

Public open spaces as catalysts for urban vitality. Sustainable revitalization of the city centre of Luanda through public open spaces interventions

Summary

The imagery of sub – Saharan African cities is often linked to challenges of infrastructural deficiencies and the prevalence of informal settlements. However, that setup does not represent the entirety of these cities, as is the case of Luanda in Angola. Although it is vital to pursue urban improvements, it is also important to cater for the preservation of historic urban centres, which have challenges of their own and have the potential to promote inclusive public life through vibrant public spaces. The revitalisation of formal, preserved but underutilised public open spaces in Luanda sets the starting point of the ongoing research, which looks at urban revitalisation at a micro-scale where communities and the private sector may contribute.

This ongoing PhD research aims to contribute with a strategy for revitalising the city of Luanda through intervention in public open spaces, which may promote social cohesion. The goal is to propose a model of intervention that promotes the vitality and maintenance of colonial inherited urban fabrics in post-colonial contemporary Luanda, which may be applied in other Angolan cities. The object chosen to induce the vitality of those cities is the public space because it is a space where social interaction can happen between all residents both from the “formal” city and “informal” settlements.

The project is based primarily on case study analysis (qualitative analysis) of urban revitalisation projects. Secondly, the research will support community inquiries (quantitative analysis) adapting general approaches to local community needs, cultural identity, and legislative paradigms. The primary goal is to propose an adaptive model of intervention in public open spaces to generate social cohesion, economic opportunities and improve the quality of the city’s natural environment.

Keywords

Public open spaces, urban revitalisation, social inclusion.



Rua dos Mercadores in Luanda, 2022.



A private night pop-up music event at Rua dos Mercadores in Luanda, 2022.



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