



## Urbanisation in Africa – Taking Angola as an Example

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### Abstract

Taking Angola as an example the paper offers an insight into how the issue of dramatic housing shortages and population density imbalance across African countries, that frequently result from prolonged civil wars, is being addressed. Some of these efforts, by and large driven by populist political expediency, are misguided and likely to lead to long term socio-economic problems. Many new towns and cities created through this process are far from being resilient or smart. They merely provide statistical data as to the number of units created, and have no regard for living conditions and social cohesion in the long run, or the life time viability of what has been built. The 27-year Angolan civil war, ended in 2002, led to the destruction of most of the country's infrastructure and resulted in a major housing crisis, especially in the capital Luanda, where 21% of the country's population lives at present. The Angolan government is engaged in a program aimed at decentralising the population. This involves creating new towns and settlements, new road networks etc. Most of large volume housing built at present in Angola is built by Chinese entities a mimicking the Hong-Kong/China high-rise, which is inappropriate for the climatic and socio-economic reality of Angola. These are normally bedroom estates i.e. not fully functional multifaceted urban organisms.

**Keywords:** Urbanisation, Housing, Population Growth, Social Resilience, Decision Making Competence, Design Competence, Cultural and Climatic Appropriateness, Town, Cities

### 1 Introduction

Population growth is closely linked to growing urbanisation, and rapid urbanisation is one of the current megatrends. Provision of adequate housing constitutes one of the biggest challenges for all countries, from the likes of the UK to the poorest nations. A challenge that is highly political and affects slum dwellers in the developing world as well as middle-income households in expensive global cities. Hundreds of millions of people struggle to find decent housing that is affordable without crippling financial commitments. The

economic, societal and human impact of lack of affordable housing is enormous. McKinsey Global Institute in its October 2014 Report -A Blueprint for Addressing the Global Affordable Housing Challenge, estimated that "some 330 million households are affected around the world and, under current trends, by 2025 the number of households that occupy unsafe or inadequate housing, or are financially stretched by housing costs could reach 440 million - or 1.6 billion people." By 2025 there will be some 40 cities with population larger than 10 million. The global rise of cities has been unprecedented. In 1800, 2% of