GGA
Good Governance Africa

CITY PROFILING REPORT 2025

Luanda

AFRICAN CITIES REPORT

Luanda

City Profiling Report 2025

The completion of this report benefited from the contributions of several individuals. The report was externally reviewed by Alan Cain and Prof Sylvia Croese and edited by Dr Ross Harvey. Helen Grange undertook the sub-editing. Brandon Janse van Rensburg designed the layout and visual presentation, and the map was prepared by Mischka Moosa. The report was authored by Ian Palmer and Stuart Morrison.

COVER PHOTO: City of Luanda in Angola.

Photo: Délcio Geovany Borges - https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=158814651

DISCLAIMER: All material is strictly protected by copyright and all rights are reserved. No portion of this report may be reproduced in any form without written consent from the publishers. The information contained herein is compiled from a wide variety of primary sources. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this publication, the publishers do not give warranty as to the completeness or accuracy of its content. The views expressed in the publication are not necessarily those of the publishers, Good Governance Africa or its associates. Excerpts may be used as long as the source is fully credited. For longer or full versions, written permission must be obtained from the publishers.

Published by Good Governance Africa – The Mall Offices, 11 Cradock Avenue, Rosebank, Johannesburg, 2196, South Africa
All rights reserved. No content may be republished without the express authorisation of GGA.

Best viewed with Adobe Acrobat Reader
https://get.adobe.com/reader

Contents

List of tables and figures

List of tables

List of figures

1. INTRODUCTION

The Luanda City Profiling Report is part of the African Cities Profiling project, which aims to enhance understanding of individual cities across the continent with a view to improving government effectiveness and empowering citizens to hold their governments to account. With Africa's rapid urbanisation, cities face significant challenges, including the growth of informal settlements and deficiencies in service delivery. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive understanding of city dynamics and the factors influencing them.

The report supports local authorities by providing comparative data that facilitates learning from peers and incentivises improvements in underperforming areas. It also assists national governments in regulating and supporting local authorities. For citizens, the report offers accessible information on the developmental context of their cities, fostering transparency and engagement.

By profiling multiple cities using standardised measures, the project enables stakeholders – local authorities, national governments, and citizens – to compare cities, identify best practices, and foster mutual learning. This comparative approach supports evidence-based decision-making and promotes improved governance, ultimately addressing urban challenges such as informal settlement growth and service delivery deficiencies.

This report for Luanda is one of 10 cities in the SADC region for which GGA is preparing city profiles, the others being: Bulawayo, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Harare, Johannesburg, Lusaka, Lilongwe, Maputo and Ndola. These cities have been selected as a blend of primary and secondary cities in the region. Where relevant in this report, comparisons are drawn with these other cities.

The report utilises existing data to provide key insights into some of the challenges and opportunities faced by the city. Alongside other city reports, this profile is intended to assist cities in improving their development impact by providing access to subnational data across Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. BACKGROUND

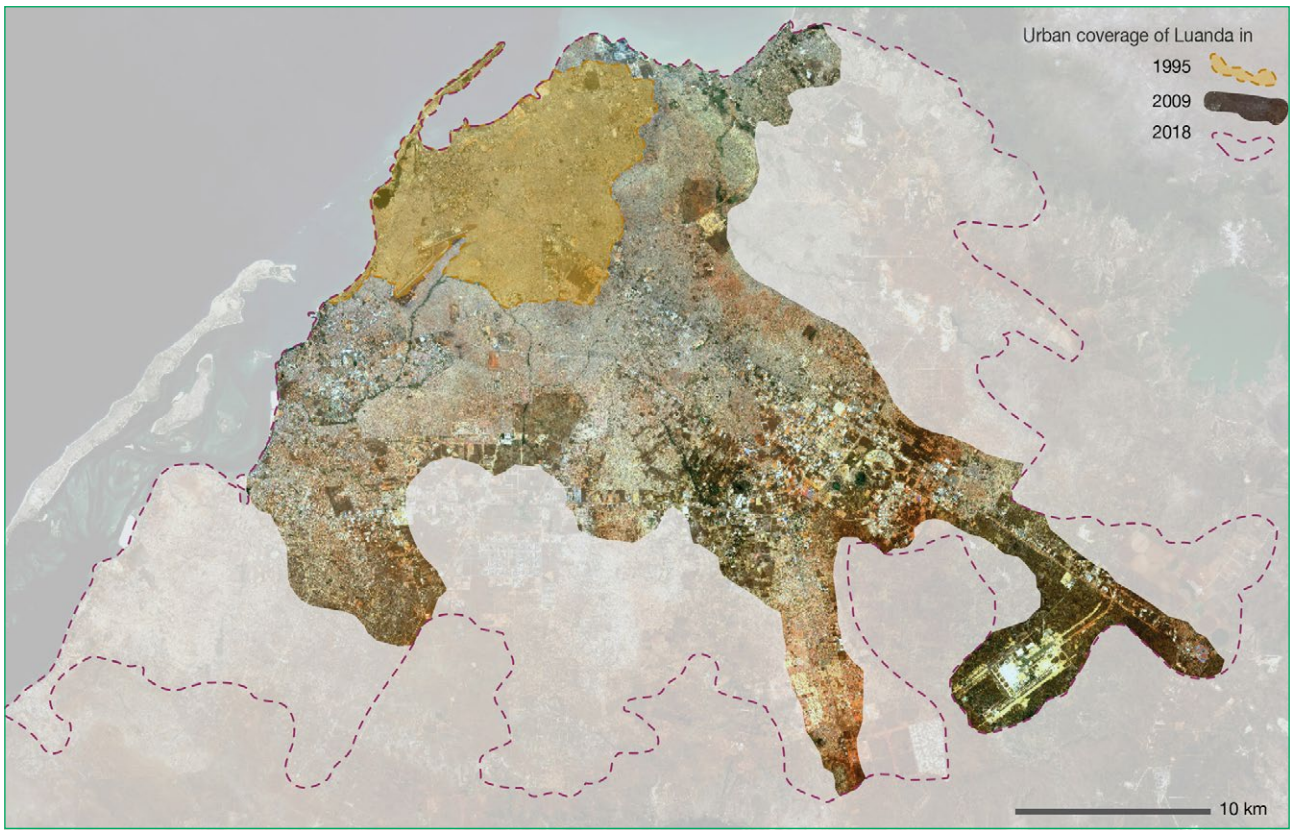
The Luanda region has a long and complex history, originally occupied by hunter-gatherers, followed by the settlement of the Bantu people moving from the North and forming the Ndongo Kingdom.[1] Portuguese traders regularly used Luanda Bay as a trading post with the Ndongo and Kongo Kingdoms in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Portuguese took increasing control over settlement in Luanda with the Fort of São Miguel constructed in 1576.[2] Over the following centuries, the transatlantic slave trade expanded, with Luanda becoming a key port for the transport of slaves to Brazil.

By the mid nineteenth century, Luanda had grown from a small town to a bustling city, with a population of some 140,000 people. At this stage in its history, Luanda was fairly insulated from the political dynamics in the rest of the country. But this would change with the Angolan War of Independence from 1961 to 1975, with nationalist forces from across the country fighting for independence from the Portuguese colonial government. After independence in 1975, Angola quickly deteriorated into deeper instability with the fracturing of the independence movement and the start of a 27-year civil war.

An attempted coup from within the ruling *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) in 1977 was violently repressed and became the pretext, with the help of petro dollars in the years ahead, on which the remaining inner core of the MPLA consolidated control over the party and eventually the country. The civil war, predominantly fought by the Cuba and Russia-backed MPLA against the CIA and South African Apartheid-backed *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA), lasted for 27 years and finally ended with the assassination of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi in 2002.[3] Migration to Luanda escalated as people sought refuge from conflicts across the country. By the time the civil war ended in 2002, the population of the city was estimated at 5.8 million people. In just three decades, Luanda's urban area more than

1 Cláudia C. Azeredo Atallah Maria Sarita Mota, Luanda, Global Capital of the Slave Trade, 2023, https://www.teseopress.com/portuguesecolonialcities/chapter/maximiliano-m-menz-wolfgang-lenk/.
2 Maria Sarita Mota.
3 Ross Harvey, *Coups, Military Rule and Autocratic Consolidation in Angola and Nigeria*, 1st ed. (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-5275-6076-5.

