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The rapid urbanization of Senegal, accentuated by a massive rural exodus of population groups, is among the causes of the human concentration in the country's cities that has led to creation of some unhealthy areas. This phenomenon continues to cause a housing shortage in urban areas, especially in the Cape Verde region, in which Dakar is located.

In 1976, the urbanization rate of the country was on the order of 29 percent for a total population of about 5 million. The difficulties experienced by the housing sector have led the government to take a certain number of steps. After the creation of the SICAP in 1950, and then of the OHLM in 1956,<sup>1</sup> the search for solutions to improve the habitat of the masses continued during the years 1971-72. Thus, an Improved Parcels of land Project (*Parcelles assainies*), partly financed by the World Bank, was developed in 1972, and has been in the process of execution since 1973.

### Origin and Political Option of the Project

The inquiries made during the development of the Improved Parcels of land Project showed that for the Dakar agglomeration, the population with low incomes account for 80 per cent of the people (evaluation report of the Improved Parcels Project, 1972). Within this framework, the population concerned by the SICAP and the OHLM Real Estate Companies represent only 20 per cent of the wage-earning population. This Improved Parcels Project supplements the operations of the OHLM and of the SICAP in the housing sector. That is why it is planned to extend this program to the regional capitals

### Objectives of the Project

Senegal needs to orient itself more toward improving the habitat of the great majority of people. This policy consists in urbanizing areas which have been connected to public utilities in order to make them suitable for installation of decent housing.

This development allows the creation of primary infrastructures and of community facilities needed to meet the needs of the population groups concerned. The principle lies in the development or improvement of the extension areas, or existing areas, in order to install:

- the road network,
- drinking water networks,
- drainage networks,
- electricity networks,
- structures for the community equipment items

Another objective of the project is to stimulate the creation of jobs through the integration of areas for professional activities. This policy of job creation is made possible by the provision of zones intended for artisans and for small-scale industry. Moreover, commercial areas are planned, as well as large land plots intended for installation of supplementary infrastructure.

### Scale of the Project

The whole Improved Parcels of land Project includes the installation of a large urban area covering 400 hectares in Dakar (Cambérène area) and 65 hectares in Thiès, located south of the city. For these areas, there are plans for 14,000 plots for about 140,000 inhabitants in Dakar, and 1,600 plots for a population of 16,000 inhabitants in Thiès.

After the development of the overall plans and their approval, some internal improvements were made tending to reduce the scale of each of these two projects, which are actually directly concerned by the city planning forecasts of the

cities of Dakar and Thiès for a period of five years — all this within the framework of habitat programs for the low-income population.

### Organization and Design of the Project

In view of the agreements concluded between the Senegalese government and the World Bank, the execution of the project was entrusted to the HLM Office, which was made a General Department, within which an Improved Parcels of land Agency was created and placed in charge of execution, in practice, of the whole set of tasks relating to the project.

The Agency was structured so as to make execution of the project possible under the best possible conditions. It consists of the following departments:

- 1) the Technical Department, in charge of technical studies and work;
- 2) the Department for Assistance to Communities, in charge of the organization of the purchasers and of guiding them;
- 3) the Selection Department, which is concerned with enrolling the candidates, inquiries, and the selection and of establishment of files after selection;
- 4) the Accounting Department, responsible, on one hand, for the general and analytic accounting, the sale of the parcels and construction loans, and, on the other hand, for collections and legal disputes affecting the parcels;
- 5) the Evaluation Office, which carries out the inquiries on the population groups involved in the project.

The Agency is responsible for following the project in all fields, in cooperation with the World Bank.

As to the design of the project, the working out and execution of the overall plans are carried out on two levels:

- 1) first of all, on the level of a search for conceptual elements and organization of space (dimensions, forms, etc.);
- 2) and then by means of forecasts to

determine the facilities necessary to meet the needs of the population groups of the area concerned by the project. All of the ministries, agencies and departments involved cooperated directly with these two types of procedures. This pluri-disciplinary approach enabled the Improved Parcels Agency to obtain the data needed for the spatial organization of the future sites with respect to

- housing and the place of work,
- traffic,
- equipment items,
- the green spaces

In Dakar, the habitat represents 56.9 per cent of the total area; traffic 28.1 per cent, and equipment 15 per cent.

The future facilities are planned as a function of the area they cover. This is the case with primary schools, dispensaries, secondary schools, markets, etc.

## Execution of the Project

### Technical Execution

The execution of the project includes several aspects and phases during which the various activities are scheduled and executed. It indicates, in a way, the structure of the Agency at the level of technical execution. The Dakar Project is divided into four sections. However, due to financial difficulties, and in view of inflation, the project was cut back to three sections in Dakar and two neighborhood units in Thiès.

The roads and the various systems are executed in Dakar as well as Thiès, with the exception of the electricity system, work on which is still in progress. As to drainage, even the execution of connections for the second and third tranches is practically completed. As to the supplementary equipment items, five schools, a health unit, a police station, a cultural center, a market, eleven public conveniences and an agency branch have been built. The other equipment items will be installed by the departments concerned.

### Community Development

As to the use of space, after organization of the candidates into associations of purchasers of plots consisting of some 242 sections, 11,000 parcels of land were assigned following selection formalities, one per purchaser.

The development of the parcels is actively pursued on two fronts:

- 1) the construction of housing units by the owners, the cost being paid from their own means;
- 2) the construction of housing units by the owners on the basis of loans granted by the OHLM, the National Bank for Development of Senegal (BNDS), and the Housing Bank of Senegal (BHS).

Under this heading, 5,210 parcels have been built up or are being built up since August, 1982. Out of this number, 1,313 constructions concern loans for two-room apartments, or 25 per cent of the buildings. The improvement program affects 45.45 per cent of the assigned plots, whereas the 2,400 parcels of the eighth distribution are in the process of construction.

In Thiès, the project was to end — as was the case in Dakar as well — in December 1981. The remaining activities to be carried out are in the process of execution, and all of the work will be finished before the end of June, 1983.

The project has encountered several difficulties, as well as modifications during execution, but the problems seem at the present time to find solutions.

The project attempted to take account of the unfortunate experiences of the past (at the SICAP, for example, and at the OHLM, some garages were transformed into grocery stores<sup>1</sup>).

The Improved Parcels of Land Project makes it possible to offer a family that is economically weak a real alternative to the housing problem, for an investment varying from 95,999 and 185,000 CFA francs (for a plot measuring 150 square meters). That is why the Senegalese authorities constantly show interest in the

project and in its extension. But no experiment can escape criticism.

### The Criticisms

- 1) The site: the arrangements made have allowed the integration of the project into the city.
- 2) The size: it was calculated as a function of a five-year plan.
- 3) Segregation: the socio-economic nature of the project, its very design, the fact that there are different sizes of plots, do not allow us to speak of segregation.
- 4) Development: it was planned on the basis of permanent or temporary use constructions. In view of the socio-economic level of the project, it was to be gradual, evolutive, in accordance with the contract.
- 5) The population target: it concerns low-income population groups. From 12,000 CFA francs, the minimum monthly income rose to 15,000 and then to 18,000 francs. The corresponding ceilings have been, in succession, 37,000, 43,000 and 55,000.
- 6) Execution deadlines linked with administrative problems: the project is not one involving just technical execution. It is, at the same time, a social enterprise requiring an original type of community organization.

Our experience, in the final analysis, consists of some positive elements, and of some others that are negative, the analysis of which will make it possible to design the future projects more effectively.

### Reference Note

<sup>1</sup> SICAP: Société immobilière du Cap Vert; OHLM: Office d'habitations à loyers modérés.