

## **URBAN DYNAMIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE ROLE THAT PLAYS LOME AS CITY IN THE PROTECTION, VISIBILITY AND PROFITABILITY OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE.**

### ***Subject-related problem***

« Nowadays, life quality becomes a priority. The considerations people have for heritages have gradually evolved. Evidence of collective memory, heritage has in fact a new role in the contemporary urban landscape composition. This does not only concern preserving here or out there scents of the past but to use them for the future of our environment. »

These ongoing words show in general how important heritage has been considered for the few past decades in the urban space. Not only the physical environment is affected, but it is also important to have moral responsibility to preserve it, for it is in our economical interest to do so.

However when many nations all over the world today realize the importance of heritage in turning it like a lever for development, African nations are in the back of the trail or worse case they do not react to the disintegration or disappearance of the cultural riches.

Among those nations, Togo is represented. Note this comment of a national newspaper in Lomé: "It is rare to talk hear or talk about the Togolese museum". Answering to the question about the interest Togolese population show for the national museum, the one in charge of museums, monuments and site in Togo says:" Togolese population rarely visit the national museum or show little interest for it, the average of visitors is about 7,000 per year including foreigners".

In regard with the population of 1,200,000 inhabitants in Lomé, this number effectively confirms the low rate of visits to the museum. However, in comparison to the museum of Togo, museums in the world see high number of visitors in the year. As example, in 1997 according to muséostat (France), Louvre museum recorded 3.5 millions, Versailles 2.7 millions and Orsay 2.3 millions of visitors<sup>ii</sup>.

In parallel with this low rate of visit, it is necessary to remind three decades ago, in its third five-year plan, Togo set prioritized the creation of a genuine national museum. Unfortunately, hitherto nothing comes into existence. Premises of the museum located in the East wing of the congress palace are inappropriate. Constant attendance of soldiers in the museum do not favor visits to the museum.

This way, the cultural wealth of Togo ends in smoke. According to an analysis conducted by ICOM (*International committee for Museums*) and UNESCO in 1979, Togo is among Countries which keep recording disappearances of important cultural heritages. In the same line, the one in charge of museums, monuments and site in Togo asserts: "since 1990, the beginning of social and political crises, gangs of dealers trafficking high-value artworks, paintings or frescoes made their irruption in the national territory. That is why valuables have been stolen and exported to Europe<sup>iii</sup>".

Therefore, cultural sector and in particular the branch dealing with heritages is held up in a strong way regarding its development for the following reasons: the inhabitants show no interest to the National Museum of Togo; they do not have any knowledge about the cultural

things; the lack of appropriate premises for the museum and the unauthorized trading of cultural heritages. Monuments and public places which could be places of expression and integration of the Togolese culture are really non-existent.

Due to this alarming situation, we have wondered about how to obviate to this dramatic situation by an adequate planning of the urban space.

### **Work assumption**

Table 1

<b>INTERROGATIONS</b>	<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>
- How can we minimize the unauthorized trading of cultural heritages?	- The planning of public places with monuments evoking the cultural heritage will help to make sensitive and raise up the interest of the public population for the cultural things and attenuate the unlawful traffic of valuables of art which have high-cultural value.
- What need to be done to attract people collectively to the cultural thing,	- A good location and a high-quality architectural image of the museum will exert an influence on the population, attract them and will create a high-rate of visits to the museum.
- How the cultural heritage can participate to the improvement of the living standard?	- The integration of this planning in a touristic mileage heading to an attractive museum will improve the quality of the urban space and will facilitate tourism.
- Today, what economical stake does the national museum of Togo represent for Lomé?	- The attraction of many tourists, the creation of new functions within the museum will generate lot of profits and create in the meantime jobs.

This board above show interrogations and assumptions we will think about.

### **Goals**

The overall goal is to revitalize the national museum of Togo in order to be a lever for the social, spatial and economical development of the city.

Specific goals turn around threefold key-concept:

COMMUNUCATION: heightening awareness for our moral responsibility to preserve the cultural heritage;

ENVIRONMENT: improving the living standard by the cultural heritage;

TOURISM: economical valorization of the cultural heritage.

### **Methodology**

For Lomé to participate to the preservation and to the visibility of the cultural heritage, we have chosen an approach<sup>iv</sup> based on the points highlighted in these following interrogations:

- To attenuate the illicit traffic –what to protect?
- To fight against disinterest – how to make sensitive?
- To guarantee the present and future existence – how to insert?
- To create out there human activities – for whom we create?