Figure 1: Urban settlement coverage of Luanda metropolitan area 1995 to 2018



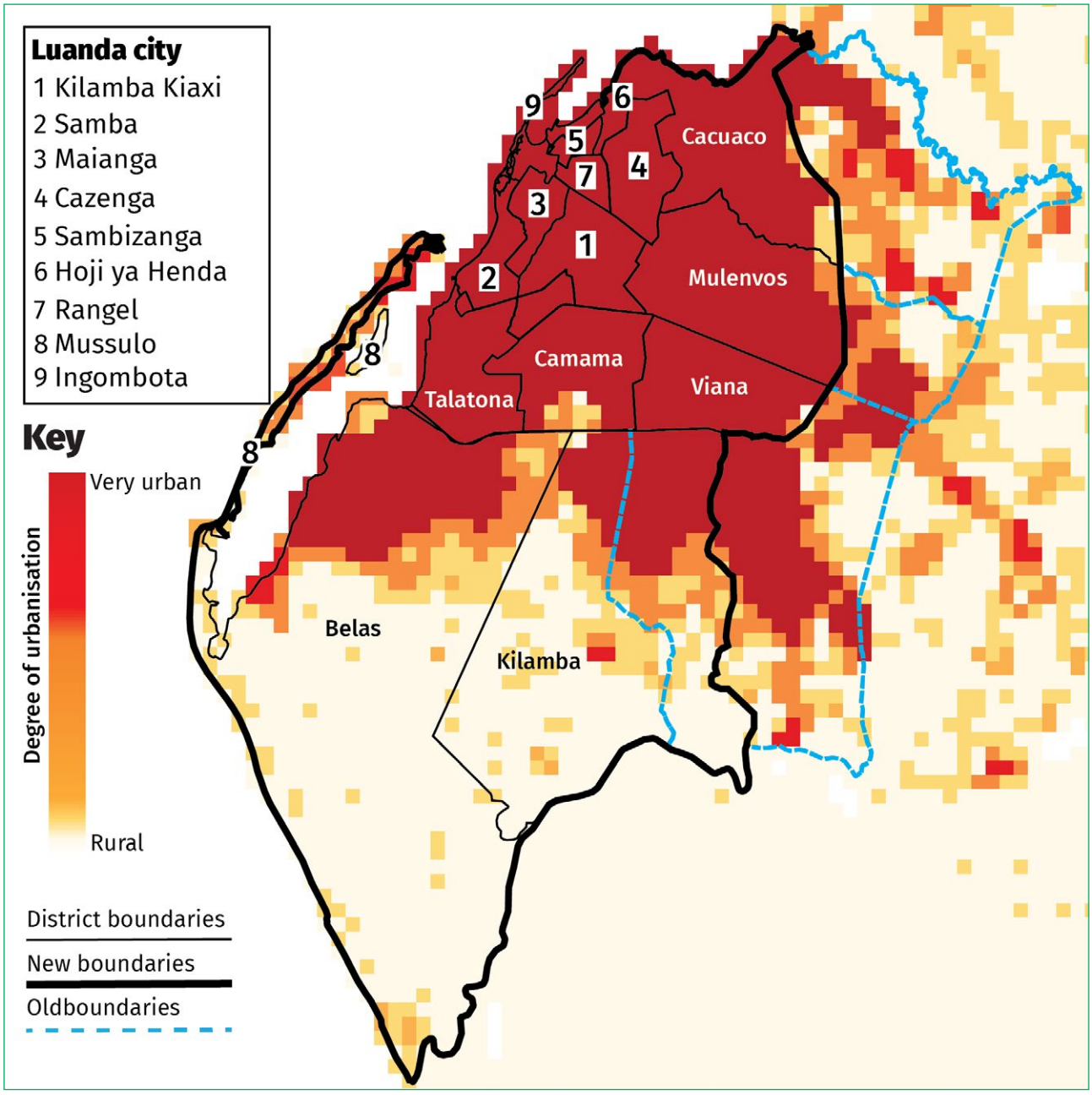
Graphic: GRID-Arendal

doubled, with some estimates putting the city's population growth rate at around 7% per year.[4]

The war in Angola consumed the majority of available resources. Combined with mass in-migration and a highly under-skilled population in the wake of the rapid Portuguese departure in 1974, city infrastructure was inadequate to cope with the growing population, with the vast majority of people living in poorly serviced informal settlements.[5] While parts of post-independence Luanda benefited massively from an oil and precious minerals boom, the city's infrastructure benefited little from extractive industries until the early 2000s. Even then, much of the infrastructure built through oil-for-infrastructure deals with China (between 2002 and 2014) was neither systematic nor sustainable (or fit for purpose).[6] Only after 2002 were opportunities provided to roll out development programmes in the city with relatively progressive improvement in services and housing. This economic growth promoted Luanda as the country's economic hub and main cultural centre.[7] With the influx of petro dollars, Luanda had become the most expensive city in the world for expats to live in by 2010, a position it still retained in 2017.[8] The city and the country remain heavily underdeveloped, with service delivery backlogs and poor housing conditions, coupled with poor public transport and environmental degradation.[9]

4 Ross Harvey, Coups, Military Rule and Autocratic Consolidation in Angola and Nigeria, 1st ed. (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-5275-6076-5.
5 Jenkins, Robson, and Cain, "City Profile: Luanda."
6 Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War* (Oxford University Press, 2015), https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mGJ2CAAAQBAJ&pgis=1.
7 Paul Jenkins, Paul Robson, and Allan Cain, "City Profile: Luanda," *Cities* 19, no. 2 (April 1, 2002): 139–50, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0264-2751(02)00010-0.
8 *The Economist*, 29 June 2010, "Dear Africa, Luanda is the most expensive city for expatriates", https://www.economist.com/gulliver/2010/06/29/dear-africa, accessed 10 December 2025.
9 An Economist article from 2017 puts it starkly: "The country is in a terrible state. After the end of the civil war in 2002, oil wealth started to flow, bringing new roads and fancy skyscrapers to Luanda. Thanks to epic corruption, little has filtered down. Most Angolans live in penury. Life expectancy is barely 60 years. So dire are health facilities that last year Angola suffered the world's worst outbreak of yellow fever in decades." https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2017/11/30/angolas-new-president-flushes-out-his-predecessors-wealthy-clan, accessed 10 December 2025.

Figure 2: Map showing current (2025) Luanda Province boundaries and local authorities in relation to the functional urban area and the pre-2024 provincial boundary



3. URBAN GEOGRAPHY AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Luanda needs to be considered geographically as a single functional urban area, which can also be referred to as the metropolitan area, with its extent expanding rapidly, as shown in Figure 1.

The extent of the metropolitan area in 2024 is shown in Figure 2, with boundaries discussed below.

The degree to which the administrative arrangements of Luanda match the functional urban area is significant as there are gains in efficiency and effectiveness having a single administration responsible for managing the city as a metropolitan area. Until 2024, the administrative boundary of the Province of Luanda largely included the whole metropolitan area as shown by the blue line on Figure 2, with the red coloured area being the urban settlement area taken from the Global Human Settlements database for 2024. Controversially, the Luanda Province

boundary was redrawn by the Angolan Government in 2024 with the metropolitan area now under the administration of three provinces: Luanda, Bengo and Icolo e Bengo[10], with the Luanda Province boundary shown by the black line.

Currently, Luanda Province incorporates 16 "municipos"[11] or municipalities, as shown in Figure 2. The extent to which these municipalities share responsibility for service provision with Luanda Province is discussed in Section 5.

Statistics in the report relating to the province are for the former, pre-2024 boundaries, which means they can be related to the whole metropolitan area.

Based on the pre-2024 boundaries, the land area of Luanda Province[12] was approximately 2,417 km^2. Of this, the urban area makes up approximately 936 km^2 (39%). Compared to the other SADC cities, this puts Luanda on a larger scale in terms of total area.

In terms of the total built-up area in Luanda, the current estimate is around 277,6 km^2. This is a 28,8 km^2 difference from the estimated built-up area[13] in 2015, which was 249,4 km^2.

3.1 POPULATION

Macrotrends records the population of Luanda at 9.65 million in 2024[14]. This corresponds with a figure from the Global Human Settlements Layer of 10.9 million in 2024[15]. This makes Luanda the fourth largest city in Africa after Lagos, Kinshasa and Cairo. It is also one of the fastest growing, with a population growth rate of 6.3% per annum in 2020,[16] although this is falling rapidly from the extraordinarily high average growth rate of 13.5% per year over the period 1980 to 2015, as people were driven from rural areas, which became destabilised during the War of Liberation and the ensuing Civil War. Luanda is now home to 30% of Angolans.[17]

The population density of the province is roughly 419 people per km^2 according to Global Human Settlements.[18]

The age breakdown of Luanda province for 2021 indicates that it has a young population with ages 0-29 making up over 69% of inhabitants.[19]

3.2 HOUSING

Household numbers are a useful way of introducing housing issues, as typically there is at least one dwelling unit per household, although this may be more where housing supply is limited. The number of households in the metropolitan area in 2024 can be estimated at 1.43 million from the population – 9.65 million – and the average household size, which is estimated at 6.72.[20] This figure of 6.72 is very high compared to the average for the 10 sample SADC cities of 4.5, with the figure for Johannesburg being the lowest at 2.8.[21] The high figure is linked to both large families and a lack of housing opportunities, with young adults having to remain in the family home for longer.

