

1 Urban Development

Peri-urban village being absorbed by the city (Tamale).

Hanna Karg

Rural–urban transformation represents one of the most profound demographic challenges at a global scale. In sub-Saharan Africa, the urban transformation is a relatively recent phenomenon, which is why urbanization levels are still relatively low as compared to the world average (Figure 1.1). It is expected that in sub-Saharan Africa, 50% of the population will live in urban centres by 2040, while globally half of the population already live in cities today. Despite declining urban growth rates, the number of people being added to urban areas is unprecedented in sub-Saharan Africa.^{1.1} Africa’s fast urbanization is caused by the growth of small and intermediate cities. Urban centers with fewer than 300,000 people accounted for almost 60% of urban growth in Africa between 2000 and 2010, while those over 1 million

inhabitants only accounted for 29%.^{1.2}

Eastern Africa is the most rapidly urbanizing subregion in Africa, followed by West Africa, whose urban population is expected to increase from 44.9% in 2011 to 65.7% by 2050, largely driven by natural increases in urban population rather than rural–urban migration.^{1.3} As on the rest of the continent, increasing urbanization in West Africa is owing to the growth

The main reason for Africa’s fast urbanization is the growth of **small and intermediate cities**.

of secondary cities. Not only have smaller and intermediate cities exhibited higher growth rates, but the number of smaller centers (10,000-49,999 inhabitants) has more than doubled between 1980 and 2010. In West Africa, 80% of the population lives in settlements with populations smaller than 500,000.^{1.2}

Across the continent, rural areas continue to play a role in the future with growth rates

of more than 1% annually.^{1,2} While urban centers grow and new settlements emerge, the average distance between these agglomerations constantly decreases, and the connections between rural and urban areas increase. Ghana and Burkina Faso are urbanizing more rapidly than the sub-Saharan average, even though the urbanization level in Burkina Faso is still below the one of sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 1.1), and both Tamale and Ouagadougou are facing rapid urban growth.

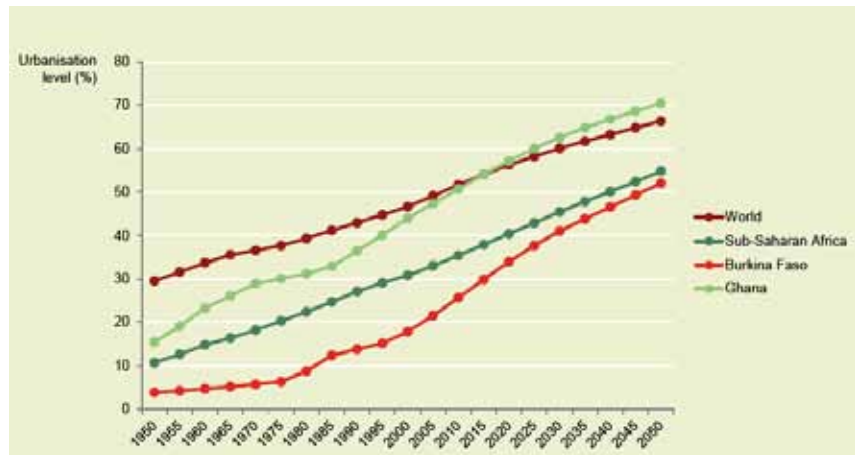


Figure 1.1. Urbanization levels.^{1,4}

Urban sprawl

2001



2017



In Tamale (Ghana) traditional building structures are part of the urban form. Unplanned sprawl results in the conversion of mostly agricultural land into built-up area.

