

## **Housing profile in the "Grand campement" district of the municipality of Koumassi (Abidjan-Côte d'Ivoire).**

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### **Abstract:**

Following the recommendations of international organisations, from the 1980s to the 2000s, the state of Côte d'Ivoire embarked on projects to restructure the precarious neighbourhoods of Abidjan, including the Grand Campement in the east of the town. This restructuring, which began in 2002, has contributed to changing the image of the housing in this neighbourhood, thus enabling it to acquire a formal status.

The objective of this research is to analyse the housing profile in a former precarious neighbourhood of Abidjan, with the Grand Campement neighbourhood of Koumassi as the experimental field.

The methodological approach was based on documentary research, direct observation of the neighbourhood and interviews with resource persons.

The study revealed that the housing in the Grand Campement neighbourhood is characterised by a strong presence of collective housing, particularly common courtyards, and a domination of dwellings built in cinderblocks, which are mostly one or two room dwellings.

**Keywords:** Abidjan, habitat, housing, Grand campement.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

En Côte d'Ivoire, la politique du logement a démarré pendant la période coloniale. Elle servit à produire des logements pour les expatriés et coopérants et pour une minorité de l'élite locale, et des logements économiques pour satisfaire les besoins des populations citadines défavorisées (Parenteau, R. et Charbonneau, F., 1992, p.419).

In Côte d'Ivoire, housing policy began during the colonial period. It served to produce housing for expatriates and development workers and for a minority of the local elite, and economic housing to meet the needs of the disadvantaged urban population (Parenteau, R. and Charbonneau, F., 1992, p.419).

After independence, the Ivory Coast state adopted the principles already present in the colonial housing policy (Manou-Savina A., 1985, p. 82 cited in Parenteau, R. and Charbonneau, F., 1992, p.419). It implemented a housing development policy in favour of the most deprived populations. The result was the production of a large housing stock, i.e. 20,000 dwellings per year from 1960 to 1980 in Abidjan (Hearinger P., 1979, p.67 cited by BNETD, 2015, p.6).

The economic crisis of the 1980s led to the disengagement of the state in favour of the private sector, which directed its efforts towards medium-standard housing through direct home ownership to the detriment of social housing (Vennetier, P. 1980, p. 56 quoted by BNETD, 2015, p.6). This private sector option, combined with the country's strong demographic growth, has led to a massive influx of people from rural areas and the sub-region to the country's major cities, particularly Abidjan, the economic capital, resulting in an increase in unmet housing demand (BNETD, 2015, p.6). As a result, the poor will move to neighbourhoods created outside of urban planning (precarious neighbourhoods) which are proliferating in Abidjan.

From the 1980s to the 2000s, programmes instigated and financed by international organisations were set up to reduce the phenomenon of precarious neighbourhoods (Konan K.P. and Acho E.T.F, 2020, p.82). Thus, the state of Côte d'Ivoire has embarked on projects to restructure precarious districts in Abidjan, including the "Grand Campement" in the east of the city (Figure 1). This restructuring, which began in 2002, has contributed

to changing the image of the housing in this districts, allowing it to acquire a formal status. The aim of this study is to show the current housing typology (in terms of housing) in the "Grand Campement" district.

## II. DATA AND METHODS

The methodology for achieving the objective of the study was based on documentary research, interviews and direct field observation. The documentary research consisted generally of consulting works on the subject.