No recent data could be found on the number of dwellings in Luanda, but if it is estimated that there are 1.1 households per dwelling, and the number of dwellings is 1.31 million in 2024.

Urban development, including housing projects, has been a central focus area in the rapid development of the city over the past fifteen years.[22] But housing remains a huge challenge for Luanda, with almost two-thirds of the population living

10 https://www.verangola.net/va/en/082024/Politics/41054/MPLA-proposes-dividing-Luanda-into-two-provinces.htm
11 "Província - Luanda," accessed February 4, 2025, https://governo.gov.ao/provincia/luanda. Municipalities included: Belas, Cacuaco, Cazenga, Hoji Ya Henda, Quilamba (Kilamba), Viana, Talatona, Kilamba-Kiaxi, Camama, Ingombota, Sambizanga, Samba, Rangel, Mulinvos, Maianga and Mussulo.
12 "Governo Provincial de Luanda," LUANDA, Governo Provincial de Luanda, accessed February 19, 2025, https://luanda.gov.ao.
13 Global Human Settlement Layer, "Urban Centre Database," n.d., https://human-settlement.emergency.copernicus.eu/dataToolsOverview.php.
14 Macrotrends. "Luanda Metro Area Population (1950–2025)." Accessed Dec 10, 2025
15 De-escalated from 2025 figure of 11.6 million at the population growth rate of 6.3%.
16 Global Human Settlements Layer.
17 Camilo Lombana Cordoba et al., "Diagnosing Angola's WASH Sector: An Urgent Call to Action" (Washington, DC: World Bank, May 10, 2021), https://hdl.handle.net/10986/35591.
18 Global Human Settlement Layer, "Urban Centre Database."
19 Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE)
20 "Area Database" (Global Data Lab, n.d.); Jeroen Smits, "GDL Area Database: Sub-National Development Indicators for Research and Policy-Making" (Institute for Management Research, Radboud University, 2016).
21 Based on Global Data Lab data.
22 Croese, S. 2016. "Urban Governance and Turning African Cites Around: Luanda Case Study". Partnership for African Social and Governance Research Working Paper No. 018, Nairobi, Kenya.

Table 1: Comparative performance of housing sectors

PNUH players	Planned targets		Achievements		Results against planned
	Units	Percentage of total	Units	Percentage of planned	
State public housing	122,000	12.2%	151,800	1244%	Exceeded target
Private sector	115,000	11.5%	45,600	39.7%	Disappointing results
Cooperative housing	80,000	8%	10,366	13%	Poor results
State-directed owner-built	685,000	68.5%	12,902	1.9%	131,624 Lots laid out
PNUH Total	1,000,000	100%	220,672	22%	33.9% if lots are counted
Social production			205,512	22%	Unplanned

Source: Allan Cain. 2020. 'Housing for whom?'

in informal, self-built housing.[23] This is comparable with Lilongwe, Lusaka and Maputo, yet Luanda has greater resources to improve access to adequate housing. There have been housing interventions in the past, including the Urbanization and Housing Programme (PNUH).[24] Launched in 2009, the initiative aimed to build one million housing units in cooperation with several stakeholders to address both the informal and formal housing arrangements. Table 1 depicts the results of this programme between 2009 and 2019.[25] The study conducted by Allan Cain shows that while the state exceeded its target of 122,000 units built, the other housing players did not come close to achieving their targets. Moreover, many of the high-end units built by the private sector remained unoccupied.[26] One of the biggest challenges was the lack of reliable data on the informal housing sector, which led to an over-prioritisation of middle and high classes. Further, it did not account for the way in which the 'musseques' functioned.

It is typical for all in formal settlements to be grouped into one category. However, in reality, the situation in Luanda is highly variable. Based on a 2019 study[27] of Luanda's 'musseques', the province had 65 musseques, with a population of 7.2 million. It shows the situation in the musseques to vary considerably in history, size, access to services and building quality. Some were established in the colonial period, with households improving the condition of their dwellings over time and with relatively good services, while at the other extreme, some are recently established with poor services. Some of the very recently established musseques are extraordinarily large in scale: for example, Camama (879,000 population), Panguila (456,000), Palanca (658,000) and Petrangol (789,000). They have poor access to water supply with the proportion of households having water on site ranging from 3% to 20% but relatively good access to electricity, with an average of 60% of households in Panguila, Palanca and Petrangol households having access to electricity (Camama is an exception with only 15% access).

Households in musseques typically build with cement blocks, with an average of 50% having this type of construction, with the remainder building with wood, palm or other materials. Between 2009 and 2015, almost 50% of houses built were informal, unassisted houses in the 'musseques'.[28]

23 Allan Cain, "Housing for Whom?: Rebuilding Angola's Cities after Conflict and Who Gets Left behind," in *Reframing the Urban Challenge in Africa* (Routledge, 2020), 183–207, https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-edit/10.4324/9781003008385-7/housing-allan-cain.

24 Cain, "Housing for Whom?"

25 Allan Cain, "Housing for Whom?: Rebuilding Angola's Cities after Conflict and Who Gets Left behind," in Reframing the Urban Challenge in Africa.

26 Cain; Jorge Manuel Gonçalves and J. M. R. F. Gama, "A Systematisation of Policies and Programs Focused on Informal Urban Settlements: Reviewing the Cases of São Paulo, Luanda, and Istanbul," *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability* 13, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 466–88, https://doi.org/10.1080/17549175.2020.1753228.

27 Carlos Pestana Barros and Carlos Balsas, "Luanda's Slums: An Overview Based on Poverty and Gentrification," *Urban Development Issues* 64 (December 2019): 29–38, https://doi.org/10.2478/udi-2019-0021.

28 Cain, "Housing for Whom?"

Informality implies a lack of secure ownership, and the situation with secure land tenure in Luanda is problematic. The Centre for Affordable Housing in Africa reports that property registration is a key challenge, as Angola ranked 167th out of 190 in property registration quality, putting it in the lowest decile.[29]

4. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 POVERTY

Taking a broad view of what constitutes poverty, the International Wealth Index (IWI)[30] is useful as it measures ownership of various assets, housing and access to services[31]. Luanda province has a mean IWI score 67.2, close to the average for the 10 SADC cities the GGA sample of 64.4 (range is 89.4 for Cape Town to 28.7 for Lilongwe). This IWI figure is for 2016 and therefore relatively outdated but Global Data Lab shows it is improving progressively from 2011 when the figure was 65.6.

Turning to income poverty in the city, 8% of households were living below the poverty threshold in 2020 as defined by the World Bank.[32] This is surprising given the relatively high level of unemployment in the city (See Section 3), and the figure is contested. For example, in an Afrobarometer survey carried out in 2024, 26% of respondents in Luanda indicated that they went without food 'many times/always'[33]. Assuming the figure of 8%, this is a very low level of income poverty by African city standards. Levels of poverty in Luanda are also low when compared to the country's average of 32.3% and extraordinarily low when compared to poverty in rural areas, where 54.7% of people live below the poverty threshold. It is not clear what the trend is for Luanda, but aggregate income poverty at the national level was decreasing in 2019.[34] More recent data indicate, however, that poverty in Luanda is increasing.[35]

4.2 QUALITY OF LIFE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Luanda's Subnational Human Development Index (SHDI) score is relatively high at 0.71 out of 1[36]. Compared to the other SADC cities in this study, Luanda sits on the higher end of the SHDI score, just below Johannesburg at 0.72 (with Gauteng province as a proxy) and Cape Town at 0.76. Lilongwe has the lowest level of human development of the 10 cities in the GGA sample, with a score of 0.52.

Luanda is an unequal society as measured by the Gini Coefficient with a figure of 0.64, similar to South African cities (Johannesburg 0.62 and Cape Town 0.67).[37,38]

From the perspective of upper-income earners or expatriates, Mercer assesses quality of life and ranks major cities[39]. Luanda has a low ranking of 205 out of 241, alongside Maputo (191), Dar es Salaam (204) and Harare (218), with the quality of life in South African cities being much higher, with Cape Town and Johannesburg ranked 102 and 105, respectively. The low ranking of Luanda has much to do with the high cost of living for higher-income people.

