

# Reinventing the city center, Dakar

Senegal

Students  
Reinventing  
Cities

Dakar is a cosmopolitan city, a symbol of Africa, a melting pot of African and world cultures, a tourist destination, but also a politically and geopolitically strategic city.

The urban landscape of the Dakar metropolitan area reflects the pluralistic and complex nature of the problems posed by the overlapping of very different phenomena and situations. Dakar has a mission to be an “open and sustainable heritage” city. In this sense, the city’s main priorities are: 1/ Promoting controlled city planning, generating wealth and jobs. 2/ Integrating the environmental aspect into city management and planning. 3/ Taking action to reduce the effects of climate change.

The proposed site for the initiative is the district of downtown Dakar and in particular the Place

de la Libération and its connections with the port, the nearby cultural and administrative hubs such as the Grand Théâtre, the Museum of Black Civilizations, the railway station and the city hall.

In addition to having many hubs, this area is home to a mix of housing and jobs. It is also at the heart of many daily trips from the capital.

The city of Dakar invites the teams to propose a master plan to redevelop this district with the aim of beautifying it, pacifying its public spaces, facilitating connections between the different hubs and combatting urban heat. Teams may propose comprehensive projects or focus on specific key areas of the district.



## Priorities for the site

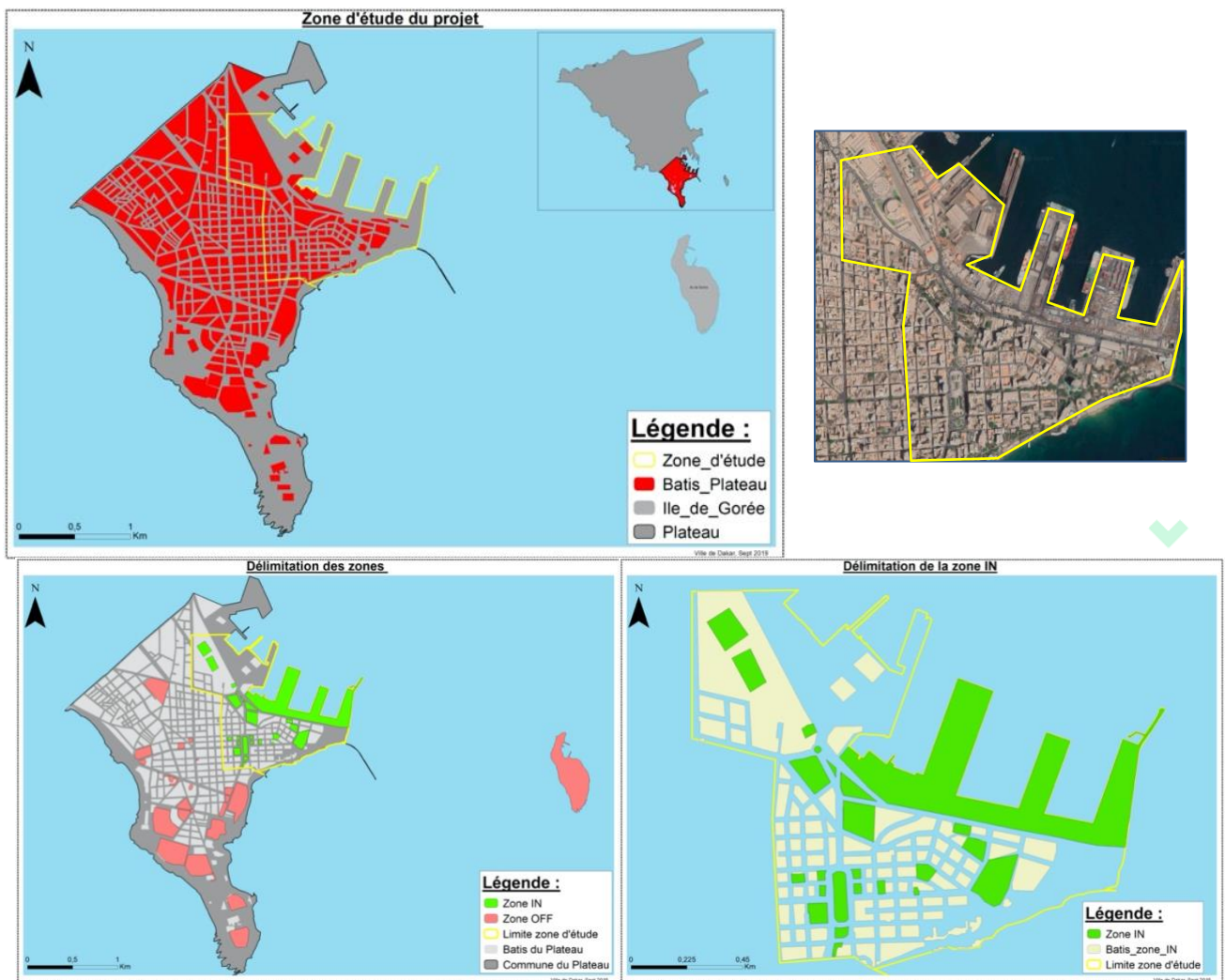
- **Redevelop public spaces and reorganize transport** to connect the district’s various urban, historic and port hubs, to pacify the public spaces and to better accommodate soft modes of transport (including walking and cycling)
- **Redesign the Place de la Libération** to open the port to the city and create a large forecourt space and a multimodal relay to facilitate the flow of the more than 300,000 passengers per day that the TER and BRT will produce.
- **Beautify the district** with quality landscaping and solutions to make the city cleaner (solid waste control).

