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Contribution of Drs. M. C. BEEKER:

"Guided land development of "spontaneous" settlements in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso."

University of Amsterdam
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Introduction

Over the years the city of Ouagadougou has developed into one of the most important urban centres of the Sahel region. In ancient times the palace of the King of the Mossi people (the Moro Naba) was situated here. In colonial times the French based one of their garrisons in the area. After 1960 local leadership took over the political and military power previously held by the French.

Since Burkina Faso’s independence, the population of the Ouagadougou agglomeration has increased from 60,000 to approximately 500,000. Without any doubt this increase has resulted in many problems for the local authorities and the population. How to create an adequate subsistence for all these people? How to give every one of them access to already limited facilities like education and health care? How to provide safe drinking water to the ever growing number of families? How should the municipality deal with the lack of acceptable and legal shelter for many of the residents?

At the start of the research project in 1978, the population was estimated to be about 250,000. This implies that the population of Ouagadougou has doubled in the past decade; a true population explosion indeed. Moreover, the pace of growth is not expected to slow down in the years ahead. There are many reasons for this. The agricultural sector offers only limited opportunities to the people in the rural areas. As a result, many people - especially young men from the small villages - attempt to make their living elsewhere. Many of them have migrated to Ivory Coast, others have settled in the more fertile zones in the southwestern region of Burkina Faso, but vast numbers of migrants moved to relatives in Ouagadougou. The underlying motives for this rural-urban migration are not only rooted in the weak economic base of the villages; in the city also many migrants fail to make a steady income. Almost every single migrant belongs to an extensive family network; especially in the Mossi-society of the Ouagadougou region this implies that one belongs to a more or less stable social network, on which one may rely in times of need. In many cases the social nucleus (core) of the family remains in a rural area. This is the place where family rituals are observed, funeral celebrations take place in the dry season and the majority of wedding ceremonies are performed, all in line with the traditions and customs of Mossi culture.

Migration to Ouagadougou therefore seldom results in detachment from the village. On the contrary, the capital is full of informal groups and associations that commit themselves to the cause of "their" village.

In Ouagadougou 22,500 residential plots were available back in 1978. The average plot size was 500 m²; the plots in older neighbourhoods were generally larger than 600 m², whereas in more recently planned neighbourhoods the municipality had also given out smaller plots of less than 400m². The survey indicated that there was little interest in subdividing the plots; an average plot-occupation ratio of 7.8 persons could be derived from a
sample in several residential blocks.
The planned neighbourhoods presumably had a population of 175,000 in 1978. The rest of the population had managed to settle on the urban fringe of Ouagadougou with the consent of the "chef de terres". The old core villages Tampouy, Tanghin, Sambin, Dassango, Wemtenga, Dagnoe, Cissin, Pissy and Nossin were readily transformed into 'spontaneous' settlements. In the 1970's the practice of 'gifts' to the 'head of the land of the family' was increasingly replaced by cash payments. This resulted in a major change in the plot allocation system on the urban fringe.

It appeared from the survey in 1978 that there was a heterogeneous mix of families within the residential blocks. Both in the planned neighbourhoods and the spontaneous settlements poor and better-off families were and are still living next to each other. The only exceptions are the so-called "zônes residentielles". These areas were planned by the French to accommodate foreign staff in colonial times. Some residential quarters for higher ranking officials were also established by the authorities after independence, and several "cité's" were constructed within the capital after 1982. The "zônes residentielles" and "cité's" are inhabited by diplomats, development workers, prosperous merchants and high ranking officials. Thus, a prosperous minority of about 5% of the population of Ouagadougou is living in these carefully planned residential zones.

In 1979 the Dutch Government granted a sum of 5 million guilders for the replanning and restructuring of a number of spontaneous settlements in Ouagadougou. This report will highlight some major aspects of the formulation and implementation of this programme. The aspects concerned are mainly the selection of a replanning model for these settlements, the choice for certain priorities with regard to the implementation of the programme and the phased implementation of these selected priorities.

The selection of the replanning model.

In 1979 consultations took place with a number of inhabitants of the spontaneous settlements. The purpose of this survey was to directly involve the residents in the choice between a number of possible planning models. Small groups of 3 to 5 persons extensively discussed the pros and cons of these models. These meetings usually took 2 to 3 hours each. Much time and attention was paid during these sessions to explaining the features of the various possible models; the implications of their respective implementation were, whenever possible, demonstrated to the residents by means of visual aids and appliances.