4.3 EDUCATION

Partly to recover from the setback of the Civil War, education has become a key developmental focus for the Angolan government. However, despite efforts to improve the quality of education, progress has been slow.

29 "Angola," CAHF | Centre for Affordable Housing Finance Africa, February 1, 2016, https://housingfinanceafrica.org/countries/angola/; Allan Cain, "Angola's Housing Rental Market" (Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa, February 10, 2017), https://housingfinanceafrica.org/app/uploads/DW-Angola_CAHF_Angolas-Housing-Rental-Market_February-2017.pdf.

30 eroen Smits and Roel Steendijk, "The International Wealth Index (IWI)," *Social Indicators Research* 122 (May 1, 2015): 65–85, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0683-x; Smits, "GDL Area Database: Sub-National Development Indicators for Research and Policy-Making."

31 These assets include seven consumer durables (possession of a TV, fridge, phone, bike, car, a cheap utensil and an expensive utensil), access to two public services (water and electricity) and three housing characteristics (number of sleeping rooms, quality of floor material and of toilet facility)

32 World Bank. 2020. "Angola Poverty Assessment – June 24, 2020."

33 Afrobarometer. 2025. "Angola Round 10 data (2024)." Accessed January 2026. https://www.afrobarometer.org/survey-resource/angola-round-10-data-2024/

34 World Bank. 2019. 'Poverty & Equity Brief – Angola.'

35 Statista. 2022. "Number of people living in extreme poverty in Angola from 2016 to 2026." Accessed January 2026. https://www.statista.com/statistics/1269331/number-of-people-living-in-extreme-poverty-in-angola/?srsltid=AfmBOoorX5RjbGEHd4OfriXCI4fcexulgVhLHvHXWdXqxTFYr-DS3rux.

36 "Subnational HDI Database" (Global Data Lab, n.d.); Jeroen Smits and Iñaki Permanyer, "The Subnational Human Development Database," *Scientific* Data 6, no. 1 (March 12, 2019): 190038, https://doi.org/10.1038/sdata.2019.38.

37 Statista. "Gini coefficient in Angola 2018-2019, by province" Published by Doris Dokua Sasu, Jan 30, 2024

38 Much poorer cities are more equal, with Harare having a Gini Coefficient of 0.38 in 2015 and Dar es Salaam 0.11 in the same year.

39 Mercer. "Quality of Living City Ranking 2023." Accessed January 2026. https://www.mercer.com/en-au/insights/total-rewards/talent-mobility-insights/quality-of-living-city-ranking/#city-ranking-item-2404943f71

Primary and secondary schooling is a provincial function in Angola. According to the 2021/2022 education yearbook,[40] around 80% of the total classrooms in the country are found in only 8 of Angola's 18 provinces, with Luanda having the most. Figures from the Yearbook for Luanda Province show the province had 2,984 schools in 2022 (49% primary) with 1,571,000 students (69% in primary school) and a student/teacher ratio of 45 (equal to the country average). 29% of students were in public schools, 16% in public/private schools and 45% in private schools.[41]

Based on 2016 data kept by the Global Data Lab,[42] the mean years of education of people aged 20+ was 8.2 years, which is very low compared to Johannesburg at 12.8 years and Harare at 11.1 years. More recent figures are needed, but it is evident that education in Luanda is a major challenge.

4.4 HEALTH

The provincial governments are responsible for the implementation of health policies and strategies established by the national government[43]. The healthcare system is broken up into three tiers:

- Primary level: community health centres and municipal hospitals
- Secondary level: provincial and maternity hospitals
- Tertiary level: specialised hospitals

The provincial government holds considerable autonomy over health care as it is fully responsible for primary and secondary health, with some responsibility for the tertiary level.[44]

The number of healthcare facilities in Luanda province run under the National Healthcare Service was 216 in 2021, which included 15 municipal hospitals, one general hospital, two specialised hospitals and 12 central hospitals.

By way of comparison, there are 1,820 privately run healthcare facilities in the province, although the majority of these were clinics (94) and medical centres (998), which presumably offer a lower range of services compared to public hospitals. The dominance of private healthcare facilities, at least at primary healthcare level, likely favours wealthier people.

In 2021, there were 4,292[45] beds across the 15 hospitals in Luanda province; 4.8 beds per 10,000 people. According to SDG 3.8, which aims to achieve universal health coverage, the target is 18 beds per 10 000 people, indicating a substantial gap in health facilities.

The latest available health outcome data in the Global Data Lab for Luanda is from 2016[46]. It estimates an infant mortality rate of 32.5 per 1,000 live births and an under-five mortality rate of 50.8 per 1,000 live births. This is significantly higher than the SDG targets of 12 and 25 per 1,000 live births, respectively. The figure for under-five mortality is close to the average for SADC cities in the GGA sample, with a wide range from 5.2 for Cape Town to 79.1 for Maputo.

Life expectancy in Luanda was 64 years in 2020[47], which is surprisingly high – comparable with the average of 67 years for the 10 SADC cities – considering the war conditions Angolans have lived through and inadequate health care. This may be attributed to the low incidence of HIV/AIDS in Luanda[48], only moderate incidence of drug-resistant TB[49] and low probability of dying through cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease, all major concerns in South Africa, for example.[50] On the other hand, the relatively poor water and sanitation situation in Angola has resulted in an alarming increase in cholera in early 2025 in Angola generally and in Luanda specifically.[51]

40 Angola Minstry of Education. 2025. "Annual Statistical Yearbook 2022/23" https://www.ine.gov.ao/Arquivos/arquivosCarregados//Carregados/Publicacao_638732654035305545.pdf
41 Statistical Yearbook 2022/23.
42 Smits, "GDL Area Database: Sub-National Development Indicators for Research and Policy-Making"; "Area Database."
43 Understanding Angola's Health & Nutrition Sectors: A Public Expenditure Review" (United Nations Children's Fund, 2023).
44 ibid
45 "Anuário Estatístico Sanitário 2021."
46 Smits, "GDL Area Database: Sub-National Development Indicators for Research and Policy-Making"; "Area Database."
47 Global Human Settlements Layer.
48 https://www.healthdata.org/data-tools-practices/interactive-visuals/hiv-africa
49 https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1201971225000013
50 WHO Diabetes_Regional_Factsheet https://files.aho.afro.who.int/afahobckpcontainer/production/files/iAHO.
51 World Health Organisation. 2025. "Disease Outbreak News. Cholera – Angola. 28 March 2025"

5. ECONOMY

Luanda is the economic hub of Angola, with its port and offshore oil facilities. For the past several decades, the Angolan economy has been almost singularly focused on oil production, which in 2019 accounted for 97% of exports, over 60% of government revenues, and together with natural gas, 31% of GDP.[52] The City of Luanda has benefited substantially from development funded from oil revenue, reflected in the city's GDP per capita in 2024 of $7,400[53], which is well above the average of $1,900 for Dar es Salaam, Harare, Lilongwe, Lusaka and Maputo, but well below Johannesburg ($16,300) and Cape Town ($13,700). However, despite the substantial GDP per capita, Luanda's unemployment rate was relatively high in 2021/2022[54] at 40.1%,[55] indicative of the unequal access to economic opportunities in the city.

2.7 million people were employed in 2022, with the breakdown by sector given in Table 2.

Table 2: Population aged 15 or over employed by sector (2022)

Sector	% of employment
Agriculture, animal production, hunting, forestry and fishing	4.0%
Industry, energy and water	5.6%
Construction	7.9%
Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles & motorcycles	42.3%
Transport, storage, accommodation and communication	10.2%
Financial, real estate and consultancy activities	2.2%
Public administrative, defense and social security activities	11.7%
Education	4.1%
Health and social	2.4%
Arts, sports, other employment	9.7%
Total	**100%**

Compared to the typical employment profile for SADC cities, this indicates a low level of manufacturing (a portion of the industry, water and energy sector) and a surprisingly high level of employment in the wholesale and retail sector.

Data from 2018[56] suggests that almost 60% of businesses in Angola are based in Luanda.

Growth rate data specifically for Luanda has not been located, but informed conjecture suggests that it closely tracks the national economy, in which case it has been improving since 2020 after stagnation in the preceding six years[57], following the oil price crash of 2014.

6. LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of Angola, Article 201, provides for decentralisation of functions to local government, but the decentralisation process has been slow in implementation.[58] While not yet properly established, the Constitution recognises local government under Article 219: 'Under the terms of the law, local authorities shall have responsibilities in the spheres of education, health, energy, water, rural and urban facilities, heritage, culture and science, transport and communications, leisure time and sporting activities, housing, social services, civil defence, the environment and basic sanitation, consumer rights, the promotion of economic and social development, town and country planning, the municipal police force, decentralised cooperation and twinning'.