As for the economical valorization of the cultural heritage, we founded our assessment on the proposed tools of Xavier GREFFE<sup>v</sup> in order to create those which are inexistent in the national museum of Togo, and reinforce revalue the existing tools which do not fully work.

Still, in order to confirm or invalidate the hypothesis mentioned above, and end to concrete proposals, we have proceeded this way:

- Documentary researches;
- Enquiries and interviews with responsible covered and population;
- Visits on the field.

### **CHAPTER I: AN OUTLOOK ON A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF MUSEUM AS WELL AS ITS ROLES IN THE URBAN DYNAMICS.**

Regarding museum and its place in the urban space today, Roland ARPIN said that the institution “became a place in the city, an area of convergence of people. It has also become an area of convergence of thinking, thought, pleasure and knowledge.” Today this fact is a reality in many towns. So when talking about the museum, we directly refer to the city that shelters the museum or when talking about the city we refer to the museum. Let’s illustrate these words by a typical example similar with the Togolese context: the national Museum of Niger.

#### ***The national museum of Niger***

Aiming to give a social climate and an economical activity to the museum and attract national and international tourists to the museum, the national museum of Niger has been planned to fit tourists who are unable to make tours on a long distance in the country by providing a complete but possible outlook of the country. Among what attract, we have:

- The habitats of the different ethnic groups of the country are displayed (habitats of nomads and sedentary inhabitants);
- Craftsmen who work in the open air;
- Zoological gardens which offer for the curiosity of the tourists the entire fauna of Niger.

All these options have positive impact by attracting visitors who reach thousand a day and generated the selling or craftsmen’s production or works displayed. Due to it, the revenue has increase considerably in hundreds of thousand francs (CFA: local currency) to reach 12 million in 1969 and 20 million in 1970.

Besides these economical fallouts, we have not lose sight of the job opportunities given to the craftsmen in order to value their professions, to protect themselves from every deterioration that might be caused by traditional techniques, etc.

Moreover for social considerations, the national museum of Niger implemented:

- Training in the profession of craftsmen for illiterate young ones;

- An action for jobless young people. This part concerns young ones who are not fortunate to get a place in school or who hardly integrate the economical sector;
- Teaching adults to read and write. It is crucial because it helps those who are more than 50 to be free from the shame of watching young ones reading and writing.

It is evident that the national museum of Niger contributes to the social and economical development of Niamey and the entire country.

After this brief outlook on the national museum of Niger, it is time to wonder on the role that the national museum of Togo plays or can play in the preservation of knowledge about cultural heritage in one hand and the participation of the cultural heritage on the socioeconomic system of the city.

## **SECTION II: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TOGO AND THE CITY OF LOMÉ: IDENTIFYING THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

In order to encircle the strengths and weaknesses related to the national museum of Togo, we have proceeded to inner analysis to understand why it does not work well, and an analysis of external agents to understand the vision the population have for the national museum of Togo and to comprehend fully why people get disinterested for the cultural heritage.

### ***Analysis of internal agents: understand the actual failure***

This analysis helps to underline important faults in the organization and management of this institution. Let us quote the following reasons:

- Tiny spaces for exhibition and storage of collected articles. In fact, the museum just has one exhibition hall of 280 meter square along with a spare room in the basement in addition of few rooms designated for offices. Only one third of the valuables all categories confused can be exposed in the exhibition room which has big inappropriate windows made of glace for a permanent exhibition. Besides, in the art village (an annex facility), detached department of the museum (1,5mile away from the national museum), spaces are still tight. In spite of the fact that some craftsmen get a studio, most of them keep seeking adequate and large space to express themselves. According to the decree that enabled the creation of the national museum of Togo, it must be constructed along with zoological park, traditional habitat park, and botanical gardens. Unfortunately, those parts do not come into existence. (See picture: exhibition hall and the art village).
- A low rate of visit. The analysis help to understand that in spite of its cheapest entrance fees, people show little interest and rarely visit. After its reopening in 1996<sup>1</sup>, the national museum of Togo recorded an interested rate of visits but this rate fell to the half. During its lifetime, the national museum has temporarily four exhibitions. We therefore understand that public interest has not been maintained. It has quickly grown tired for exhibitions which offer no new articles or artworks. So it is quite possible to attract the public population to the museum by widening the exhibition space and by diversifying the artworks, paintings or frescoes intended for the exhibition (as for information, for the moment the collection matches much more than 1000<sup>2</sup> valuable articles).
- The absolute dependence of the national museum of Togo towards the government for financial supplies; sadly, government's subsidies are ridiculous reveal a lack of interest by the government for the cultural thing. This dependence resulted in this sad reality: the

national museum cannot generate revenues itself in regard with the fixed entrance fees along with a lack of creating and diversifying activities that can generate financial resources. Thus, it is indispensable to lead the national museum of Togo toward a financial autonomy by allotting to the national museum of Togo financial means to help diversify its resources. It is quite true because possibilities of generating financial means remain unexploited.