Effects of land markets on urban farmers in Buipela, Tamale

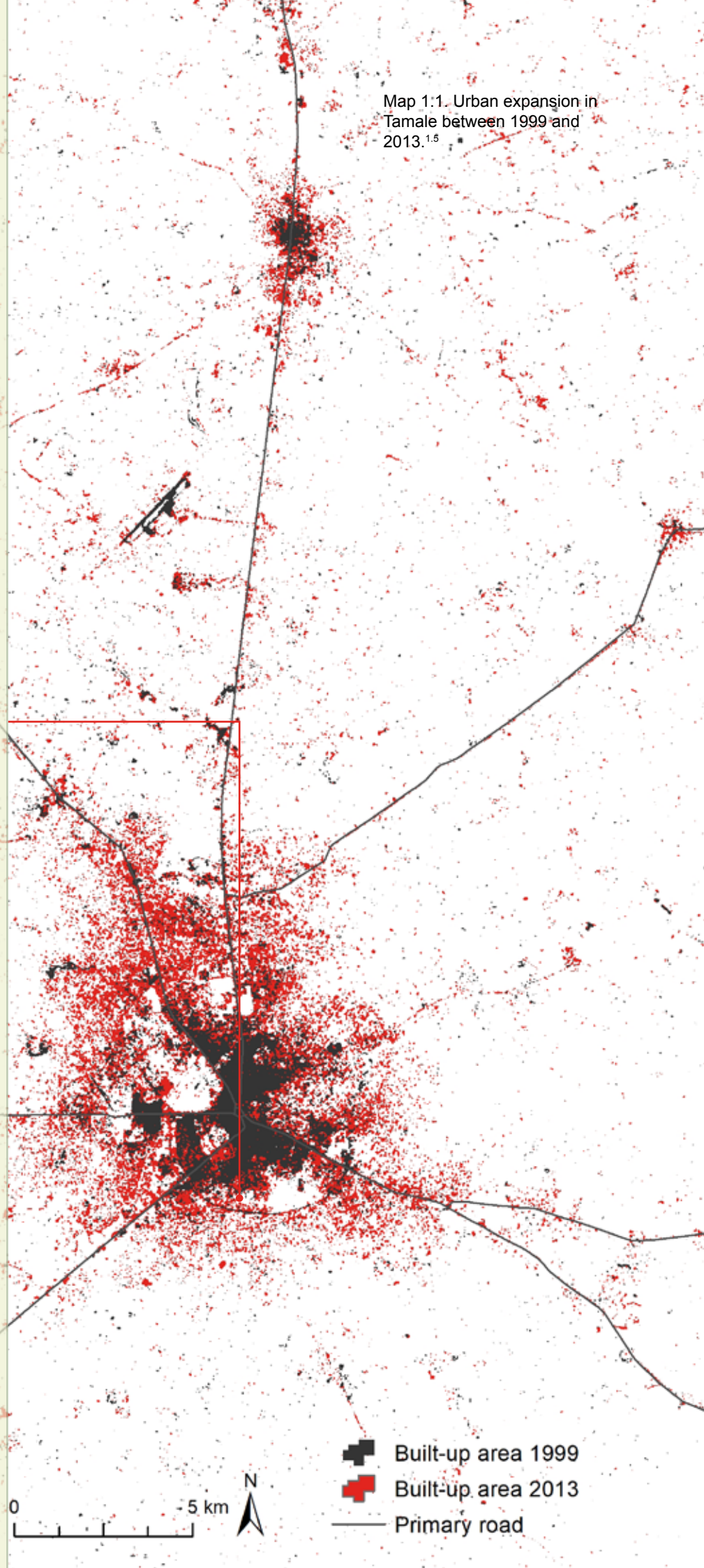
Eileen Bogweh Nchanji

Tamale is experiencing rapid population growth. This is a result of its centralized position and its offer of jobs and education to communities within and outside of the region. In Tamale, traditional *chiefs* own 90% of the land, which they hold in trust for the community, and the state owns 10% of the land through eminent domain. Attached to this ownership is a social obligation to lease these lands and use the money for the development of the community. Rapid urbanization has resulted in a valuable land market. Chiefs are taking advantage of this situation to act as 'private land owners' and lease lands to estate developers for personal gain. This move often occurs to the detriment of urban farmers who have user rights over these lands. In Buipela (Tamale), more than 90% of land has been sold to estate developers, displacing farmers to peri-urban areas. Discussions with urban farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture revealed that money from sales of these lands is unfortunately not used for community development, but to maintain chieftaincy status and ostentatious lifestyles for most of the *chiefs*.

For more information:

Nchanji, E.B.; Bellwood-Howard, I.; Schareika, N.; Chagomoka, T.; Schlesinger, J.; Axel, D.; Rüdiger, G. 2017. Assessing the sustainability of vegetable production practices in northern Ghana. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* 15(3): 321-337.

Map 1:1. Urban expansion in Tamale between 1999 and 2013.^{1,5}



In the past decade, urban population growth has been speeding up, accounting for an annual growth of 4.5% in Tamale and 3.8% in Ouagadougou (Figure 1.2 & 1.5). Urban population growth is reflected in the physical expansion of the cities. Within the past 15 years, Tamale's urban land has increased 2.5 times (Map 1.1).^{1.5} In Ouagadougou, urban built-up area has more than doubled as compared to the year 2000 (Map 1.2).^{1.6} Due to rapid urban growth, urban planning and infrastructural development are challenged. Therefore, and due to different planning traditions, administrative boundaries do not necessarily reflect the actual urban built-up area. For the purpose of comparing food systems in Tamale and Ouagadougou, a simplified boundary was created including grid cells with more than 25% built-up area (Figure 1.3 & 1.6).¹

On average, the urban population in Tamale doubled every decade, increasing from about 83,000 in 1970 to about 371,000 in 2010.^{1.7} In Tamale, traditional authorities (*chiefs*) are responsible for managing most land in and around the city. Due to increasing demand