There are substantial overlaps in responsibilities allocated to local and provincial governments. For example, the Luanda Province website includes an extensive list of responsibilities, including:

- Education and teaching at the provincial level, as well as coordinating provincial programmes aimed at scientific and technological development, research and innovation;

52 The World Bank. Angola - Electricity Sector Improvement and Access Project (P166805)
53 Citiesabc.com
54 "Angola Employment Survey Report 2022" (Luanda: Instituto Nacional de Estatística, May 2023).
55 "Angola Employment Survey Report 2022."
56 "Angola: Study on the Migration from the Informal Economy for Formal Economy" (Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Organization, 2021), https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_dialogue/@act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_823469.pdf.
57 See World Bank Databank, World Development Indicators, GDP per capita growth (annual %), as well as GDP (constant 2015 US$) https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators for Angola, accessed 10 December 2025.
58 Carlos Nunes Silva. 2020. "Decentralization and the New Urban Agenda: The Case of Angola".

- Public health and medical and pharmaceutical assistance in the Province;
- Transport, traffic and urban mobility;
- Cultural, tourism, youth and sports fields;
- Environment, waste management and community services, as well as coordinate provincial programmes aimed at promoting good practices in the sector;

The reality, based on the provincial budget described in Section 9, is that the Province undertakes all the major service responsibilities, including security; primary and secondary education; health (primary health care and hospitals); social protection; housing & community services; recreation and culture; and economic affairs. Thus, the reality is that the 16 municipalities within Luanda Province have minimal responsibilities, primarily, it is assumed, because they do not receive funding for the responsibilities allocated to them in the Constitution. This means that Luanda Province is the de facto local authority taking primary responsibility for the provision of urban services. This situation became more complicated in 2024 with the shift in provincial boundaries so that the Eastern part of the metropolitan area is now under the administration of the Province of Icolo e Bengo, as described in Section 1. Further, the reality is that the services are undertaken by others, either by Luanda Province, public utilities or private businesses, as described in Table 3.

Surprisingly, roads are not specifically mentioned in the Constitution Article 219 nor on the Luanda Province website, given their importance for city functionality and the high proportion of urban assets they represent. The probability is that they are included in the more general

Table 3: Table of functional responsibilities

Function	Institution providing service	Notes
Water supply	Empresa Publica de Aguas de Luanda (EPAL)	Provincial-scale public entity
Sanitation	Provincial-scale public entity and private	Sewered sanitation split between provincial public utility and private company. 'On site' sanitation overseen by Luanda Province with service mainly private.
Electricity	Empresa Nacional de Distribuição de Electricidade (ENDE)	National scale public entity
Roads – national	Instituto Nacional de Estradas de Angol (INEA)	National scale public entity
Roads – regional	INEA	National scale public entity
Roads – local (streets)	Luanda Province	INEA also acts as technical advisors to Province
Public transport	Luanda Province as authority; Bus companies; Minibus taxis	Bus company ownership mixed Minibuses privately owned
Mass transit		BRT system at advanced planning stage
Solid Waste Management	Luanda Province oversight; Private providers	Some roles for community based organisations.
Community services including sporting facilities, community halls, environmental health and parks	Luanda Province	
Emergency and security services (fire, city police etc)	Luanda Province	
Primary and secondary health care and general hospital services	Luanda Province	
Education (Primary and secondary)	Luanda Province	

Note, with the recent changes in provincial boundaries it is likely that provincial functions for the metropolitan area of Luanda will be shared between Luanda, Bengo and Icolo e Bengo.

term 'transport'. Although transport policy allocates responsibility for 'unclassified' or 'municipal' roads to provinces, as described in Section 7.6, they are not specifically mentioned in the Luanda Province budget, with the assumption being that they are included under 'urban infrastructure', which only represents 4.8% of the Province's operating budget.

The key feature of this institutional map is the absence of municipalities, as they do not undertake any major functions, although they share some responsibility for solid waste management (street cleaning). That said, they have an increasingly important role in managing land and local services, with future elections to establish municipal councils likely to increase their responsibilities. At present, they function largely at the behest of the Provincial Government, which oversees the activities of municipalities.

The extent to which health and education are provided by the province acting as metropolitan government is unusual, as a more typical arrangement in Africa is for these services not to be local government responsibility, particularly secondary schooling and secondary health care.

7. ACCESS TO SERVICES

7.1 WATER SUPPLY

Institutional arrangements

The organisation of the water, sanitation and health (WASH) sector in Angola has seen significant developments in the last decade and continues to evolve. At the national level, the Ministry of Energy and Water (MINEA) has overall responsibility over water supply and sanitation. This includes regulation (Instituto Regulador dos Serviços de Electricidade e de Água - IRSEA), water resource management (Instituto Nacional de Recursos Hídricos - INRH) and planning and investment (Plano Nacional da Água - DNA), as well as oversight of the provincial public water and sanitation utilities. In Luanda, the Provincial Government is responsible for wastewater management through UTGLS.[59]

While, in principle and in law, the Angolan government is committed to decentralising the water supply service, with water supply the responsibility of local government, in terms of law, the reality is that the sector remains heavily centralised.[60] In Luanda, it is dominated by Empresa Publica de Aguas de Luanda (EPAL), the public utility responsible for water supply to Luanda Province, but its activities have been limited to bulk water supply and distribution to formally established commercial and residential areas, with EPAL estimating in 2021 that it serves 42% of Luanda.[61] Supply to informal, mostly poorer areas, the Musseques, is undertaken primarily by small private water truck and standpost operators, sometimes working cooperatively and in some cases with community-based organisations, between them serving two-thirds of the Musseque population.[62]

Access to services

While the level of access to a water service is increasing, with Cordoba et al giving a figure of 87% of people having access to at least a basic level[63], the city population is growing so fast that there are still close to one million people in Luanda without a basic service. The ability to deliver services effectively is hampered by institutional shortcomings, including a lack of technical capacity and a lack of coordination of sector activities.[64]

The success of the water supply sector is, firstly, dependent on the performance of EPAL. But this is difficult to assess as performance data is not readily available: EPAL does not make performance figures available on its website and does not contribute to the international IBNET utility monitoring system, as do other Angolan water companies. However, it is evident that the distribution system has high technical losses and EPAL faces other technological and

59 UNICEF. 2023. "Bottleneck analysis of the WASH sector in Angola from a public finance perspective". https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/13496/file/UNICEF-Angola-Bottleneck-WASH-Sector-2023.pdf

60 Ibid.

61 Lombana Cordoba, Camilo, Luis A. Andrés, Lucrécio A. M. da Costa, and Crystal Fenwick. 2021. "Diagnosing Angola's WASH Sector: An Urgent Call to Action—Diagnostic Report." World Bank, Washington, DC. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/5afd6d32-814c-5a4e-8a42-75695b6d3061

62 Allan Cain and Afonso Cupi Baptista. 2020. "Community Management and the Demand for 'Water for All' in Angola's Musseques". https://www.mdpi.com/2073-4441/12/6/1592

63 Cordoba et al use the SDG definitions as applied by the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP): "Drinking water from an improved source, provided collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a roundtrip including queuing",

64 Cordoba el al, 2021 p99-100

managerial shortcomings.[65] That said, EPAL is benefiting from major new investments in the water supply system.

With the limited success of formal, large-scale water supply arrangements, informal arrangements using small private operators and community-based organisations have been vital for the social and economic development of Luanda. Over the past decades, the evolution of these arrangements has been supported by a national NGO, Development Workshop, working with government and community-based organisations. There are three main water distribution mechanisms:[66]

- Bulk water is made available by EPAL at a few points in the City where private water truck operators draw water for sale to households who have water tanks on their properties. These households may on-sell water to neighbours who do not have tanks.
- Water is piped from bulk supply points to public standposts or kiosks, which are being expanded using a community-managed model, with households purchasing water at agreed prices.
- Water truck operators also draw raw water from rivers in the city for sale to households, sometimes with minimal treatment in the form of chlorination.

EPAL is supposed to be economically and financially self-sufficient, raising income from water sales. In reality, it receives operational subsidies from the national fiscus in the form of consumables, goods and equipment and investment subsidies (in the form of works and big repairs) provided by MINEA, through DNA.[67] On the other hand, subsidies are not made available for water supply to the poorest people in Luanda, who rely on private and community-based services.