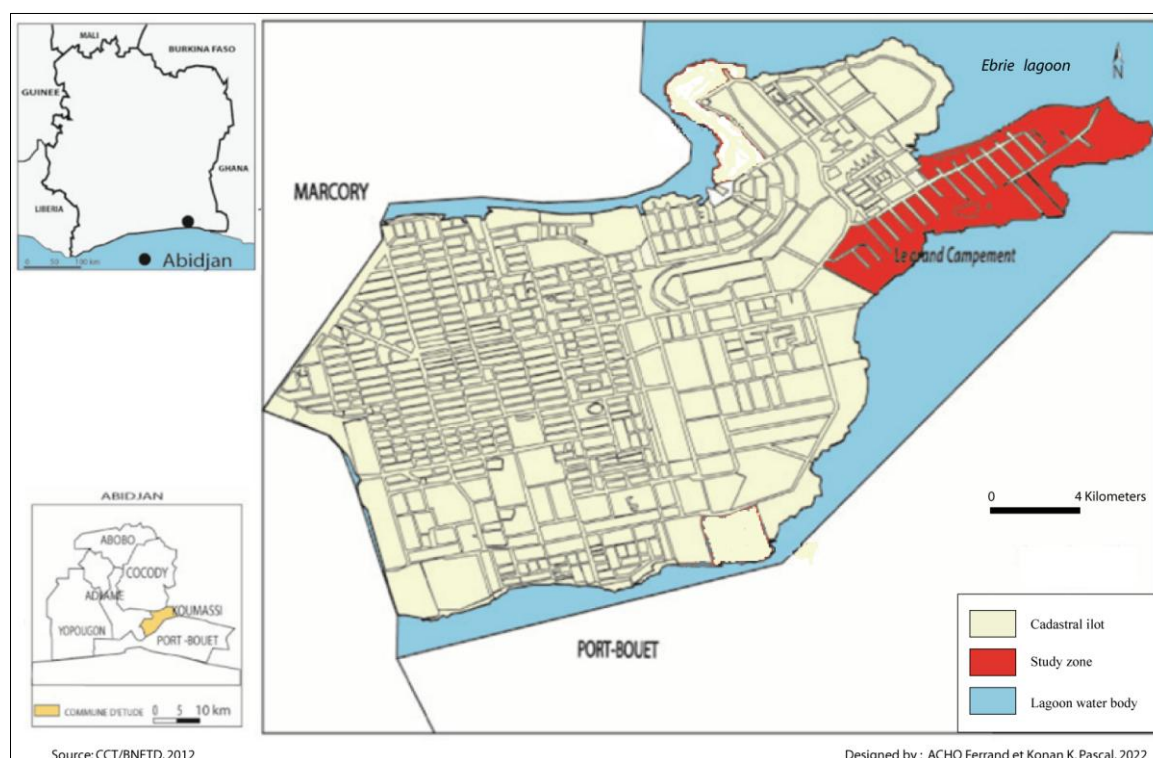
The interview and direct observation were carried out in 2017. The interview was carried out with available resource persons, in particular neighbourhood managers and heads of department in the municipality.

The direct observation made it possible, through several field visits, to collect data on the nature of the construction materials of the dwellings, the typology of the habitat, and to inventory these dwellings in space. Concerning the observation of the habitat, we proceeded to the inventory of the dwellings.

In this inventory work we counted all the individual dwellings such as villas and terraced housing. However, as far as collective housing is concerned, such as blocks of flats and communal courtyards, we have retained the block of flats or the communal courtyard as the housing unit.

Also, statistical data from the 1998 and 2014 population and housing censuses (RGPH) were needed to establish the demographic profile of the study area.

The data were processed using Microsoft Excel software, which was used to produce summary tables, graphs and maps. For the maps, the cartographic base used was a digital file of the land parcel of the Grand Campement district provided by the land registry. This parcel was updated using the Google earth geo-portal.



**Figure 1:** Location of the Grand Campement district

## III. RESULTS

### 3.1-Demographic characteristics of the population

#### 3.1.1-Population by nationality

Table 1 shows the distribution of the population of the "Grand Campement" district according to nationality in 1998 and 2014. Over the two years, residents of Ivorian nationality are the most numerous, with proportions exceeding two thirds (2/3). However, it should be noted that from 1998 to 2014, the proportion of Ivorian residents increased by 6 points, from 66% to 71%. This situation could be explained by the long military-political crisis (from 1999 to 2011), which led to the flight of people of foreign origin from this district. Moreover, most of the foreign population in this district are nationals of ECOWAS countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Ghana, Togo, Benin, etc.).