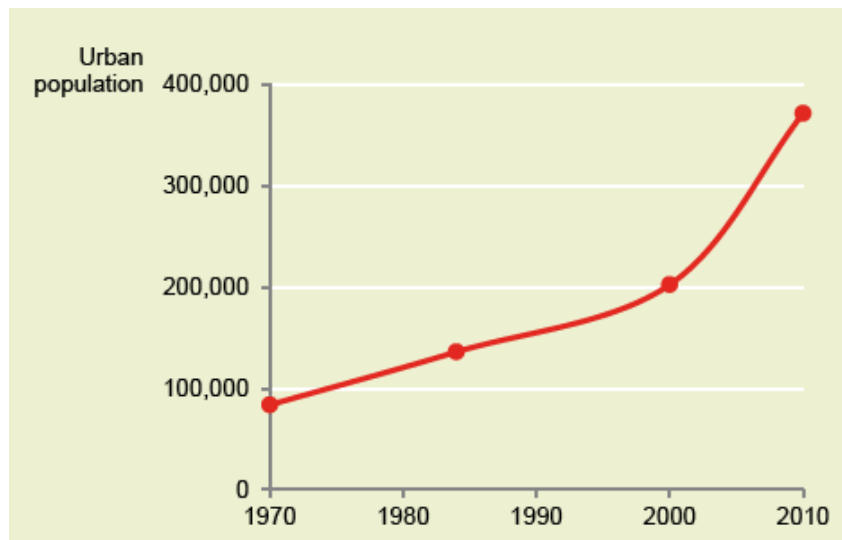


Figure 1.2. Tamale's population growth between 1970 and 2010.^{1.7}

for land, land prices have risen, resulting in *chiefs* selling land to property developers (see page 8). Besides the tremendous urban growth, urban planning is thus further challenged by conflicts over the allocation and use of land between the traditional authorities on the one hand and governmental planning institutions on the other. As a result, the urban area is expanding, creating vast peri-urban landscapes without adequate services and facilities. Chapter 4 illustrates the discrepancy between governmental plans and urban development on the ground.

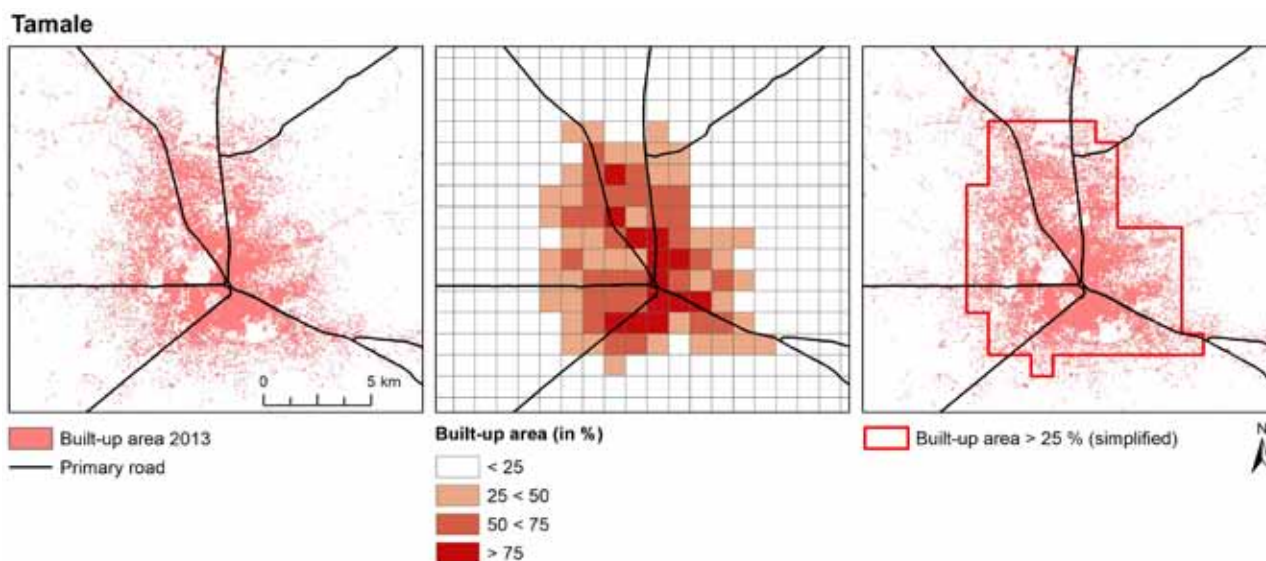


Figure 1.3. Creation of simplified urban boundary for Tamale, Ghana.

