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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# URBAN RENEWAL AND MUTATION OF A SECONDARY CITY OF IVORY COAST: CASE OF BIANKOUMA

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### ABSTRACT

Since independence, the Ivory Coast has developed an urban framework dominated by the city of Abidjan. Under the influence of decentralization, secondary cities began to develop little. In fact, Biankouma, a secondary town in the Tonkpi region, is not immune to this situation. The objective of this study is to analyze the urban changes made in the city of Biankouma which is subject to urban renewal. To conduct the study, we used the hypothetico-deductive method to conduct an exploratory and descriptive research combining the quantitative and qualitative approach. The surveys were conducted with 20 resource persons and administrative officers from the city of Biankouma. This study showed the progress of the city of Biankouma in terms of infrastructure and basic equipment.

## INTRODUCTION

Like most villages in western Côte d'Ivoire, Biankouma was a village perched on top of Mount Bian. Hence its name "Biankouma," which means: village located at the top of Mount Bian. The city is located in the Tonkpi region, limited to the north by the department of Touba, to the south by the department of Man, to the east by the department of Séguéla and whose Sassandra river, to the west by the department of Danane. The locality was erected in Sub-prefecture by Decree No. 61 - 16 of 03/01/1961, and opened in 1963. The sub-prefecture of Biankouma covers an area of 2640m<sup>2</sup> and has 88 villages (RGPH, 2014). Biankouma has been erected as a full service commune since 1985 and has 10 urban districts and 14 rural districts. Biankouma once a big village was erected in commune then chief town of department. This is a major change in its urban policy. In view of this change of vision, this town knows many changes, especially in terms of equipment and basic infrastructure, hence the interest of our study. The objective of our study is to analyze the mutations made in the urban space of Biankouma. What are the changes made in the equipment of the city of Biankouma?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The city of Biankouma covers an area of 2640m<sup>2</sup>. It has 10 urban neighborhoods and 14 rural neighborhoods.

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The city is located in the Tonkpi region, limited to the north by the department of Touba, to the south by the department of Man, to the east by the department of Séguéla and whose Sassandra river, to the west by the department of Danané (see map 1) Regarding the methodology, the study was based on interviews with 20 resource persons (5 technical officers of the town hall, 5 heads of neighborhoods, 5 association managers and 5 BNETD agents). Subsequently, the collection of information was based on three techniques. First, the literature search that consisted of collecting statistics on the population of Biankouma. As a result, it provided information on the previous configuration of the city. Then, the direct observation made it possible to evaluate the nature and the state of the equipments of the urban area of Biankouma. And finally, the survey made it possible to make an inventory of the equipment and infrastructures of the city.

## RESULTS

### The urbanization of biankouman to the test of the physical constraints of the site

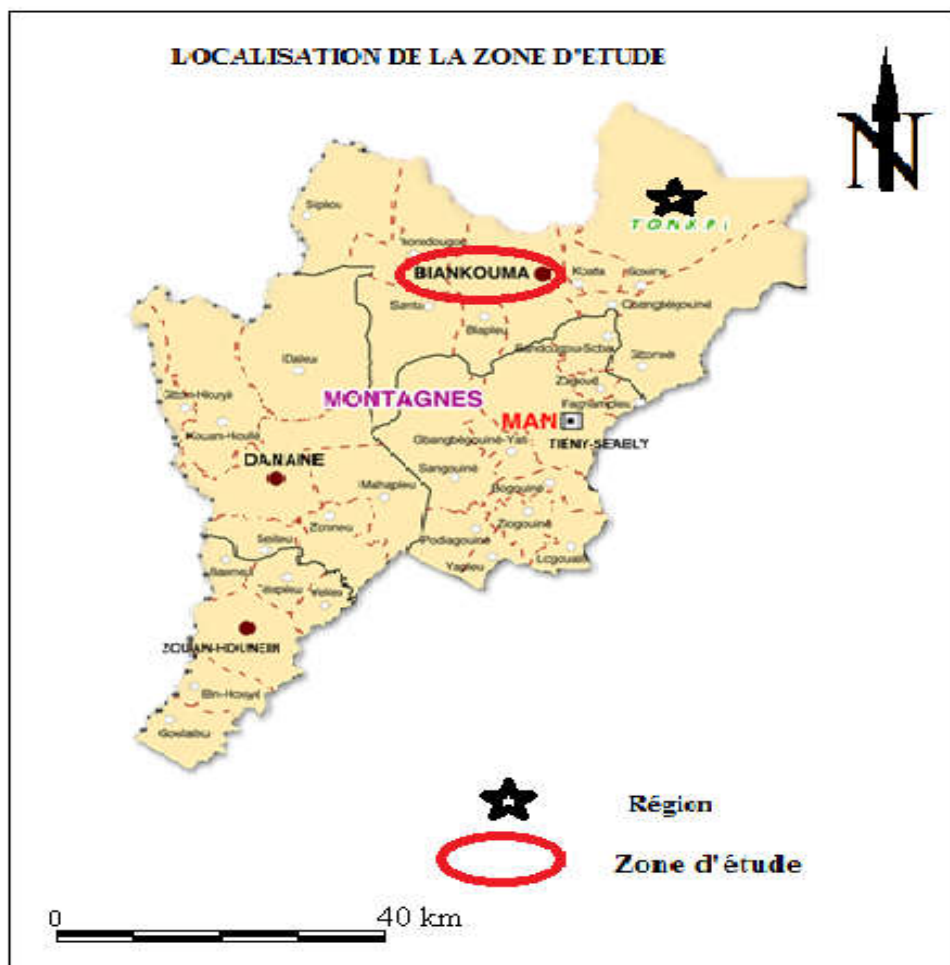
The region has a very rugged terrain, the differences in altitude are important and the peaks often peak more than 1000 meters as the crow flies. Its soil is ferrallitic, with a high rainfall and suitable for arboriculture and food crops. The hydrography is summarized in the Sassandra river which is the limit between the department of Biankouma and that of Séguéla, in the Bafing river which serves as limit with the department of