7.2 SANITATION

As with water supply, sanitation is legally the responsibility of local government. However, the de facto situation historically is that the service was provided by Empresa de Luanda e Saneamento de Luanda (ELISAL), a parastatal company established in 1991 with the mandate to provide both sanitation and solid waste collection services throughout Luanda. But the company encountered serious operational problems; hence, the government transferred most of its responsibilities on a municipal-concession basis to several Angola-owned private companies.[68] This includes responsibility for sewered wastewater systems, which is unusual in comparison to other Angolan provinces and international utilities, where sewered sanitation is typically a shared responsibility with water supply. But these formal arrangements have little impact on the poorest households in the *musseques*, who use self-managed on-site sanitation systems, with some using small private pit-emptying services.

Access to a basic level of sanitation service was estimated at 72% in 2023. Only 10.2% of Luanda households have access to a sewered sanitation system, with the balance using on-site sanitation, mainly septic tanks, pit latrines, either unimproved or improved with ventilation and proper slab, pedestal and privy construction. 50% of Luanda households empty pits themselves, with the remainder using well-established private operators offering a pit emptying service, or individual informal service providers. 32% of faecal sludge from these latrines is considered to be safely managed.[69]

After decades of neglect there has been a substantial increase in investment in sanitation in Angola, with Luanda having the highest rate of access to basic sanitation[70] at 72% in 2021 but with the greatest number of people in need: slightly more than 2.1 million.[71]

7.3 ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

The Ministry of Energy and Water (MINEA) has overall responsibility for electricity and energy affairs nationally, with regulation of service providers under the auspices of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (ARSEP).[72] The country's current energy mix consists of 61.8% hydropower, 37.6% fossil fuels and 0.6% hybrid (solar/fossil fuel).

65 Cain and Baptista. 2020.
66 ibid
67 UNICEF, 2023
68 Cordoba el al, 2021
69 Cordoba el al, 2021
70 Cordoba et al use the SDG definition of basic sanitation as 'improved' sanitation which is assumed to include sewered sanitation, septic tanks and improved pit latrines with at a proper slab, pedestal and privy construction.
71 ibid
72 United States International Trade Administration (US ITA), 2024, "Angola - Country Commercial Guide". https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/angola-energy

In 2014, the electricity sector was restructured to divide the responsibility of para-statal electricity utilities into separate generation, transmission and distribution entities. Empresa Nacional de Distribuição de Electricidade (ENDE) is responsible for the distribution and commercialisation of electricity throughout the country. ENDE is financed by electricity tariffs paid by consumers, but electricity remains heavily subsidised (the average tariff is approximately half of the cost of service). A distributional analysis carried out by the IMF shows that 77% of fuel price subsidies benefited the richest 40% households. In a country where the electricity customer base remains very limited and likely composed of wealthier urban residents, tariff subsidies do not benefit the poor.[73] Improvements are needed in the regulatory framework to operate at a cost-recovery level and promote Independent Power Producers (IPPs).[74]

Access to electricity in Luanda was 78% in 2016[75], with more recent data for the whole city not accessible. In the musseques specifically, 56% of households had access to electricity in 2019[76]. Only 4% use wood, charcoal or other organic matter for cooking – very little compared to other SADC cities.

ENDE is an under-performing utility, with its cost recovery of operating costs from tariffs at 37%, in the lowest 10th percentile of some 80 energy utilities in Africa monitored by UPBEAT.[77] Its collection rate is only 49%, and distribution losses 11.8%. In addition, the service is unreliable due to frequent interruptions and voltage fluctuations.[78]

7.4 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

In the era of 4IR, access to information and communication technology is incredibly important. The Angolan government has recognised this, and the city has seen quite significant growth in its ICT infrastructure over the past few years.[79]

However, since Luanda relatively enjoys greater access to ICT than the rest of the country, several projects are aimed at closing this gap. But Internet access remains constrained by expensive data costs and slow internet speed. This has largely shaped the development of ICT in the city, with most people accessing the internet through mobile devices. According to Global Data Lab,[80] 92.9% of households have a phone, but only around 32,3 % of households have internet access. This puts Luanda below the GGA SADC city sample average of 46.6%, with only Lilongwe and Lusaka having lower household internet access.

Further, according to the UN City Data's local online service index,[81] Luanda ranks 129th out of 194 cities with a score of 0.21. This is similar to several other cities in the GGA set, including Lusaka, Maputo and Harare, but is way below the figure of 0.6 for Johannesburg.

In terms of internet freedom, Angola has a score of 59 out of 100, putting it in the partially free category. However, this largely comes from limited infrastructure and access, as opposed to the government internationally limiting internet access. "Although internet service from the country's largest telecommunications provider stabilised, the country's poor infrastructure continues to hinder users' ability to access the internet consistently and without disruption."[82]

7.5 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Environment formulates policies and laws related to solid waste management and licenses and certifies private waste contractors and others through the National Waste Agency. The Ministry is responsible for the management of both hazardous and non-hazardous wastes. The National Waste Agency, a subordinate agency of the Ministry, promotes waste management policies based on the priorities of generation control, reuse, recycling, recovery and disposal.

73 World Bank. 2021. Angola-Electricity-Sector-Improvement-and-Access-Project.pdf
74 https://africa-energy-portal.org/aep/country/angola
75 Global Data Lab.
76 Carlos Pestana Barros and Carlos Balsas, "Luanda's Slums: An Overview Based on Poverty and Gentrification," Urban Development Issues 64 (December 2019): 29–38, https://doi.org/10.2478/udi-2019-0021.
77 Balabanyan, A., Y. Semikolenova, A. Singh, and M. A. Lee. 2021. Utility Performance and Behaviour in Africa Today (UPBEAT): Summary Report. ESMAP Papers. Washington, DC: World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/4e1de673-d875-5813-a732-4fd6bb8392ee/content
78 World Bank. 2021. Angola Electricity Sector Improvement Plan.
79 "Angola Aims to Enhance Its ICT Infrastructure and Cybersecurity," Telecom Review Africa, July 31, 2023, https://www.telecomreviewafrica.com/articles/features/3631-angola-aims-to-enhance-its-ict-infrastructure-and-cybersecurity/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.telecomreviewafrica.com%2Farticles%2Ffeatures%2F3631-angola-aims-to-enhance-its-ict-infrastructure-and-cybersecurity%2F.
80 "Area Database"; Smits and Steendijk, "The International Wealth Index (IWI)."
81 UN City Data, "E-Government Knowledgebase," accessed February 1, 2025. The index includes the following indicators: institutional framework, content provision, services provision, participation and engagement, e-government literacy, and technology. https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data/City/id/3-Luanda/dataYear/2024.
82 "Angola: Freedom on the Net 2023 Country Report," Freedom House, accessed February 19, 2025. https://freedomhouse.org/country/angola/freedom-net/2023.

While local government is legally responsible for day-to-day collection, treatment and disposal of waste, in Luanda Province, waste management is under the control of the provincial government. The institutional arrangements within the province have been rearranged recently, with a much-reduced role for Empresa de Limpeza e Saneamento de Luanda (Luanda Cleaning and Sanitation Company), ELISAL, and increased involvement of the private sector with the contracting of private companies for waste collection and transport. Afrik21 (April 2021) report on the appointment of seven private companies responsible for solid waste collection. It is understood that the operation of the Mulenvos landfill, the only one in Luanda, remains with ELISAL.

The municipalities are responsible for some of the street cleaning operations and have no other duties related to waste management.[83] There has also been a history of solid waste management using community-based arrangements[84], with no data accessible regarding the continuity of this approach.

Approximately 9,100 tons/day of waste is generated in the Province, of which approximately 6,200 tons/day is collected, resulting in a collection rate of approximately 70%, with the balance defined as 'illegal dumping', much of this into waterways. The waste unit generation rate for the entire province of Luanda is estimated to be 1.0 kg/person/day. All the collected waste is transported to Mulenvos landfill site for final disposal.[85]

It is estimated that 450 tons/day of waste is recycled, about 5% of the municipal waste quantity. This is done by private companies, typically at a small scale and typically focused on specific materials.

7.6 ROADS

Roads represent the largest asset grouping within cities and are central to creating a livable city with a viable economy. Yet the situation with roads in Luanda, most under the control of Luanda Province, is not good.

Starting with a look at the road system nationally, a summary of Angola's road system is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of national road lengths in Angola[86]

Classification	Length of roads (km)	Paved roads (km)	Management Responsibility
Fundamental	26,000	13,600	INEA
Complementary	17,500	210	INEA
Municipal	32,345	–	Provinces

The Angola Roads Institute (INEA) is responsible for the major roads nationally, which include the trunk roads running through Luanda Province, while the provincial administration is responsible for low-volume roads, with statistics for the geographic area of the province given in Table 5.