### ***Analysis for external factors of the national museum of Togo***

First of all, it is useful to surround the situation of Lomé on the plan of dynamics under three major angles: social, economical and spatial. The analysis leads to the following remarks:

The majority of the population is made up of young people due to two factors including the migration. This population faces problems related to employment, care and urban services.

The demographical dynamics stresses on the space by a urban task which rapidly broaden without being concentrated creating different areas of high and low density zone. This urban task does not spare enough place, because the existing ones suffer from environmental damages due to the high demographical pressure and the low capacity of management for the town council. (See board of public places in Lomé and the damages caused to the environment).

Always within the urban space unequally concentrated, the property heritage is deteriorating. Most of the colonial buildings we see on the sea shore which were used in the past with proud for services and empty today constitute the proof.

Along with the social and spatial problems we have the economical problem which renders the population unable to fully participate in comparison with the urban investment. The authority in charge of the commune is therefore unable to fully assume his role. A sector liable to create jobs is art works that are not fully integrated to the national economy.

Can we attenuate certain weaknesses related to urban life basing on the strengths Lomé has? We may ask. If yes, an institution like the museum: what important role can the museum play to reach these goals? To improve the living standard of the urban population?

It is by thinking on this question that we developed questions related to the situation of the national museum of Togo in the city of Lomé and the consideration people have for it. The results of our analysis can be summarized in these three following points:

- The actual geographical of the national museum of Togo in the urban space, this position is not advantageous because it is located in the administrative center which become empty in the night and week end and in the other hand the museum is attended regularly by soldiers or they turn around
- There lack of accompaniment facilities like in the immediate environment of the museum restaurants, hotels which provided services that equalize the purchasing power of the population. There are even no trading galleries around. All the hotels located in the vicinity are ranked five stars hotel (hotel de 2 février) or three stars hotel (hotel ibis et Palm Beach). Nevertheless the museum is accessible from all important areas of the city. From the Business center (the great market of Lomé called adawlato), the martyrs place, Anani Santos place formerly called freau jardin, the different French cultural centers, the

American cultural center, the German cultural center) through the avenue RTP, the national road number 5 (see picture ways that serve the national museum).

- Here are the results of enquiries realized with the Togolese public population. In February, a poll taken with one hundred persons help to measure the popularity of the national museum of Togo. The results of this enquiry help to identify two categories of people: those who know about the museum (38%) and those who do not have no knowledge about it at all (62). The poll helps to confirm the idea that the permanent exhibition is not attractive according to those who know about the museum. In the beginning, the public get interested but as days go by, people are fed up of the unchanged exhibition about 66% of those who know about the museum grow tired, (see graph of the poll). The enquiry also helps to figure out that among those who firstly are interested and then get disinterested, one of the reasons why they get hesitant is the presence of soldiers around the museum (13% in this category).
- A second inquiry related to this analysis permit to establish the true reasons of the disinterestedness of the public population toward the museum and to verify certain assumptions established in the beginning of the present study (see graph). The analysis also help to identify two categories of people: those who desire to see an interested collection to the museum including the cultural heritages of Togo and cultural heritages for some places (44%) and a category of those whose want to see an attractive and accessible museum for the public population (45%).

### ***The national museum of Togo: stake of urban development***

“Where people hardly strive to have the daily bread, how can we say, let us rather give them museums”. This exclamation illustrates the reserve detractors have for museum in developing countries. In fact, for living with a dramatic economical situation and whose only concern is to struggle to survive, what is the advantage of a museum? Those who study the museum found this question unfounded, they argue: “whatsoever economical situation people have, their cultures are of infinite value, infinite riches” and what they produce “are not bread or museums but bread and museums”.

Regarding the stakes that the national museum represented today, question is: why is it necessary to build a new museum today? Is it of what benefit? What do we lose if we do not do so?