Touba and also many tributary streams of Bafing and Sassandra. The vegetation is dominated by a dense forest and a Guinean-type soap-box wined with forest, galleries and streams suitable for raising cattle and small ruminants. The physical characteristics of the biankouman site, which is not conducive to habitat establishment, have not slowed down the dynamics of the population of this locality. Indeed, the population of the city of Biankouma is estimated at 51269 inhabitants (INS, 2014) composed mainly of indigenous Yacoubas and Toura, allochtones Mahous, Malinkés, Baoulés and non-native people who are mainly Guineans, Malians and Burkinabe. The population grew remarkably between 1998 and 2014. This secondary town, due to its equipment, attracted people from villages and camps.

There is a clear evolution of the population of Biankouma between 1998 and 2014. In fact the population of the city has increased from 12965 to 51269 inhabitants (source INS, 2014). This is justified by the fact that Biankouma is becoming a second regional pole thus supporting the city of Man. What could in the long run, decongest demographically the common Man.

**Equipment and infrastructure of biankouma worthy of a secondary city**

**Roads:** The city of Biankouma is served by two main paved roads connecting the cities of Man and Touba and Sipilou. The secondary roads of Biankouma are very uneven and are not reprofiled.



Source BNETD 1998 Design realization Koné Moussa

Map 1. Location of the Study Area

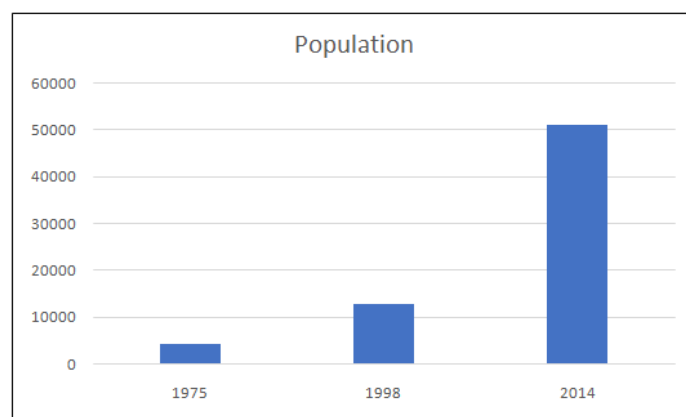
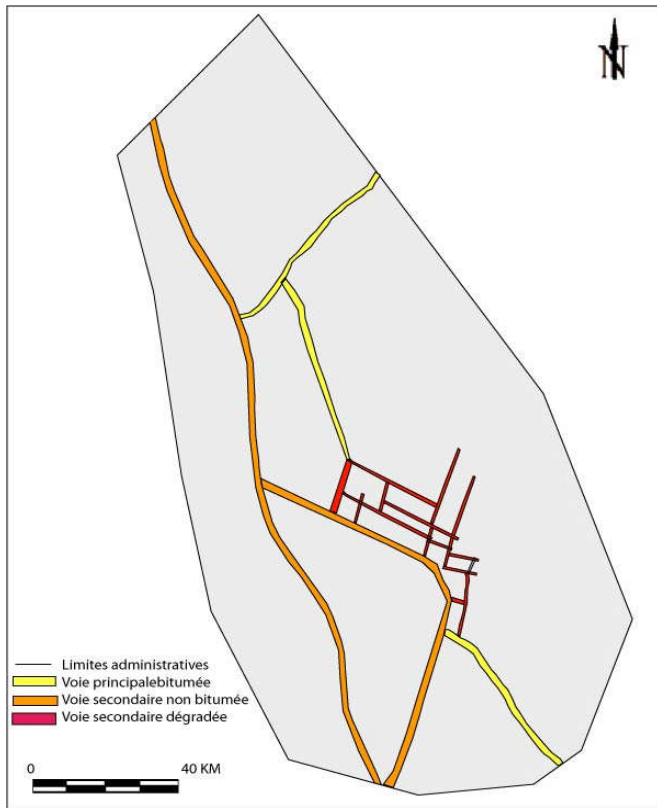