**Table 1:** Distribution of the population by nationality in 1998 and 2014 (%)

Nationality	Proportion of 1998 (%)	Proportion of 2014 (%)
Ivoirian	66	71
foreigner	34	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100

Source RGPH 1998, RGPH 2014

### 3.1.2-Population by ethnic group

**Table 2:** Distribution of the population by ethnic group in 1998 and 2014 (%)

Ethnic group	Proportion of 1998 (%)	Proportion of 2014 (%)
Akan	48	35
Krou	19	15
Northern Mandé	17	25
Southern Mandé	7	4
Voltaic/Gurs	8	16
Ivorian not defined	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100

Source RGPH 1998, RGPH 2014

The table above shows the distribution by ethnic group of Ivorian residents in the Grand Campement district in 1998 and 2014. Over these two years, the table shows the highest rates for the Akan group with 48% in 1998 and 35% in 2014. They are therefore the largest group in the Grand campement district.

### 3.2-Type of housing according to construction materials

In this section, we classify the dwellings according to the nature of the materials used. Three groups of materials are distinguished for the construction of dwellings in the Grand Campement district: hard materials, intermediate materials and light materials.

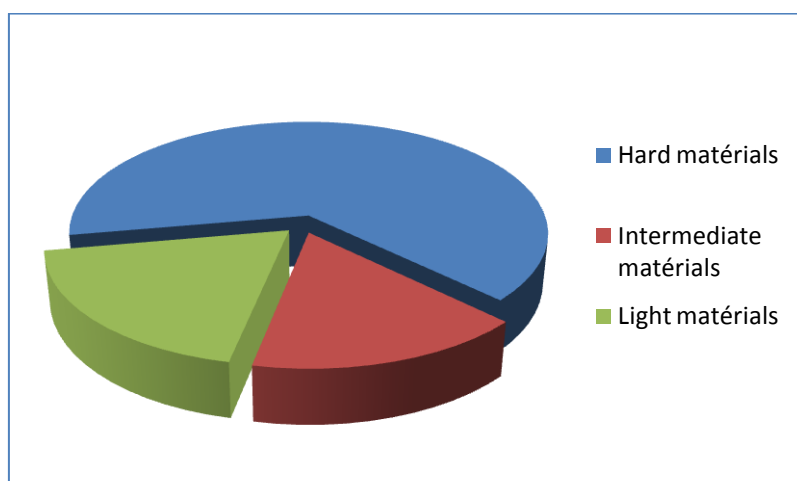
The spatial analysis of dwellings according to construction materials is carried out according to the configuration of the quarter described below.

The configuration of the Grand encampment quarter (Figure 3) resembles an aeroplane taking off with its tail on the ground (the south-western part) and the rest of the aircraft on a body of water with its head (the north-eastern part) pointing towards the clouds. The north and south flanks in the central section follow the shape of an aircraft wing.

#### 3.2.1-Hard materials

Hard-standing housing is defined as housing with walls made of cinder blocks (also known as aggloms or rubble blocks). These are empty or solid concrete blocks, made of gravel, cement and water. The roof is made of concrete slab or tiles or corrugated iron. The floor is covered with tiles, cement or concrete.

Almost two thirds (65.49%) of the dwellings in the district are built entirely of hard materials (Figure 2). Hard materials are the most commonly used materials in the construction of dwellings. The use of hard materials concerns all housing models in the Grand Campement district. Apart from the common courtyards and the banded houses, all other housing categories were built entirely (100%) with hard materials (Table 3). This type of material covers the whole area of the district with varying intensities. Indeed, the dwellings made of hard materials are very dense in the North-East (the head) of the district but this density decreases towards the South-West (the tail) (Figure 3). In addition, this type of housing is moderately dense on the flanks (the wings).



**Figure 2:** Proportions of material types used in housing construction

### 3.2.2-Light materials

In this study, lightweight materials are recycled materials used in the construction of housing. Lightweight housing is housing where the walls, roof and floor are constructed entirely from recycled materials. The walls are made of cardboard, tarpaulin, wood, sheet metal or other salvaged materials; the roof is covered with thatch, palm, matting or plastic; and the floor is made of cement or earth or sand.

Dwellings built of light materials represent 18.70% of the dwellings in the Grand Campement neighbourhood (Table 3). Lightweight materials are the second most common type of material used in the construction of dwellings in the neighbourhood. In addition, these dwellings are all made up of common yards.