Table 5: Length of roads in Luanda Province[87]

Road classification	Km	split
Trunk	267	1.0%
Primary	552	2.1%
Secondary	243	0.9%
Tertiary	956	3.6%
Sub-total	**2,018**	**7.6%**
Residential & service	17,364	66.1%
Paths, tracks etc	1,881	7.2%
Unclassified	5,005	19.1%
Total	**26,267**	**100.0%**
Paved roads	3,275	
% paved	12.5%	

While responsibility for specific road categories is not clear, it is assumed that the Luanda Province is responsible for all lower-class roads (residential, service, paths, tracks and unclassified) while INEA looks after higher-class roads.

Based on the total road length in Luanda Province (pre 2024 boundary) of 26,300km from Table 5, the road length per capita in Luanda in 2024 was 2.72 m/cap, a low figure compared to the average of 3.65 m/cap for the 10 SADC cities in the GGA sample (range 2.00 for Lusaka

83 JICA. 2022. "Data collection survey on municipal solid waste management in African cities - final report" https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/1000048189_01.pdf
84 Development Workshop. 1999. "Community Based Solid Waste Management in Luanda's Musseques: a Case Study'.
85 JICA. 2022. "Data Collection Survey on Municipal Solid Waste Management in African Cities - Final Report.
86 Data from Openstreetmap accessed via humdata. Link?

to 5.26 for Harare). The low figure for Luanda is likely to be strongly influenced by the large household size in the city, which implies relatively large numbers of people per plot. 12.5% of the roads within the geographic area of the province are paved, which is higher than the average of 9.4% for the eight SADC cities in the GGA sample, excluding Johannesburg and Cape Town, which have 63% and 59% of their road paved, respectively.

There is no data available on the condition of roads managed by Luanda Province[87], but anecdotal evidence suggests conditions are poor, particularly on unpaved roads. This may be related to comparatively low levels of expenditure on road maintenance in the Luanda Province budget (See Section 8).

7.7 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Luanda is a very congested city, with the situation exacerbated by the current lack of a mass transit system. The NUMBEO traffic index[88] indicates that Luanda is significantly more congested than other SADC cities, with an index of 371, with the other seven primary cities in the GGA sample having indices in the range of 86 (Lilongwe) to 208 (Cape Town). Along with Lagos (index 365), the NUMBEO data indicates that Luanda is probably the most congested city in the World.

Schalekamp et al[89] note the general lack of data on passenger transport modes but include data on public transport with specific reference to minibuses (referred to as "candongueiros" in Angola): "... minibuses were reported to be the dominant mode of passenger transport, providing 'more than 60% of mobility in the city'. In terms of public transport fleet sizes, there are estimated to be just under 10,000 blue-and-white licensed minibuses in Luanda, compared to approximately 400 buses across all nine bus operators."[90] The balance of 40% is likely to be made up of transport by bus, private vehicles, with a considerable portion of motorcycle taxis (referred to as 'moto-taxis' in Angola).[91] These statistics relate to motorised transport, but the majority of Luanda's citizens commute by walking.

With the rapid growth of the city, the government has recognised the necessity to implement a mass transit system. Plans were made in 2021 for a 'surface metro' line, 149 km long, covering the axes of the Port of Luanda-Cacuaco, Fidel Castro Ruz-Benfica Avenue, Port of Luanda-Largo da Independência and Kilamba City-Largo da Independência (Furtherafrica, Sept 2023). However, the project failed to be financed, and a new project has been launched under the Programme for Improvement of Urban Mobility in Luanda (PRO-MMUL), with construction due to commence in 2025. It is no longer planned to come to the city centre, with the reference point being the Agostinho Neto International Airport, which opened in 2023 but was only expected to start receiving passengers in the last quarter of 2024 (Skyscraper, 2024). The reduced concept for the metro will be 60 km long, with the first phase connecting the new airport to the Via Expresso through the Exclusive Economic Zone (ZEE), scheduled for completion in 2026.

PRO-MMUL also includes a plan to resurrect the Bus Rapid Transit system after the failure of a previous BRT project in 2017. This is a modest initiative, just 17.5 km long, to connect the Estalagem area to the KK5000. Construction work is expected to begin in 2025, similarly to the metro, with completion scheduled for 2027[92], with the connection between Avenida Luther Rescova and Estalagem.[93]

8. ENVIRONMENT

Considering the impact Luanda has on climate change, the city has a low level of carbon dioxide emissions at 0.50 tons/per capita per year, similar to Dar es Salaam (0.65), Lusaka (0.49), and Maputo (0.32). Johannesburg, by comparison, has emissions of 3.2 tons per capita.[94]

87 Mustapha Benmaamar, Fatima Arroyo Arroyo and Nelson Tisso Eduardo. 2020. "Angola-Road-Sector-Public-Expenditure-Review". World Bank.
88 Numbeo is a Serbian crowd-sourced online database of perceived consumer prices, real property prices, and quality of life metrics. The Numbeo Traffic Index is a numerical score assigned to a city which represents the perceived level of traffic congestion in that city,
89 Herrie Schalekamp*, Solène Baffi, Sophie-Anne Monplaisir and Lucile Boudet. 2024. "Working towards informal public transport improvement and integration in Luanda: process and outcomes of international technical cooperation between France and Angola".
90 Schalekamp et al take this information from Costa, E., Silva, F. and Veras, P. (2023). Os caminhos para o novo sistema de transporte público na Província de Luanda – Angola.
91 Lucas Budler. 2024. "Why We Invested in Anda: Building the Motorcycle Taxi Ecosystem in Angola". Article in untapped-global. It is stated that there are 600,000 motorcycle taxi drivers based in Luanda, but this is not backed up by research and is likely to be an over-estimate.
92 With doubts that this will happen in practice.
93 Skyscraper city. 2024. "Luanda – Public transport" https://www.skyscrapercity.com/threads/luanda-public-transport.2392289/
94 Global Human Settlements Layer

Air quality in the city, measured as the PM2.5 concentration of particulates in the air, was 20 µg/m3 in 2020. This is above the WHO standard[95] of 5 µg/m3 but close to the average for 9 SADC cities of 17 µg/m3 (Cape Town 8 and Johannesburg 42 at the extremes).[96] Internationally, this can be compared to 9 µg/m3 for London, 16 for Bogota and 68 for Mumbai.

Luanda is facing negative climate change impacts with its growth and infrastructure challenges compounded by the effects of climate change.[97] Flooding and extreme weather risks have further undermined efforts to address the ongoing housing crisis. Given its coastal location and lack of financial resources for climate adaptation, Luanda faces increasing risks due to climate change, as reported by Rodrigues, referencing Cain [98]: "In recent years, there also has been serious flooding in Angolan cities, most widely in coastal cities, with local river flooding, erosion, inundations from sea-level rise and salt-water intrusion. Luanda, although not in the top 50 most-exposed cities in the World from the point of view of rising sea levels, recorded significant proportional increases in exposure"[99].

9. ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

9.1 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Accessing information on Luanda is not easy, with a lack of publicly available data disaggregated to provincial and local government levels (a recent population census has not been carried out, with the last one done in 2014). The Province of Luanda, as the de facto local authority responsible for administering the metropolitan area, has a website (luanda.gov.ao) and, while it has information on the organisational arrangements and responsibilities (functions) of the Province, there are no documents which are useful in understanding the development impact of the administration. There is no information on the 16 municipalities within the metropolitan area. The website of the water supply utility, EPAL, was inactive at the time of writing, and the electricity distribution utility, ENDE, did not appear to have a website, only a Facebook page. Financial information on Luanda Province needs to be sourced from the national accounts, which is not straightforward. To compensate for this poor state of information from government sources, there is considerable research on the city published by international development agencies and local NGOs.

9.2 LOCAL LEVEL GOVERNANCE

Urban areas in Angola have a multi-tier organisational structure: national, provincial, municipal (municípios), commune, neighbourhood (bairros) and blocks.

Angola is in a transition stage regarding decentralisation of responsibility to provincial and municipal governments. But the pace of decentralisation has been slow, which means that, currently, municipalities do not have local councils set up with elected councillors and hence are not well placed to act as representatives of citizen interests. As stated in Section 4, municipalities also have minimal responsibilities, with Luanda Province being the de facto local authority for the Luanda metro area.

Local government elections have been mooted for several years, but have yet to take place, although the President has stated his commitment to these elections. Aside from the obvious benefit local representation brings to citizens, Troco[100] points out that the ongoing delay is a concern for opposition parties, which want influence at local level. Quoting from the same source:

"Central government effectively appoints all senior officials at the three lower levels. The president appoints provincial governors. They, in turn, appoint the municipal administrators, who then appoint the administrators of the districts (converted back into comunas in the 2024 legislation)[101].

