradoxically, the demands of the fledgling national-level civil society in Angola for state accountability, transparency, fiscal responsibility, open budgeting, public scrutiny and good governance are many of the same prereq-

uisites set by international agencies. While in many other countries civil society and international agencies are at loggerheads over structural adjustment policies, there is a potential alliance of interests, albeit short-term, that may have a strong influence on government policy decisions in Angola.[24] Yet, national-level civil society organizations are also aware that, in future, differences of opinion with such international organizations might emerge over issues such as price levels for fuel and services, and privatization of basic services.

In addition, this implies a reorientation of international support away from the current emphasis on emergency service provision, towards support to civil society as a space for local development and participatory politics, linking users and service providers, state and citizens. This can be through continuing to pressure the state at national level for more accountability and better governance, while in parallel supporting examples of good governance and action within civil society at local level. To make the necessary links, international support for national-level civil society organizations is also necessary. This will also require a significant shift in the current emphasis in reconstruction, away from one based on inward foreign investment and export-led growth.[25] Assistance to civil society needs to be more direct, providing resources, skills, training and dissemination of alternatives while maintaining sensitivity to the needs of national-level civil society: it should not replicate the worst aspects of globalization, through the dominance of African agendas by Northern ones. There is also a strategically important role for international advocacy by non-governmental and other sympathetic organizations – even the "social responsibility" wings of the transnational companies.

However, winning hearts and minds within Angola will be of great importance – both at grassroots level, to avoid apathy and "waiting for the state", as well as – crucially – within the growing (and increasingly disgruntled) middle class. Here again, local non-governmental organizations and "sympathizers" in state institutions need to be active in key skills training and dissemination of alternatives – and interact proactively with those who are organizing within civil society, as well as those who could be sympathetic in the national and local government structures. International experience shows that strategic development from grassroots organizations – such as are developing in Luanda – to wider urban social movements that can pressurize the state for change and, where necessary, counteract exploitative private-sector activity, requires "horizontal" provision of resources and skills, which often come from "vertical" organizations within civil society – e.g. NGOs, churches, trade unions and the investigative media. It also often requires "walking a tightrope" of political alliances – within the state and opposition parties, as well as international-organization agendas.[26]

Thus, a clear analysis of the realpolitik opportunities and risks needs to be constantly undertaken by the actors in civil society – and their international allies – to ensure effective strategic impact. This is something that many local institutions often do implicitly – certainly the more successful ones – but that international organizations often formally avoid. Hence it is possible for such organizations to complete extensive analyses of urban problems, and propose quite prescriptive solutions, without any, even implicit, mention of the realpolitik situation. This respect for national sovereignty, however, is seldom carried through in adaptation of the often centrally determined policy positions of these Northern-based institutions, nor does it reflect the realpolitik of globalization as this impacts on the economy and society in the South.

24. International agencies are themselves increasingly questioning the beneficial effects of structural adjustment as applied in the 1980s and 1990s, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

25. Robson, P (2001), "Communities and community institutions in Luanda" in Robson, P (editor), "Communities and reconstruction in Angola", *Development Workshop Occasional Paper* No 1, Guelph, Canada, pages 166-180.

26. Jenkins, P (2001), "Relationships between the state and civil society and their importance for sustainable development" in Carley, M, P Jenkins and H Smith (2001), *Urban Development and Civil Society: The Role of Communities in Sustainable Cities*, Earthscan, London, pages 175-191.

27. This in no way is meant to suggest that rural development is not important but, rather, that urban areas are "here to stay" and both need appropriate economic and social development policies.

The grassroots activities described above are mainly focused on pro-poor policy development within Angolan urban areas, accepting that urban growth will continue.[27] While civil society engagement in the provision of urban services is essentially a question of more equitable economic redistribution, the authors argue that this can also be a model for the creation of more equitable social and economic development policies than exist in the current macro-level political economy of Angola. This, however, cannot only be developed from within but requires an international level of advocacy to counteract the global inequality that is inherent in the centre-periphery relations being newly structured within the concept of "globalization". Thus, while "agency" matters in the realpolitik at the micro level, in the face of the global political economy, it also matters at the macro level, and international alliances in this also have strategic importance.

## b. Broader development issues

In the twenty-first century, sub-Saharan Africa's role in the world economy continues to be mainly to supply primary products, leaving countries vulnerable to fluctuations in the world price of their main exports. About 80 per cent of inward investment is at present in exploration and extraction of minerals. The bulk of this is for petroleum, and Nigeria, Angola and other potential oil producers in West Africa are the principal destinations of this inward investment. There is little investment in agriculture, and world prices for African agricultural products continue to decline, while these have difficulty in competing even locally as foreign products flood the market. This economic context has reinforced the post-independence tendencies for strong rural-to-urban migration, despite the poverty experienced by migrants when they reach the cities.

Many independent African countries initially attempted to protect their local agriculture and industry through such means as tariffs, quotas or restrictions on capital flows, while remaining linked to the global economy. However, the promotion of a neoliberal economic agenda by world financial institutions and Northern governments has made this increasingly difficult since the 1980s. Opening up to the world economy implies attracting highly specific inward investment, while suffering a decline in general economic activities in local agriculture and industry and the weakening of any opportunities to create an integrated national economy.

28. Neto, M (2001), "Angola – the historical context for reconstruction" in Robson, P (editor), "Communities and reconstruction in Angola", *Development Workshop Occasional Paper* No 1, Guelph, Canada, pages 23-50.

As this paper has shown, Angola is an extreme case of this peripheral-ization, although facing similar challenges to those of the rest of Africa. As one Angolan historian has noted, international organizations frequently criticize the Angolan state for not resolving fundamental problems nor creating basic conditions for development; however, these areas are precisely where international organizations should be capable of assisting, but rarely do.[28] Other African nations are also experiencing similar rapid rates of growth in urbanization and poverty, even if they are not at war, and they have better-integrated national economies. The major development question concerning globalization and peripheralization at a broader level is not how to ensure that the benefit of export-led growth can trickle down more effectively through better redistribution (i.e. underpinned by more open governance) but how more people can be productively engaged in the development process. Here again, lessons can be learned from the local level for broader development policies.