Moreover, the spatial distribution of dwellings built with light materials shows a strong presence of this type of dwelling in the south-western part (the tail), extending into the central part between the two sides of the neighbourhood (Figure 3).

### 3.2.3-Intermediate materials

Housing made of intermediate materials consists of dwellings built of both hard and light materials, i.e. a mix of construction materials.

The presence of this type of dwelling in the "Grand Campement" district is estimated at 15.81% of all the dwellings in the study area (Table 3). This material mix is the least used material in the construction of dwellings. These materials were used for the construction of common yards (98.52%) and terraced houses (1.48%).

On the other hand, intermediate materials have a strong presence starting from the northern flank (northern wing), the central part (between the two flanks) and extending towards the south-western part (the tail) with a slightly decreasing intensity. They have a weak presence in the north-eastern part (the head).

In sum, the analysis of the typology of housing according to the use of materials in construction has highlighted the presence of three materials in the constitution of the dwellings in the Grand Campement district, with varying intensities. Hard materials are the most used. However, intermediate materials seem to occupy the same spaces as light materials, with a higher intensity for light materials. This can be explained by the fact that the intermediate material is a transitional material to the use of the hard material. Thus, in order to switch from the light material (originally used in the construction of all the dwellings in the neighbourhood) to the hard material, the owners opt for the use of the intermediate (mixed) material.

**Table 3:** Distribution of dwellings by type of material

Housing model	Materials						Sum	
	Hard		Intermediate		Light			
	headcount	Proportion (%)	headcount	Proportion (%)	headcount	Proportion (%)	headcount	Proportion (%)
Apartment building	17	0,57	0	0,00	0	0,00	17	0,57
Common courtyard	1789	59,65	467	15,57	561	18,70	2817	93,93
Villa	8	0,27	0	0,00	0	0,00	8	0,27
Single or detached	17	0,57	0	0,00	0	0,00	17	0,57

house								
House in a strip	133	4,43	7	0,23	0	0,00	140	4,66
Sum	1964	65,49	474	15,81	561	18,70	2999	100,00