It is good to remind that the construction of a new museum is necessary for the following reasons:

- The museum is temporarily sheltered within the congress palace with inappropriate premises for museum activities;
- The museum is the best place to preserve the cultural heritage which is dangerously about to disappear due to the illicit traffic;
- The population of the city ignores the museum and the artworks, paintings and frescoes which are exhibited there, and consequently get rid of its cultural values. No need to remind that these cultural values are important for the development of the country. It is admitted that cultures are important for the development of a country more than the economical aspects in the evolution of African societies.
- Finally the national has potentials and it will be a pity if they are not exploited for society and for the museum itself.

To enable Lomé and the museum to participate to the preservation, visibility and valorization of the cultural heritage of Togo, many options have been explored. Among these options, we have chosen to exploit the urban culture, the environment and the natural heritage.

The following boards recapitulate elements grouped into two that will be exploited in the tourist route.

*Table 2*

<b>Urban culture</b>		
<b>Architectural heritage</b>	<b>Curiosities of the city</b>	<b>Public places in Lomé</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The former palace of VIP</li> <li>- The former palace of justice,</li> <li>- The cathedral of Lomé,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fetish market</li> <li>- Ruins of the ancient wharfs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monument of the Independence,</li> <li>- Monument to the dead ones,</li> <li>- Martyrs' place,</li> <li>- Dove of peace</li> </ul>

*Source: the national museum of Togo*

According to the enquiry realized and in straddle entitled PASSANT (in this straddle questions were about the opportunity offered by a new museum, the implantation site of such a project, its integration in a touristic route along with public places and monuments):

- 94% of the people enquired desire the construction of a new museum;
- 81% agree that this new construction need to be implemented on a site initially planned, 19% are reticent because of the insalubrities and the lack of sanitation of the zone.
- 69% agree about the integration of the new museum in a tourist route, on the other hand 31% doubted about such initiative because public places are rare and are not cleaned up.

These statistical analysis show the approval of the public for the project.

In relation with these different investigations and our hypothesis and goals, we propose these following points for the preservation, the visibility and the valorization of the cultural heritage through the city of Lomé and the national museum.

**Communication :**Table 3

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Solutions</b>	<b>Elements involved</b>	<b>Anticipated results</b>
Ignorance of the cultural heritage and the illicit traffic	To inform people about the cultural heritage Attenuate the illicit traffic	Consciousness-raising	Architectural conception of the new national museum Cultural heritage Technological heritage Teaching profession of primary schools Dynamic young ones for NGOs Artists and painters	Construction of a new national museum inspired of the architectural heritage and made of local materials ; Institute a HERITAGE DAY Reinforcement of teaching programs by visiting the museums ; creation of sculptures (monuments) Creation of a center for demonstration of traditional techniques

Source : proposal**Tourism**Table 4

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Solutions</b>	<b>Elements involved</b>	<b>Anticipated results</b>
Low rate of tourists' visits Lack of resources proper to the museum Insufficiency of functions	Increasing the visit rates Constitute sufficient and proper resources Creating jobs	Adequate plannings Economical valorization Creation of a new environment for professional	The national Museum of Togo Touristic mileage Jobless young ones	From : 5800 visits per year to 36 500 280 m <sup>2</sup> surface of exhibition to 900 m <sup>2</sup> Fixing the entrance fees relatively to the seasons (high and low) Marketing through advertisement