95 World Health Organization. WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines: Particulate Matter (PM2.5), 2021
96 Global Human Settlements Layer.
97 Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues, "Climate Change and DIY Urbanism in Luanda and Maputo: New Urban Strategies," *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 11, no. 3 (2019): 319–31.
98 Cain, A (2017) Water resource management under a changing climate in Angola's coastal settlements. IIED working paper, IIED, London. https://dw.angonet.org/wp-content/uploads/cain_2017_water_climate_change_in_angolas_coastal_settlements.pdf
99 Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues. 2019. "Climate change and DIY urbanism in Luanda and Maputo: new urban strategies?"
100 Albano Agostinho Troco. 2022. "Why COVID-19 can't be blamed for Angola's failure to have local governance". The Conversation, Aug 24, 2022.
101 The administrative divisions have also changed in number in 2024, subsequent to Troco's assessment. There are now 20 provinces, 163 municipalities and 618 comunas in the country (Wikipedia).

Because officials at sub-national level are not elected by the people, they are politically and institutionally accountable to their hierarchical superiors, and, ultimately, to the president. Hence, sub-national government in Angola has always been remote from the people".

In assessing the responsiveness of government at all levels to issues raised by citizens, Afrobarometer undertakes surveys of countries and cities in Africa, with four questions relating to the extent to which citizens have access to information and can get action from government on important matters which concern them. The results shown in Table 6 indicate that, while there are no large differences between the sample SADC cities, Luanda has the lowest score. This is consistent with the assessment by Freedom House of the level of political freedom in Angola, which is given a rating of 28/100, which places it in the bottom group of four SADC cities – along with Zimbabwe, Eswatini and DRC – and can be compared to the average score of 53 for the 16 countries in the SADC region.

The poor performance of local government as a representative governance structure has meant that citizens place greater reliance on non-government, community-based structures both to provide services and to represent their interests.

Table 6: Results of Afrobarometer institutional responsiveness survey, 2024

Cities	Country	Institutional quality index (0-3, higher is better)
Bulawayo	Zimbabwe	1.1
Harare	Zimbabwe	0.9
Johannesburg	South Africa	0.9
Cape Town	South Africa	1.1
Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	1.3
Lilongwe	Malawi	1.0
Luanda	Angola	0.8
Lusaka	Zambia	1.0
Maputo	Mozambique	1.1
Matola	Mozambique	1.0

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS

The Province of Luanda is the dominant authority responsible for urban development in the metropolitan area. The focus here is on the provincial budget, with figures for expenditure and revenue for 2023 summarised in Tables 7 and 8.

Key observations on expenditure include:

- The budget is strongly oriented towards social services, with the combined expenditure on education and health being 50.5%.
- 'Trading services' for which consumers pay a tariff fee are largely excluded, although there may be some charges associated with the sanitation service.
- In comparing this expenditure budget with those for the other six SADC cities in the GGA sample for which data were available at the time of writing:
- In total, Luanda spends considerably more per capita than Lilongwe, Lusaka and Ndola (average US$12.8 per capita) but considerably less than Cape Town, Johannesburg and Harare (US$727, US$705 and US$275 per capita respectively).
- Considering only social services (health and education) Luanda spends US$ 23.0 per capita per year, the same order as Harare (US$34.5 per cap, mainly health) and Cape Town (US$19 per cap, for a partial primary healthcare service) with the average for Lilongwe, Lusaka and Ndola being US$0.5 per capita as they provide only minimal social services.
- Luanda's expenditure on sanitation at US$10.2 per capita is considerable but less than that for Harare, Johannesburg and Cape Town (US$10.3, US$26.5 and US$40.9 per capita, respectively).
- The percentage spent on governance and administration by Luanda (17.6%) is much lower than the average of 34% spent by the six other SADC cities in the GGA sample for which data were available at the time of writing.

Revenue is dominated by tax revenue raised nationally and allocated to cover expenditure in Luanda Province. In addition, transfers to Luanda Province are recorded on the national accounts. As the total of US$1,234 million far exceeds the budgeted operating expenditure of US$493 million (Table 7), it is assumed that the balance covers

Table 7: Expenditure budget for Luanda Province by function, 2023

Function	Kwanza m	US$ m[1]	Split	Exp/cap US$
General public services	63,934	77.5	17.6%	8.43
Economic affairs	12,498	15.2	3.4%	1.65
Security and public order	883	1.1	0.2%	0.12
Education	118,821	144.1	32.8%	15.66
Health	64,085	77.7	17.7%	8.45
Social protection	2,682	3.3	0.7%	0.35
Community development	2,900	3.5	0.8%	0.38
Housing	60	0.1	0.0%	0.01
Recreation, culture & religion	752	0.9	0.2%	0.10
Urban infrastructure[2]	17,332	21.0	4.8%	2.28
Transport	6,713	8.1	1.9%	0.88
Water supply	991	1.2	0.3%	0.13
Basic sanitation	77,554	94.0	21.4%	10.22
Total opex	**362,493**	**439.5**	**100.0%**	**48.8**
Capital expenditure	44,172	53.6	12.2%	5.82
Total opex and capex	**406,665**	**493.1**		**53.60**

Source: Angola-National-Budget-Brief-2023-PT

Note:
1. Exchange rate applied: 825 Kwanza per US$.
2. Urban infrastructure is assumed to include roads

Table 8: Revenue budget for Luanda Province, 2023

Source	Kwanza m	US$ m[1]	Split	REV/CAP US$
Tax revenue excl property rates	733,946	839.2	89.3%	96.7
Property rates (estimate)2	24,120	25.3	2.7%	2.7
Equity revenue	1,319	1.6	0.2%	0.2
Service revenue3	22,312	27.1	2.9%	2.9
Miscellaneous current income4	17,759	21.5	2.3%	2.3
Total own source revenue	**775,336**	**940.1**	100%	102.2
Transfers	243,527	295.3		32.1
Total	**1,018,863**	**1,235**		**134.3**

Source: Angola-National-Budget-Brief-2023-PT

Note:
1. Exchange rate applied: 825 Kwanza per US$.
2. Property rates estimated from national figures (30.3 billion Kwanza collected from 269,000 properties, with an assumed 40% from Luanda)
3. Service revenue is mostly community service income
4. Miscellaneous current income mainly from fines and penalties

capital expenditure, some of which (US$53.6 million) is reflected on the Luanda Province budget (Table 7) and some, presumably, allocated to capital works managed nationally[102].

In comparing the operating revenue profile of Luanda Province to other SADC cities in the GGA sample, the following is evident:

- Luanda is heavily reliant on transfers from national government – 92% of revenue - compared to the average for six other cities in the GGA sample, where data is available of 21%.
- Luanda, along with Lusaka, has the lowest level of property rates revenue at US$2.7 per capita per year, with the figure for Johannesburg being US$159 per capita as a comparison.
- Luanda also has the lowest figure for collection of minor sources of revenue such as fines, levies, penalties, permits and licenses.

This comparison illustrates the low level of devolution of powers to local government in Angola.

To conclude on the collection of revenue, the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment (SGWOFI)[103] states that taxes are collected under the central government General Tax Administration (AGT), with some of the taxes collected shared between municipal governments and the central government.

Subnational governments are left with limited autonomy over local financing, despite the recent measures to devolve financial authority to local governments. Despite this, limited authority and the small budget for which they are responsible, a system of municipal participatory budgeting was introduced in 2019, aimed at promoting the role of citizens in the budgeting process.

11. CLOSURE

Luanda city has had one of the fastest-growing urban populations in the world and is currently one of the largest four cities in Africa. Economically, it has also benefited from Angola's oil wealth, bringing a rapid increase to the size of the city's economy. However, access to urban services in the city has been uneven, with high service backlogs experienced by poor households. Institutionally, Luanda has, by the standard of other SADC cities, an extraordinarily centralised system of governance, service provision and local government finance. The Province of Luanda, the de facto local authority for the Luanda metropolitan area, does not have an elected council. Neither do the municipalities within the province, which are given little service provision responsibility. The Province and municipalities also have little opportunity to raise their own revenue.

102 Key reference on financial status of Luanda taken from Luanda case study in: Haas Astrid R.N., Anton Cartwright, Aweng Garang and Vera Songwe 2023. "From Millions to Billions: Financing the Development of African Cities".

103 https://www.sng-wofi.org/

Notes

For bespoke research, contact our
Good Governance Africa advisory services team.

Contact us
Tel: 011 268 0479
Email: info@gga.org
Web: www.gga.org

GGA
Good Governance Africa