The first model involved the construction of several roads, reservation of an open area for a public school and clearing of space for the installation of public water taps. This implied that existing structures on the required space would have to be removed by the residents. These households would either have to move to an overspill area or put up with a reduction in available space. All other existing structures could be left intact and the total number of square metres in the residential area would be unaffected. In this model about 83 per cent of the existing structures could be preserved on their present location. Plot-sizes would range from
100 to 1500m². The second model was based on the premise that all residential plots should have access to a street. In a later stage this would facilitate the installation of infrastructure like water, electricity and drainage. Some clearing of space for public facilities would be required, just as in the first model. Again, the residents of the plots on space designated for public use, would have to relocate or accept a reduction in their plot. In this second model about 60 per cent of the existing structures could be preserved. There would also be a wide range of plot-sizes.

In the third model, the system of plot distribution that had prevailed in Ouagadougou over the years, would more or less be continued. The single major difference would be a reduction in the plot-size to between 225 and 375 m². This would apparently make it possible for all families entitled to have a plot in the settlement actually to acquire one. Nobody would have to move out of the settlement and the differences in plot-size would be much smaller than in the other two models. However, only an apparently random 30 per cent of existing structures could be preserved. As in the other two models, space would be reserved for public facilities.

The conclusions of the preliminary survey were remarkable:

- Any reduction in space available for residential plots should still allow all eligible families to stay resident in the area;
- The preservation of existing structures should be secondary to the reallocation of available space. In a new lay-out plan the differences in plot-size should preferably be as small as possible; this would be the only way to avoid rivalry and envy between neighbours;
- Based on these considerations, 75 per cent of the participants of the discussions preferred the implementation of the third model. Only 7 per cent approved of the first and 18 per cent of the second model.
- After the formulation of the new lay-out plan the authorities would have to start parceling out the space needed for public facilities (schools, roads); in addition parcel-stones had to be placed to mark the future outline features of the residential plots. Whilst placing these markers, as little damage as possible should be done to existing structures. The residents proved willing to make temporary "peephole" in their dwellings to facilitate the work of the land surveyors.
- Having placed the markers and parcelled out the space required for public purposes, the authorities should start allotting the available plots in the settlement to the eligible families as soon as possible. Those allottees, currently residing on designated public space, should obtain a plot near their present one. Any surplus plots should first be allotted to those families that were living with relatives.
- After actual allotment of all plots in a residential area, all families should move to the allotted plot within one
year. This term was considered necessary because relocation of houses would often require consultations between neighbours; this also enabled the residents to do most of the reconstruction work on their own initiative. In addition, non-eligible families were given the opportunity to find a place to live elsewhere.

During this one-year reconstruction period the authorities were only expected to improve the water supply (drinking water and water for the construction of mud-brick houses). A number of deep-well drillings and the installation of wells were suggested.

After the reconstruction period the public space should be clear from structures. The authorities were then supposed to try to improve public facilities and infrastructure. Priority should be given to the passability and accessibility of the main roads and streets in the settlement. Depending on available resources, further upgrading activities could then be undertaken in the years to come.

These conclusions were submitted to the authorities and served as a guideline for the formulation of the replanning programme, implemented with the help of the Dutch donation mentioned above. During the programme formulation phase, the marked preference of the residents to be able to stay in their present residential areas was taken into account. The reallocation of available residential space clearly ranked higher as priority for them than the preservation of existing structures. Relocation of houses over short distances, if necessary for the implementation of the replanning programme, was not considered to be too great a drawback of the plan.

The selection of priorities for the implementation.

With Dutch sponsorship, a Master Plan was to be drafted for the capital, to create a comprehensive framework for the extension of the main road network, the drainage system, water supply and other public facilities. This Master Plan was intended to provide a framework for the future replanning of all spontaneous settlements in Ouagadougou. The Dutch donation was to be used for setting up a revolving fund. This fund could then provide the resources necessary for implementation of the planned activities. The fund was controlled by the General Directorate for Urban Planning and Topography (DGUT). This Directorate signed an agreement with the Municipality of Ouagadougou, in which the separate duties and responsibilities were defined for the implementation. DGUT became responsible for the works that were considered a priority: formulation of a new lay-out for every settlement, parcelling out the public space and placing the marker stones, installation of public water taps and the reconstruction of roads and streets after the "reshuffling period" of one year. All of these works were financed from the Dutch donation. The families that acquired a plot had to deposit 25,000 CFA (~500FF) in the revolving fund. This was to give DGUT sufficient resources in the years to come for initial financing of other replanning operations.
The allotment of residential plots was to be done by committees which were to be formed in each settlement. These committees were placed under the authority of the Head of the Province. The DOUT was also represented on these committees. The upgrading of infrastructure and public facilities would be financed by household contributions of 300 CPA/m² for every residential plot during the next 5 years. For instance, for a 250m² plot a total contribution of 75,000 CPA had to be made. The 25,000 CPA deposit to the DOUT was deducted from this figure.