Source : proposal

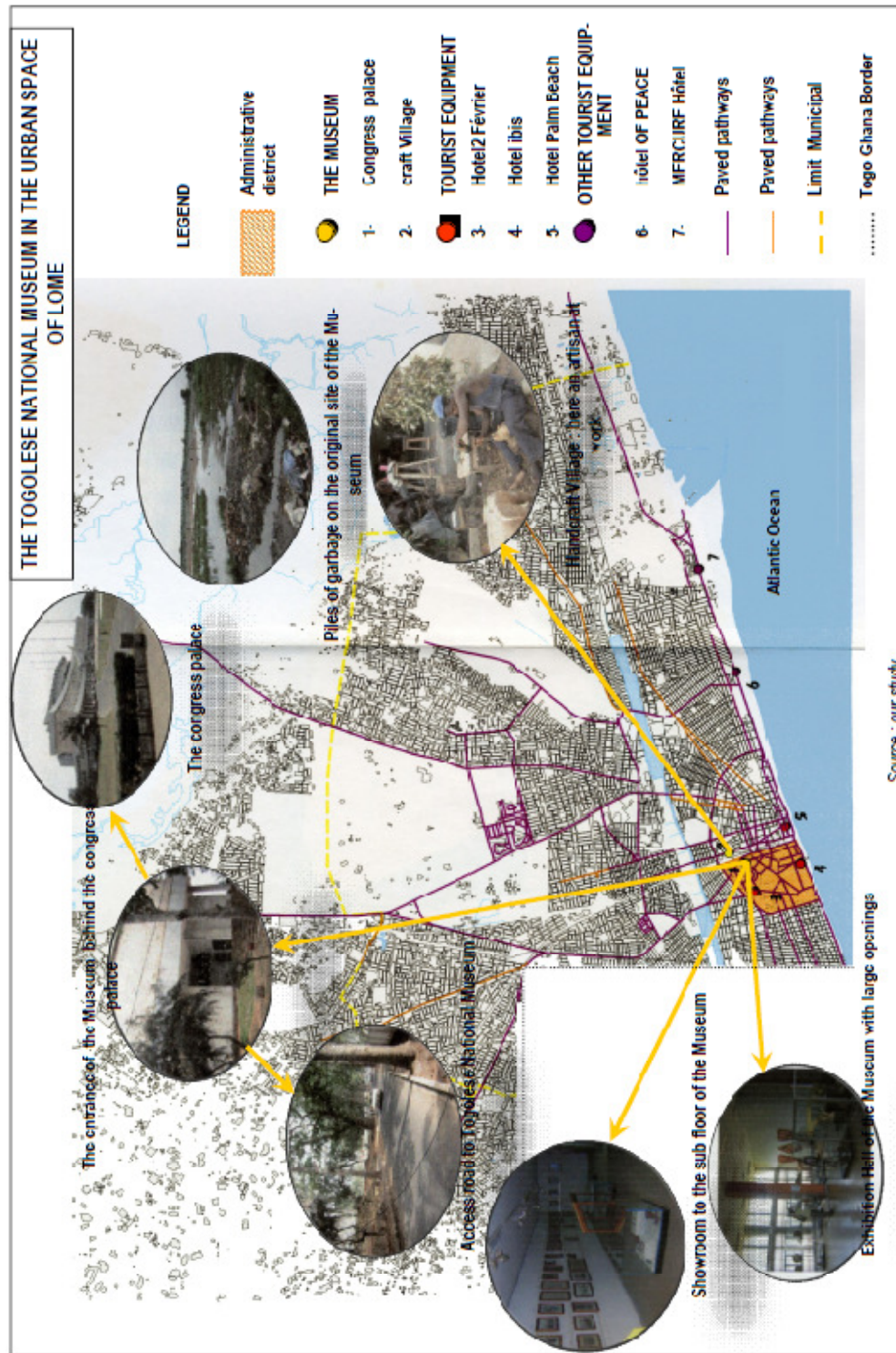


***Environment: Natural and Architectural Heritage***Table 5

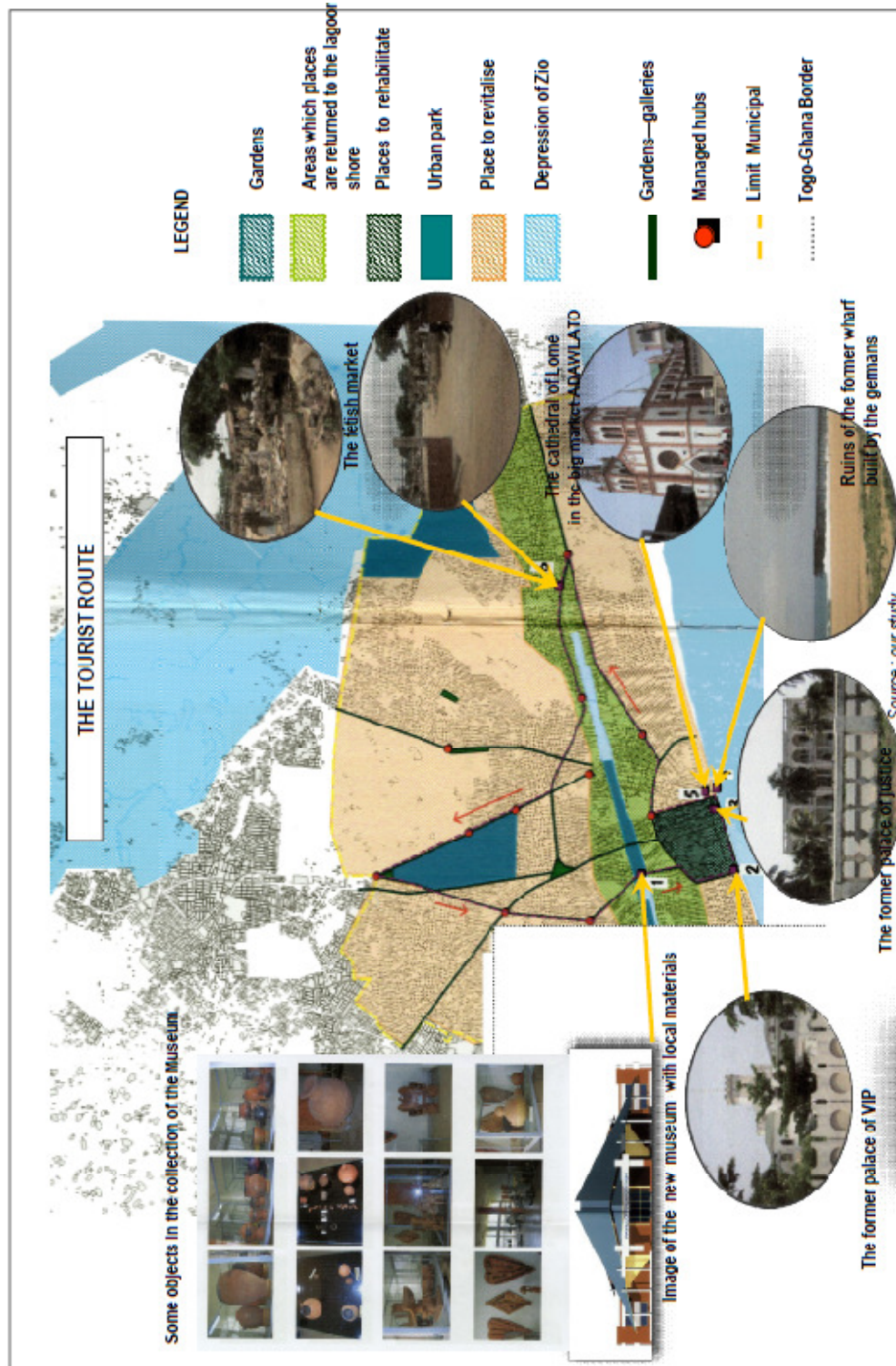
<b>Problems</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Solutions</b>	<b>Elements involved</b>	<b>Anticipated results</b>
Low rate of public places and deterioration of the living standard	Increasing the number of public place and improving the existing ones.	Creation, reinforcement and rehabilitation of public places	Non constructed parcels of the commune, existing places, crossroad	Schematic of the planning of the touristic mileage
Architectural heritage in deterioration Lack of financial means for the maintenance of the property heritage	Rehabilitation of colonial buildings Constituting proper financial means for the maintenance of the architectural heritage	an integrated approach for conservation and economical valorization of the heritage	Colonial building booked for the touristic mileage: ancient palace for VIP and congress palace.	Preservation of buildings by enforcing regulations, Deletion of pathologies that cause degradation, Attributing new functions or reattribution of existing functions, Management given to specialized public, private institutions or NGOs

Source: proposal

Graphic 1: The actual Museum in the Urban space of Lomé



Graphic 2: The Tourist Route



### **Conclusion**

It appears clearly at the end of this study that cultural heritage can play and should play a significant role in the development of urban space today .the Museum as guarantor of the protection of the heritage is one of the means by which we can allow the heritage to shape our urban environment. This is why it is essential to provide for the necessary resources for the full achievement of its mission.

Even though this study remains a reflection we dare to believe that the proposed approach can be used to help the institutions in charge of the protection of the heritage in the countries where this aspect of urban development is still neglected. This is what we hope, so that heritage to become one of the levers of development in Africa and elsewhere.

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**TOGO**

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<sup>i</sup> R.EKONGA (2002), Société ,TOGOPRESSE ( October ).

<sup>ii</sup> E.THEVENON (2001), La France des Musées, LABEL France – N°42 (January)

<sup>iii</sup> R. EKONGA . op.cit.

<sup>iv</sup> G.H. BAILLY ( 1975), the architectural heritage,local authorithies and integrated conservation policy,DELTA VEVEY.

<sup>v</sup> Xavier GREFFE,Economical Valorization of the Cultural Heritage- Report to Dep and Dap,Paris. Ministry of culture and communication.