Source: Personal surveys, 2017

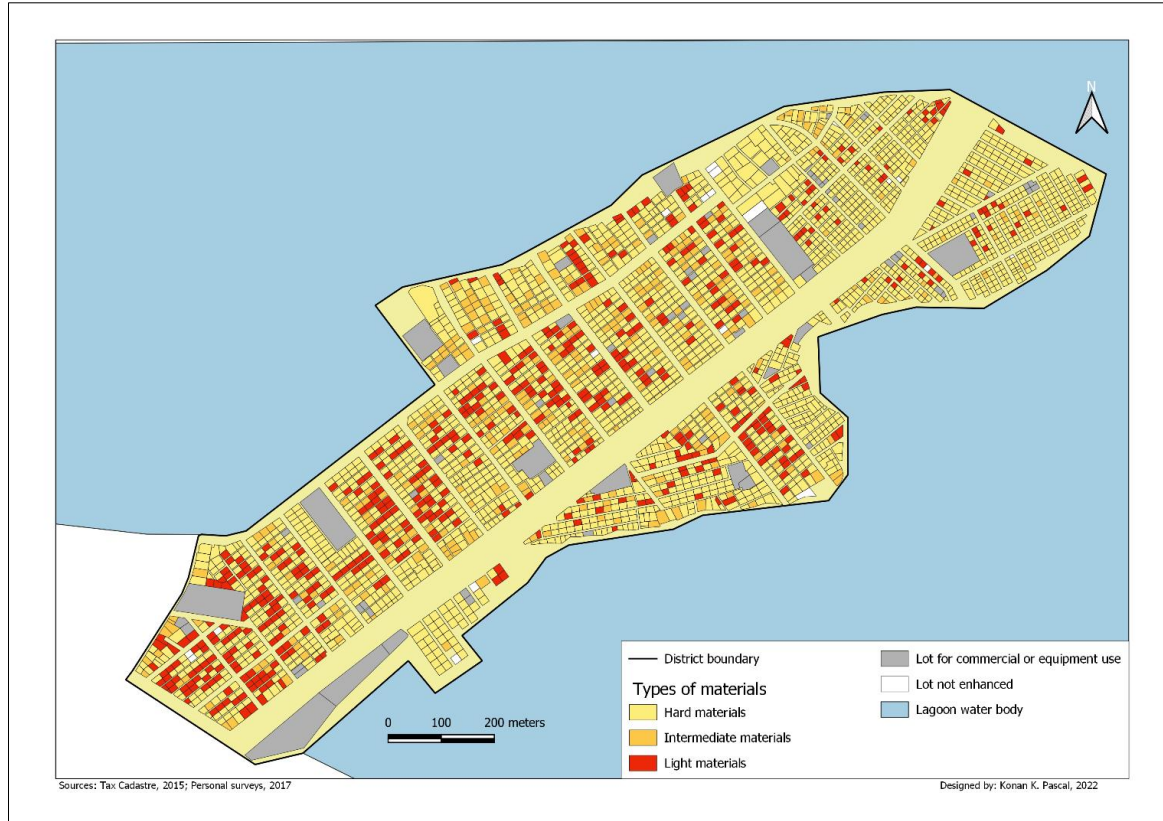


Figure 3: Nature of housing construction materials

### 3.3-Type of dwellings according to the grouping of the housing unit and the construction model

Table 4: Distribution of dwellings according to housing unit grouping and construction model

Housing grouping unit	Housing model		Headcount	Proportion (%)
Collective housing	Apartment building		17	0,57
	Common courtyard	Of origin	2526	84,23
		Privatised	291	9,70
Individual housing	Villa		8	0,27
	Single or detached house		17	0,57
	House in a strip		140	4,66
Sum			2999	100,00

Source: Personal surveys, 2017

#### 3.3.1 Collective housing

Collective housing is a dwelling located in a building that groups together at least two housing units sharing certain facilities. It is predominantly represented in the Grand Campement district with 94.50% of all dwellings (Table 4). There are two types of housing: the block of flats and the common courtyard. This type of housing covers the whole area of the district (Figure 4).

##### 3.3.1.1-Apartment building

The apartment block is a building with flats stacked on top of each other. It is one of the least common building types in the Grand Campement district, accounting for 0.57% of the neighbourhood's dwellings (Table 4). The buildings are marked by their dispersion over the whole area of the district (Figure 4).

### *3.3.1.2-Common courtyard*

The common courtyard is a concessionary housing complex. It is evaluated at about 94.00% of the dwellings in the large camp (Table 4). It is built in two forms: the simple common courtyard (or traditional) and the individualised common courtyard (or privatised). The simple common courtyard is very dominant (84.23%). In addition, the individualised common courtyard represents nearly 10.00% of the dwellings in the study area (table 4).

Moreover, the simple common courtyard covers the whole area of the neighbourhood, whereas the individualised courtyard is scattered throughout, with the exception of a few groupings in the north-eastern part (the head) and on the northern flank (the north wing).

### *3.3.2 Individual housing*

Single-family dwellings are single-family dwellings, i.e. they house only one household and have no shared facilities. This type of dwelling represents barely 5.50% of the dwellings in the Grand Campement neighbourhood (Table 4). It was built in three models: the villa, the banded house and the single house.

On the other hand, individual dwellings are scattered in all sectors of the neighbourhood.

#### *3.3.2.1-The villa*

A villa is a detached house with a garden and an internal garage. It is evaluated at 0.27% of the dwellings in the "Grand Campement" district (table 4). Thus, it has the lowest share of the existing housing models in the district. It also represents almost 5% of the individual dwellings. This model is dispersed in the central sector of the district (figure 4).

#### *3.3.2.2-The house in a strip*

The strip house is a group of dwellings built on the same lot in a straight alignment forming a strip (KONAN K.P. and ACHO E.T.F, 2020). This type of housing represents 4.66% of the dwellings in the Grand Campement district, and about 85% of the individual dwellings (table 4). This type of housing is scattered throughout the neighbourhood (figure 4).

#### *3.3.2.3-Single or detached house*

The single house is a dwelling that occupies a single lot and does not have a garden or a garage for a vehicle (KONAN K.P. and ACHO E.T.F, 2020). This type of dwelling is estimated at 0.57% of the dwellings in the Grand Campement district, and 10.30% of individual dwellings (table 4). This type of housing is mainly located in the eastern part of the district.





