



City profile

City profile: Tamale, Ghana



Issahaka Fuseini *, Joseph A. Yaro, Gerald A.B. Yiran

Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana, PO Box LG 59, Legon, Accra, Ghana

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 16 July 2015

Received in revised form 30 July 2016

Accepted 30 July 2016

Available online xxxx

Keywords:

Tamale

Ghana

Colonial

Post-independence

Neoliberal globalisation

ABSTRACT

Tamale is the capital of the Northern Region of Ghana. It emerged as a growth point for northern Ghana upon independence in 1957, and has since become the third largest urban centre in the country. The city has the second highest annual population growth rates after Kumasi Metropolitan Area. In this paper, we profile Tamale regarding its social, economic and spatial growth dynamics, transformation and governance as well as highlight the implications of the city's growth trajectories for its sustainable futures.

© 2016 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Tamale is the regional capital of the Northern Region of Ghana and doubles as capital for the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA) which is one of 26 local government units in the Northern Region. Tamale was a colonial creation in the first decade of the 20th century when the administration decided to make it the capital of the British Northern Territories. It has since grown to become the third largest urban centre in Ghana after Accra and Kumasi with its population growing from less than 2000 people in 1907 to about 400,000 presently (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013a; Staniland, 1975). The Tamale Metropolitan Area (TAMA) is the second fastest growing metropolis in Ghana after Kumasi (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c).

While the status of Tamale as one of the most important settlements in Ghana's geopolitical space dates back to colonialism, the city only emerged as a growth centre in the previously marginalised and depressed northern part of the colonial Gold Coast after independence in 1957 (Songsore, 2009). Geographically, the entire northern Ghana had few exploitable natural resources of interest to the colonialists and so the region was deliberately made a labour reserve for the mines and cocoa plantations in the south of the colony (Dickson, 1968; Plange, 1979). Consequently, a stream of north-south migration developed which deprived Tamale, the most important settlement in northern Ghana, of demographic stability. The first post-independence government led by Kwame Nkrumah tried to pursue national development

grounded in spatial equity in investment which significantly transformed Ghanaian towns and cities, including Tamale. The city's growth was significantly enhanced by the implementation of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) sponsored structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) from the 1980s. The execution of several development programmes together with the globalisation forces that followed the implementation of the SAPs impacted on the growth of Tamale similar to the experiences of other cities in the developing world (see Briggs & Yeboah, 2001; Grant, 2009; Otiso & Owusu, 2008; Owusu, 2005; Yeboah, 2000).

In the ensuing presentation, we provide a comprehensive profiling of Tamale regarding the city's historical, social, spatial and economic transformation. This profiling differs markedly from the UN-Habitat's recent profiling of the city which centred on urban growth dynamics with respect to governance, slums, gender and HIV/AIDS, and the environment (UN-Habitat, 2009). The presentation is structured in five sections. The next section provides a comprehensive background of the city including its location and history, socio-economic characteristics as well as demographic and spatial growth dynamics. Issues of governance are presented in section three while in section four an assessment is made of implications of the city's growth dynamics on its sustainable futures. We provide concluding remarks in section five.

2. Background

This section presents comprehensive but broad background of Tamale regarding the city's location, origin, socio-economic characteristics and growth dynamics and lays a foundation for understanding

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: issahaqf@yahoo.com (I. Fuseini), yarojoe@yahoo.com (J.A. Yaro), yiranab@gmail.com (G.A.B. Yiran).

governance's issues, the emerging challenges and opportunities, and implications for the city's futures.

2.1. Tamale – location and origin

The TAMA is located within latitudes $9^{\circ}16'N$ and $9^{\circ}34'N$ and longitudes $0^{\circ}34'W$ and $0^{\circ}57'W$ (Fig. 1). It covers a total area of 922 km² (Tamale Metropolitan Assembly, 2010). Regarding its relative location, the TAMA is bordered to the north by Savelugu-Nanton Municipality; to the east by Mion District; to the south by East and Central Gonja Districts; to the west by Tolon District and to the north–west by Kumbungu District. Regarding settlement structure, the TAMA is composed of the city of Tamale, 17 peri-urban communities and 115 villages (Fuseini, 2014). In 2012, the Sagnerigu District Assembly (SDA) was carved out of then TaMA which constituted the TAMA due to rapid growth of the metropolis.

Tamale gained its modern status when the colonial administration designated it capital for the British Northern Territories in 1907 (Staniland, 1975). This followed the relocation of the administrative capital from Gambaga to Tamale (see Fig. 2). This meant that the capital for the Northern Territories had been relocated twice within a space of nine years as it was first moved from Kintampo to Gambaga in 1898 (Eades, 1994). The remote incident that facilitated the designation of Tamale as the administrative capital was the emergence of the British as victors over the Germans for control of this part of present day Ghana (Dickson, 1968). Earlier on, the Germans had practically quelled the resistance by a Dagbamba King who vowed that 'the whiteman would not settle in his land'. On the other hand, the proximate factors for the move were the settlement's centrality within northern Ghana, availability of water and its closeness to Yapei, which was to be

developed into a river port town of Tamale (Awedoba, 2006; Dickson, 1968; Eades, 1994; MacGaffey, 2006).