In selecting the priorities the preferences of the households weighed heavily. The programme stated explicitly that top priority would be given to security of tenure for the residents. All other aspects of the programme implementation were made secondary to this issue. Allottee-households could start working on their house immediately after the allotment of the exact plot boundaries. During the allotment, efforts were made to maintain the original location of the households' plots; in this way they could preserve (part of) the existing structures. If they had good relations with their neighbours in the same block, it was possible to leave part of the existing houses untouched for an unspecified period. All households were given a year to effect the necessary relocation of buildings. The restructuring of the households' residential area was thus the top priority in this programme.

The upgrading of infrastructure and the installation of public facilities was moved to a later stage; this was now dependant on the resources actually available to the local authorities. However, the plan also responded to the residents' request for improvement of the water supply in the settlements under replanning. The programme opted for deep-well drillings (40-60m) and installation of hand- or motor-driven pumps. After the households had removed their structures from designated public spaces, the main roads and streets would be levelled.

The sequence of activities that was chosen here differs markedly from the approach in the World Bank-financed CISSIN project in Ouagadougou. In CISSIN the households were relocated to an overspill area after the space required for public purposes was parcelled out in the settlement. The households were given 3 months to carry out this relocation over a distance of 1 km, after which the construction of the main roads and levelling of streets and public space started. Furthermore the drainage system and many of the planned water pipes were installed. Public water taps were introduced in the settlement and some of the households could also apply for a private water connection. The allotment of residential plots started after completion of the works. Allottee-households had to make a down payment of 25,000 CPA. Because a World Bank loan was involved, the households had to repay the real cost of replanning within 5 years. This meant a monthly payment to the municipality of 5000 CPA. Furthermore the municipality demanded the down payment of 25,000 CPA before the exact location of the residential plot had been set out in the area. This resulted in a scattered allotment of plots throughout the settlement and neighbours not knowing who would get a certain plot. This allotment procedure created a lot of confusion. The CISSIN project was

The phased implementation of the programme.

The issue of timing the implementation of a replanning project is a crucial one. Due to political complications in the country it was not until 1982 that the preparatory work for the implementation was taken up. The demand for residential plots was big at that time and the price of such a plot was usually over 1 million CFA (20,000FF). These plots were therefore out of reach of at least 80 per cent of the households looking for legal accommodation in Ouagadougou. Therefore, the large-scale buying of residential plots near the old village cores in the immediate surroundings of the capital had evolved. Depending on the social relations with family members of the 'head of the land of the family', plots in the spontaneous settlements were bought for prices ranging from 50,000 to 100,000 CFA. Many new owners only built mud-brick walls for their future residence, but kept staying with relatives in existing settlements, while others rented a room in a relative's compound. There was water and electricity in these settlements; the level of convenience was clearly much higher than in the spontaneous settlements on the outskirts. Other owners did build a temporary shelter and settled in the spontaneous zones, anticipating the future allotment of plots in these areas.

In view of the existing demand for legal plots and the expected increase in the population it would be desirable to set the target plot allocation at 50,000 units before 1990. However, the CISSIN project only produced 5000 plots, the approach took too much time and the plots proved to be too expensive for half of the households anyway.

In consultations between Burkina Faso and the Netherlands it was agreed to apply the approach reviewed earlier (step by step rehabilitation) to all other spontaneous settlements. The Dutch donation was used for initial financing of the planned activities in sectors 8-17, 10-19 and 20-21-22. About 30,000 residential plots would have to be produced in these sectors. To promote the replanning of the remaining spontaneous settlements, the Burkina Faso authorities made starting capital available from their own resources. About 15,000 plots would have to be laid out in the short term.

This report only discusses the phased implementation of the Dutch-sponsored programme in the specified sectors. The first phase concerned the implementation of a small pilot project in Larle-extension (sector 10) to serve as a test case for the selected procedure. The pilot project covered 300 plots, i.e. 1 per cent of the total programme. After formulation of the plan the plot-markers were placed, in cooperation with the residents. The plot allotment however, did not proceed smoothly. Some households claimed two plots or more, as they were convinced that the plot they were allotted was too small for the size of their family (in several cases the household size was over 10 persons). The allotment criteria however were clear: one household was entitled to have one plot in Ouagadougou. Still there were people who tried to acquire an extra plot, notwithstanding the fact that they already owned a
legal one in an older settlement. This alleged fraud was actually substantiated in two cases, but the authorities apparently did not dare to take action, because influential people were involved.