Figure 1. Demographic evolution

Three transport companies (MT, OT, ST) exist in the city. They transport people to all major cities in the interior of the country. We also have motorcycle taxis, bush taxis and minicars called MASSA which provide the link between the city of Biankouma and the villages of the sub-prefecture.

In terms of sanitary equipment, more specifically in bed numbers, the Biankouma hospital is unable to provide pediatric hospitalization services. What drives parents to drive their children to Man located 40 km from the city. Other services have acceptable amenities for an average city.



Source Bnetd 1998 Conception Koné Moussa Realization Koné Moussa

Map 2. Roads in Biankouma

**Educational facilities:** Many secondary and primary schools are built in the city, there are also private vocational schools. At secondary level, the city has a total of four (04) secondary schools, including the public High School and three (03) private colleges.

**Preschool and preschool establishments:** The city benefits from the following primary and pre-school institutions:

Two kindergartens (02) two school groups (04) four public primary schools (01) a private Catholic primary school (01) a Franco-Arab school.

**Private Professional Training:** There is one (01) vocational training establishment (sewing) and one (01) other training the caregivers.

**Sanitary equipment**

**Public Health:** In terms of sanitary infrastructure, the city of Biankouma has:

01 General Hospital and a School Medico

Table 1. Statistics of open health beds in Biankouma

Services	Medicine	Chirurgie	Pediatrics	Surgery	Total
Number of beds	5	5	0	6	16

INS statistical yearbook 2010

Table 2. Statistics technical plateau in Biankouma

Services	Laboratory	Operating Room	Radiology	Dental Office	Total
Number	1	1	1	0	3

INS statistical yearbook 2010

The technical platform of the Biankouma City Hospital is devoid of a dental office. This situation is the door open to many unqualified private practitioners who endanger the health and sometimes even the lives of the inhabitants. As with the pediatric ward, patients are referred to Man's Hospital, which is naturally saturated due to the influx of patients from all parts of the region.

**Private Private Health Establishment**

There are four (04) private infirmaries in the city of Biankouma that are palliative to Biankouma's population's shortcomings in health-related sources: (our survey, 2017). A single pharmacy depot covers the medical needs of the people.

**Places of worship in Biankouma**

There are several places of worship in Biankouma. Muslim worshippers have (08) eight mosques for their daily prayers. Regarding Catholic Christians the choice is reduced to one church. Evangelical Christians have up to nine (09) temples for their worship. The witnesses of Jehovah have a large temple. Other religious beliefs are also represented in Biankouma (01) a Buddhist temple and (01) a temple of the rose cross, (30) thirty places of fetishism and maraboutages have also been listed (source: our survey, 2017).

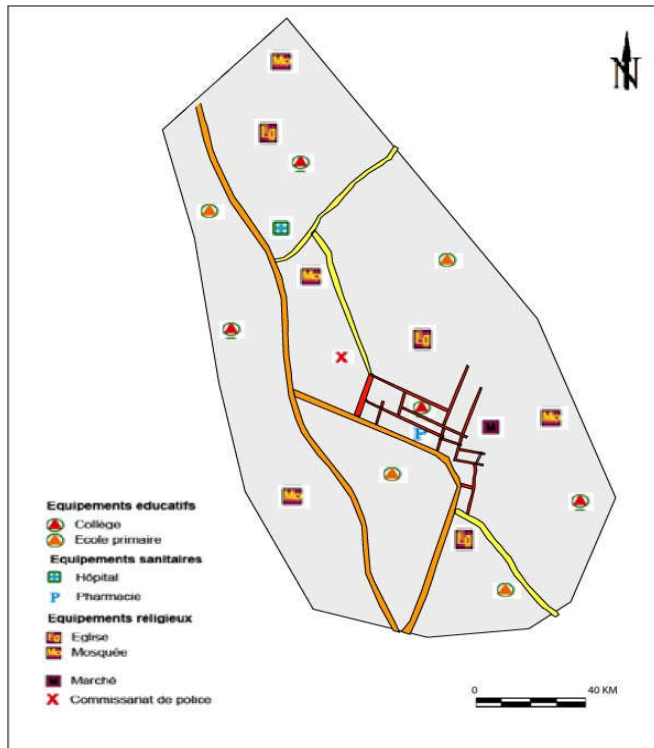


Source: (Koné Moussa, 2017)

Picture 1. Our Lady Biankouma Catholic parish

## Leisure / Sport

We have two football training centers and two stadiums. The city of Biankouma has a youth center. Several sports activities are organized during the holidays in collaboration with the social service of the City Council, the Departmental Directorate of Youth and Sports.



