

# Forum showcased Luanda as Africa's construction hub

The second African Urban Infrastructure Investment Forum (AUIIF), themed 'Turning African Cities into Economic Powerhouses', was held on 29 and 30 April in Luanda, Angola.



© khunaspix – [za.fotolia.com](https://za.fotolia.com)

The AUIIF showcased Luanda as one of Africa's construction hubs, while highlighting the country's post-conflict reconstruction efforts. The government used the opportunity to showcase its flagship urbanisation project 'New Centralities' (New Cities). The project is a result of the Angolan government's National Programme for Urbanism and Housing (PNUH).

"This project was formulated, co-ordinated and led by the President of the country himself," said the Angolan Minister for Urbanism and Habitat, José António M. da Conceição e Silva, reinforcing the fact that this is a major government priority over the next few years. He said that it is essential for his country to keep strengthening urban infrastructure in order to attract foreign investment, and to allow for the rapid industrialisation of the economy.

## Bridging housing gap

As part of the government's urban plan, Angola is banking on the construction of new cities to bridge the housing gap. Most of these cities are being built on the outskirts of the country's largest existing cities, particularly on the fringes of Luanda. There has already been significant progress, with new centralities such as Km 44, Capari, Kilamba Kiaxi located 20km from Luanda benefiting from an investment of \$3.5bn.

Cuaco and Zango cities are either under construction or planned and the construction plan will be extended to Beguela, Uíge and Lobito. While in Luanda, delegates at the Forum will have an opportunity to visit the Kilamba New Centrality. According to Minister da Conceição e Silva, there is no doubt that these large housing developments, Kilamba's, are the best public housing units not only in Africa, but in the developing world.

## Spending power

The McKinsey Global Institute forecasts that by 2030, the continent's 18 largest cities will have a combined spending power of \$1.3 trillion. However, although African cities are growing an unprecedented rate and creating huge commercial opportunities, there are great inequalities and there is also potential for social tension.

One of Africa's urbanisation experts, UCLG-A General-Secretary, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, states that between 2010 and 2050, Africa's average urban population is set to increase threefold, from 400 million to 1,2 billion. This means that a quarter of the world's urban population - or the equivalent of Africa's current total population - will live in African cities. The major challenge for African governments, therefore, is to build urban environments that meet the needs of residents and investors.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>