The households started working on the reconstruction after the plots were allotted. Based on the level of investments made in the house, three distinct categories of households could be observed during this process:

- Those households that just relocate the houses (if necessary) with the assistance of a brick-layer from the family. They do not make substantial investments; usable mud-bricks, zinc roof sheets, wooden beams, door and windows are re-used in the reconstruction.

- Those households that hire a brick-layer to carry out the relocation and reconstruction, assisted by family members. The available building materials are also re-used in these cases. However, improvements are often made through modest investments in the foundation, a shower, a new door etc.

- Those households that hire a team of construction workers to carry out the entire reconstruction. A substantial part of the building materials is newly bought. However, as a larger area of covered space is often built on the new plot, much of the old building materials may also be re-used for the extension of the house. This category of households clearly belongs to the better-off in the settlement.

The allotment committee managed to give 88 per cent of the allottee-households a legal plot in their old residential block; this implies that a major part of the old accommodation was preserved and that existing structures were relocated over a distance of not more than 20 m, whenever required. The remaining allottee-households were given a plot in another block within the settlement. It appeared from consultations with the households that they especially favoured this procedure because it enabled them to continue living on or near their old plot. Furthermore, the necessary vacating of structures located on planned roads or public space could be carried out over a period of a year. This period was necessary to achieve minimum interference with the existing relationships in the neighbourhood. If one neighbour did not proceed with his relocation, other households often had to wait before starting their own reconstruction work.

After the one-year relocation period it was observed that the public space had practically been cleared by the households involved. The streets were now passable for bikes and motorcycles. Subsequent levelling of the streets was done with a scarper.

However, on the block level not all reconstruction activities had been finished. Several neighbours had apparently agreed to leave structures on each other's plot for the time being. This should not pose too many difficulties for the replanning operation, as long as it happens by mutual arrangement. Conflicts surfaced where there had been little or no consultation and somebody claimed his plot without paying any attention to the interests or preferences of others.

Given this generally positive experience the decision was made for large-scale adoption of this procedure in the spatial restructuring of the other spontaneous settlements in Ouagadougou. The Central Government instructed the DGUT to implement the
extensive programme with the utmost urgency. However, in view of the Larle-extension experiences, it would have been advisable to take at least two issues into further consideration:

1 The allotment criteria should have been defined more clearly. Clear city-wide regulations should have been made, stating which households in Ouagadougou could rightfully claim them.

2 After the division of space into public and residential use, the allocation of available space on the block-level could have been examined more closely. The pattern now evolved is based on rectangular plots, which have all basically the same size. By means of a less rigid lay-out more existing buildings might have been preserved. Also, the size of the households could have been taken into consideration when determining plot boundaries. The range of household sizes is very large (5-30 persons) so that the application of one standard plot-size causes big problems for many households.

DGUT followed the Central Government's instruction. Formulation and approval of the restructuring plans, within the framework of the Dutch-assisted programme, took place at a very high pace in the years 1984-1986. Two land survey bureaux from Ouagadougou were subsequently commissioned to place the parcel-stones and to produce the maps for the land register. DGUT confirmed in July 1988 that 29,699 out of the planned 30,000 planned plots had been marked, i.e. 99%. A survey revealed that 75% of these plots had actually been occupied by the rightful owners. By June 30, 1988, the households had deposited 436 million CFA in the revolving fund. This implied that 60% of the households had made the required 25,000 CFA down payment. Up to December 31, 1988, the DGUT has invested almost 94% of the total available Dutch donation, i.e. 584 million CFA. In conformity with the original project outline, these resources have been used in the period 84-88 for:

- realisation of the new lay-out plans;
- marking of plots;
- installation of public water taps, and
- levelling of streets.

In this way, this operation has amply succeeded in doubling the number of available legal residential plots in Ouagadougou.

Conclusions.

The "step by step rehabilitation" approach that was applied here has proved to be viable. There has been little protest from the residents and the required clearing of the public space has been carried out within the planned time-period of one year. By giving the highest priority to security of tenure, the households were apparently sufficiently motivated to make the necessary efforts within the set period. The installation of public taps, based on deep-well drillings, made major improvements in the access to safe drinking water for the households. Levelled roads created the required conditions for regular public bus transport into the replanned settlements.

Total investment cost for these highest priority works were based on a contribution of 25,000 CFA per plot. At least 90% of the
allotsee-households should be considered able to deposit this amount in the revolving fund. Available data indicated that by mid-1988 60% had already made the deposit; if the local authorities insist on this requirement it should be possible to completely recover the real investment cost for the highest priority works.

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