Figure 1.4. Division of land into plots (white areas) (*lotissement*) in an informal settlement of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.^{1,10}



Map 1.2. Urban expansion in Ouagadougou between 2000 and 2013.^{1,6}



- Primary road
- Built-up area 2000
- Built-up area 2013

0 2.5 5 km



Ouagadougou experienced a population increase of 400% between 1985 and 2012, rising from 500,000 to almost 2 million people.^{1.8} In Ouagadougou, until the 1980s, no formal urban policy had accompanied the demographic and spatial expansion of largely unorganized settlements that were allocated by traditional authorities (*chefs de terres*).^{1.9} It was only after 1984, when a land reform was established and the land nationalized, that urban land was demarcated on a large scale, resulting in the division of land into regular plots (*lotissement*) that were allocated to households, facilitating legal ownership and infrastructural development (Figure 1.4).^{1.9}

Today, this inner urban area constitutes a rather homogenous area that is well equipped with infrastructure. As the city becomes increasingly formal, informal settlements are almost exclusively found at the periphery of the city, where the rapid expansion of the city has outpaced municipal strategies. Here, traditional allocation of land persists, resulting in parallel structures that facilitate land speculation.^{1.11}

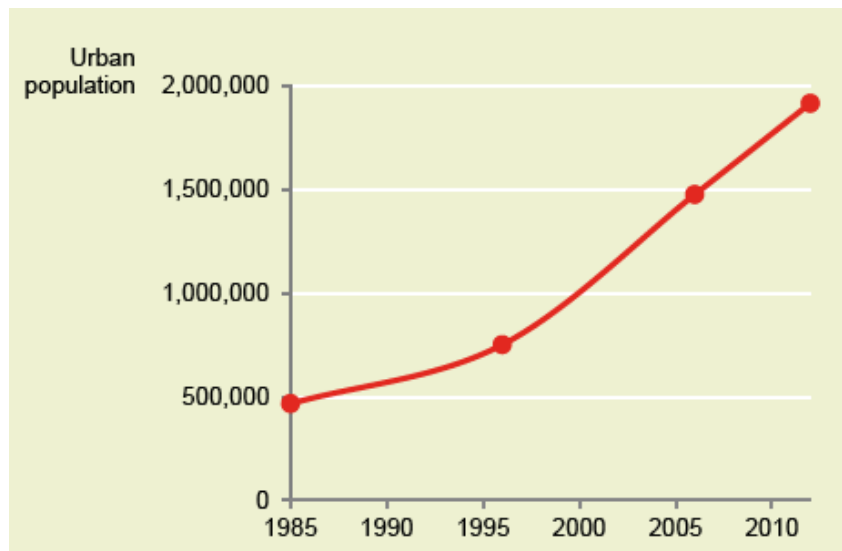


Figure 1.5. Ouagadougou's population growth between 1985 and 2012.^{1.8}

Ouagadougou

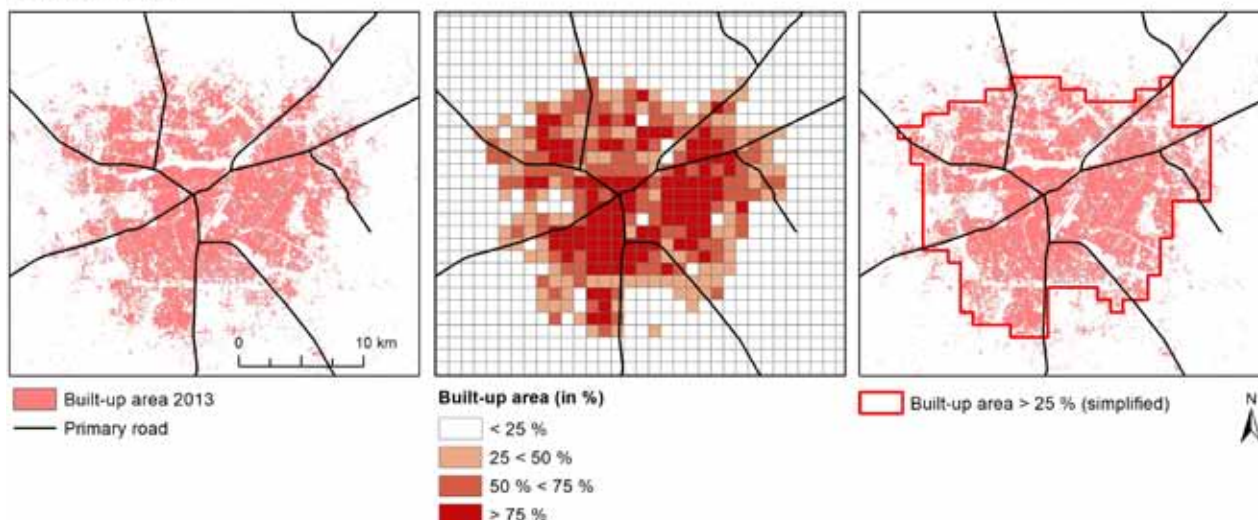


Figure 1.6. Creation of simplified urban boundary for Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.