**Figure 4:** Housing typology by construction model

### 3.4-Housing size

In this study the size of a dwelling refers to the number of main rooms, excluding kitchen, bathrooms and toilets. This section establishes a typology of dwellings according to the number of rooms (Table 5).

**Tableau 5 :** Répartition des logements selon le nombre de pièce

Number of rooms	1 room		2 rooms		3 rooms		+ of 3 rooms	
	Headcount	Proportion (%)	Headcount	Proportion (%)	Headcount	Proportion (%)	Headcount	Proportion (%)
<b>Villa</b>	0	0,00	0	0,00	1	0,03	7	0,23
<b>House in a strip</b>	9	0,30	30	1,00	14	0,46	4	0,13
<b>Single or detached house</b>	0	0,00	2	0,06	5	0,16	8	0,26
<b>Apartment building</b>	0	0,00	8	0,26	7	0,23	2	0,06
<b>Common courtyard</b>	1789	59,65	1041	34,71	70	2,33	2	0,06
<b>Total</b>	1798	59,95	1081	36,05	97	3,23	23	0,77

Source: Personal surveys, 2017

The observation of the above table shows the grouping of dwellings into four classes in the Grand Campement district: one-room dwellings (60%), two-room dwellings (36%), three-room dwellings (3.23%) and dwellings with more than three rooms (0.77%). Thus, one to two room dwellings represent 96% of the dwellings in the district. The remaining 4% are shared by the others.

However, the cross-reference of the number of rooms with the type of dwelling shows that the majority of dwellings with one room (99.50%), two rooms (96.30%) and three rooms (72.16%) are in common yards. On the other hand, dwellings with more than three rooms are mostly single houses (34.78%) and villas (30.43%).

#### **IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

This study highlights the typology of housing in a former precarious neighbourhood of Koumassi (Grand campement) which has moved from informal to formal status. It distinguishes three ways of classifying the housing in the Grand Campement neighbourhood.

With regard to the typology according to construction materials, the results of the study show the use of three materials in the constitution of dwellings, with a preference for hard materials to the detriment of light and intermediate materials (mixed). These results are confirmed by those of Atta K., Koné M. and Kra K. (2015, p.200) and, Konan K. P. and Acho E. T. F. (2020, p.89). Their work revealed that over time, in former slum areas, the preference for hard materials is marked by the dominance of hard housing in the housing stock of the areas. In addition, the study describes the housing patterns of the Grand Campement neighbourhood. It reveals a strong presence of collective housing (94.50% of the constructions) marked by the domination of common courtyards (94.00% of all housing). These results seem to be confirmed by those mentioned by Atta K., Koné M. and Kra K. (2015, p.197) and UN-Habitat (2012, p.19). Indeed, in a previous study, these authors revealed that common courtyard housing is in the majority in the architectural landscape of Abidjan's neighbourhoods.

Moreover, the present study indicates a domination of one-room dwellings in the Grand Campement neighbourhood of around 60%. This proportion decreases when the number of rooms in the dwelling increases. Similar findings had already been made by Atta K., Koné M. and Kra K. (2015). Indeed, their work on three precarious neighbourhoods revealed a predominance of one-room dwellings which also decreases when the number of rooms increases.

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

The "Grand Campement" district is located to the east of the commune of Koumassi. It has benefited from a restructuring programme which has helped to change the image of the housing on this site, thus enabling it to acquire a formal status. Thus, the present study has made it possible to identify the profile of the housing through three modes of classification of the dwellings: typology according to the construction materials, typology according to the grouping of the housing unit and typology according to the number of rooms.

In short, the "Grand Campement" neighbourhood is characterised by a strong presence of collective housing (particularly common courtyards), a domination of dwellings built in breezeblock, and which are mostly one or two room dwellings. As a result, the "Grand Campement" district is identified with the working-class districts of Abidjan. However, this study could be extended to the other neighbourhoods of the commune of Koumassi in order to draw up an overall profile of the housing in each neighbourhood.

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