Source : BNETD 1998

Conception réalisation : Koné Moussa

**Map 3. Basic equipment in Biankouma**

## Public administrative services in biankouma

The city of Biankouma is home to some key administrations that allows it to have a pretty good image among the most equipped cities in the country. We quote the administrations below: The Prefecture, the Sub-prefecture, the Town Hall, the Services of Assessment of the Taxes, the Inspectorate of the Primary and Preschool Education, the Post (just opened its premises since the 01 / 03/2018) The Public Treasury (currently under construction) the ONI (National Office of Identification), the CMU (Universal Health Cover), the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission). The city has a total of nine (09) departmental directorates under Ministerial supervision, namely: the Departmental Direction of Agriculture and Rural Development, Animal and Fisheries Production, the ANADER Zone, the Health and Hygiene Department. Public, the Directorate of Construction and Urban Planning, the Social Center, the Directorate of Infrastructure and Public Sanitation, the Directorate of Youth and Sport. The city of Biankouma counts to its credit six (06) Surveillance units distributed as follows: The Gendarmerie Brigade, The Police Station, The North-West Security Base (BSNO), The Forest Police (Water and Forests), The SODEFOR, The Ivorian Office of Parks and Reserves (OIPR).

## Private services in Biankouma

The city has only one service station, it will soon house 02 other service stations currently under construction.

Regarding the mobile network, there are 03 different mobile phone companies (MTN, Orange and Moov) that provide coverage for communication, deposit and money transfer and internet connection. Two micro-finances insured the financial movements of the populations. Unfortunately, FLEC has given way to COOPEC for financial reasons. The CIE (Ivorian Electricity Company) ensures the electrification of the city however there are households that resort to anarchic connections on the network of Cie. SODECI also provides water distribution in the city, it has a station and two water towers to his credit.

## Tourism

The former village designated UNESCO World Heritage, the handicraft center in very advanced state of disrepair, the feast of yams and Mont-bian constitute a real tourist asset for the city.

**Hotel receptives:** there are a total of 07 hotels spread throughout the city.

## A secondary city still marked by the agricultural sector and informal trade

### Agriculture

There are thirteen (13) legally constituted Cooperative Societies of which twelve (12) are engaged in the marketing of agricultural products such as coffee and cocoa and one (01) in the field of rice and food crops.

### Breeding

In general, breeding in Biankouma is anarchic; the animals are not parked. They are delivered to themselves. However, some breeders were able to make a difference by building pens including two (02) hog barns and three (03) barns.

### The highly diversified informal sector in biankouma

The city of Biankouma has a single market, the large market located in the commercial district that benefits the entire population. We find in the city:

The city of Biankouma is full of many activities and various small trades exist.

There are 15 men's hair salons and 22 women's hair salons that allow residents to perform their beauty treatments. In all 8 stitching workshops are available for making garments of all kinds.

Concerning building trades, 09 joineries, 3 sawmills, 15 bricklayers 'workshops, 18 plumber's workshops and 10 ironworks and 13 electricians' workshops enable residents to build or maintain their homes.

There are 03 fishmongers in the city that ensure the daily life of the population. The city benefits from a single butcher's shop for a modern slaughterhouse supervised by the service of the animal and halieutic production. (03) bakeries are competing in the city and 02 other creations, the city also has 02 Superettes, 07 hardware stores, 05 maquis, 03 air-conditioned bars, 02 small bookstores.



Market Source: (Koné Moussa, 2017)

**Picture 2. Biankouma**

## Conclusion

This study has highlighted the different equipment available in the city of Biankouma. To do this, she made an effort to present the site on which the city is built. Then she identified the characteristics of the city's equipment, infrastructure, and services. The dominant facilities in the municipality are important for a small town like Biankouma, which used to be a big village. The city is under increasing demographic pressure because of the city's attractiveness for basic amenities. Biankouma is now provided with equipment and infrastructure. But with the galloping demography of the city, this county seat would not be in the grip of a saturation of its available equipment?

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