It is reported that in 1907, Tamale was a collection of a few villages that had about 1435 inhabitants (MacGaffey, 2006; Staniland, 1975). However, housing (e.g. Sakasaka quarters) and other infrastructural development coupled with in-migration soon contributed to the town's expansion (MacGaffey, 2006). Soon after its designation as capital in 1907, the colonial leadership laid the blueprint for the development of expatriate quarters with the requirements that, sites for European settlement "should be away from bush or swampy land, have a good water supply and not be near native buildings" (MacGaffey, 2006: 110). Based on the prevailing in-direct rule system the various chiefs controlling the villages were promised rewards proportionate to their contribution to the execution of the project (MacGaffey, 2006). The growth trajectories of Tamale are discussed in the following sections.

2.2. Demographic and spatial growth dynamics

The discussion is presented in three subsection, namely growth during colonialism, growth in post-independence Ghana up to 1980, and growth beyond 1980 which is described as the neoliberal or globalisation era.

2.3. The growth of Tamale under colonialism (1907–1957)

As stated earlier, the population of Tamale began to grow almost immediately it was designated administrative capital of the Northern Territories. The first impetus of the town's growth occurred when in about 1909 efforts were made to establish a cotton industry (agriculture being the only viable economic activity in that part of the colony) in northern

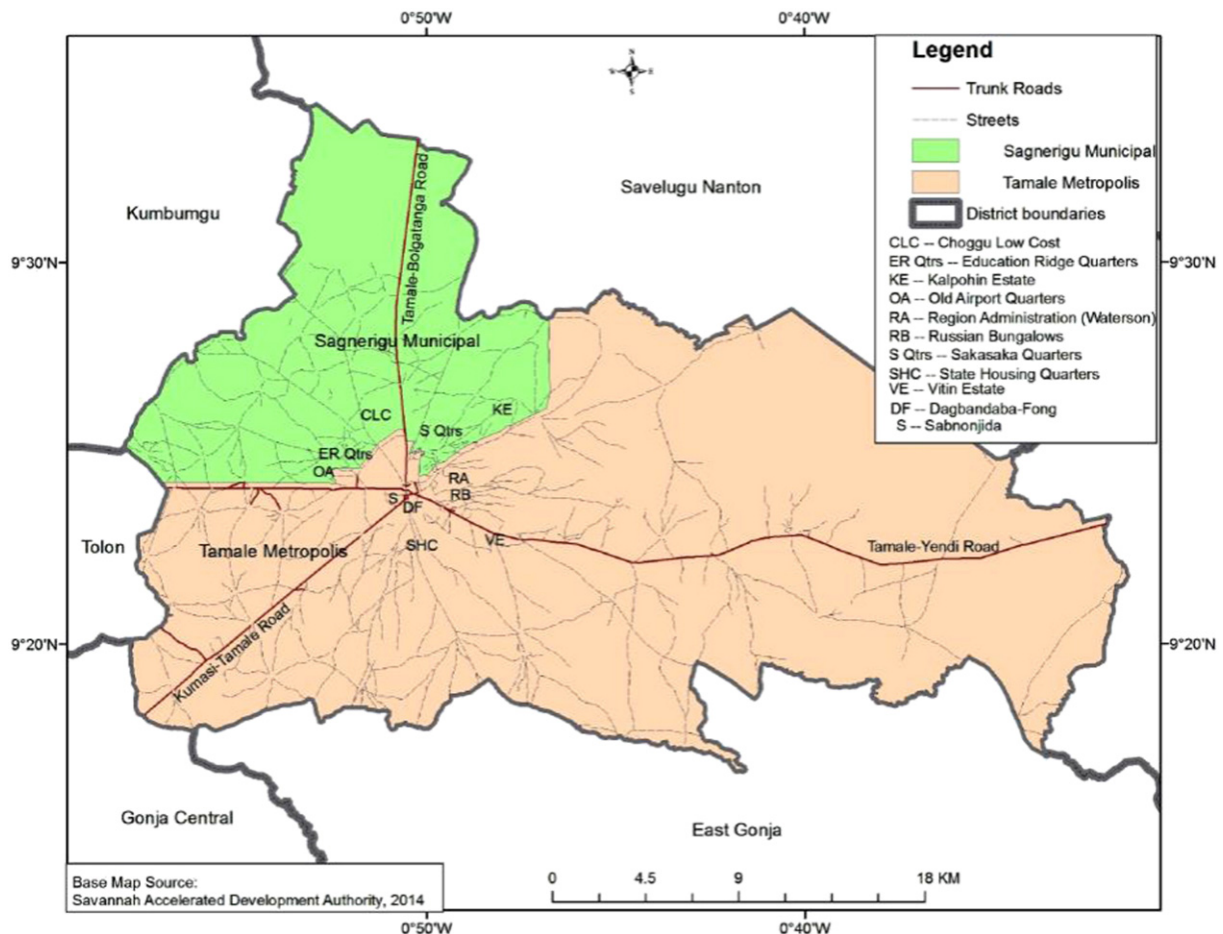


Fig. 1. Location of Tamale Metropolitan Area.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1008162>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1008162>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)