- **Combat heat islands** by proposing natural cooling solutions.
- **Increase the greening of the district** and create new green spaces.
- **Strengthen the cultural function** by taking advantage of the centrality of the major infrastructure that is the Grand Théâtre and the Museum of Black Civilizations and by highlighting intangible heritage.
- **Support the restoration projects** of listed historical monuments under way such as the railway station, the main building of the city hall, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prefecture.

## Presentation of the site

The proposed site is the district of downtown Dakar (demarcated in yellow on the map). It includes a thoroughfare starting from pier 1, at the corner of the Corniche Est of Dakar, for just over 1.2 km before passing the main entrances of the port of Dakar, the Directorate of Municipal Police and the entrances to the Town Hall Garden, and then finishing at the Allées Robert Delmas, in front of the Cercle Messe des Officiers. It finally leads to the Dakar Gorée pier, commonly known as “Pom Bou Béés”. Meandering through the ocean and subjected to the fury of the waves with its anglers, this construction is also one of the defining features of Dakar. It should be noted that the first celebrations of Senegal’s Independence Day took place on this once bustling main road because it was a meeting place for seafarers, a focal point for traders and businessmen.

This downtown district of Dakar contains many functional, cultural and administrative hubs of the city such as the Grand Théâtre, the Museum of Black Civilizations, the railway station and the city hall. In addition to containing many hubs, this district is home to a mix of housing and jobs and is also at the heart of many daily trips from the capital.



## City climate priorities and specific environmental issues to address

Today, to be part of a desired rather than imposed future, the city of Dakar has identified the different forms of occupation and use of urban space and has set its priorities to improve the living environment of populations while managing and managing urban space sustainably. This includes:

1. Making Dakar clean and reducing solid waste, including plastic pollution.
2. Improving travel networks, enabling better mobility for the people of Dakar between residences, places of activity, jobs, equipment and services, and reducing air pollution.
3. Linking places of residence and work in order to eliminate geographical and social disparities,
4. Strengthening Dakar's urban centrality.
5. Introducing a policy of beautifying the city and safeguarding the natural and architectural environmental heritage.
6. Strengthening against environmental and climate vulnerabilities, particularly floods, coastal erosion, air pollution and urban heat.

In this downtown district, these priorities can be broken down as follows:

- **Redevelop public spaces and reorganize transport** to connect the district's various urban, historic and port hubs, to pacify the public spaces and to better accommodate soft modes of transport (including walking and cycling).



- **Redesign the Place de la Libération** to open the port to the city and create a large forecourt space and a multimodal relay to facilitate the flow of the more than 300,000 passengers per day that the TER and BRT will produce.



- **Beautify the district** with quality landscaping and solutions to make the city cleaner.

- **Combat heat islands** by proposing natural cooling solutions.

- **Create new green spaces.** The city of Dakar wants to develop parks and green spaces to improve the comfort of urban life. The aim is to combine various areas for recreational purposes to increase green spaces by including city woods in a context of rapid population growth.



- **Redefine the cultural function** by taking advantage of the centrality of the major infrastructure that is the Grand Théâtre and the Museum of Black Civilizations and by highlighting intangible heritage.

- **Support the restoration projects** of listed historical monuments under way such as the railway station, the main building of the city Hall, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prefecture.

**In short, the aim is to make downtown Dakar hospitable, inclusive and sustainable, a beating heart of the city where communications are easy and activity is vibrant and creative.**

## Specific city planning rules and regulations

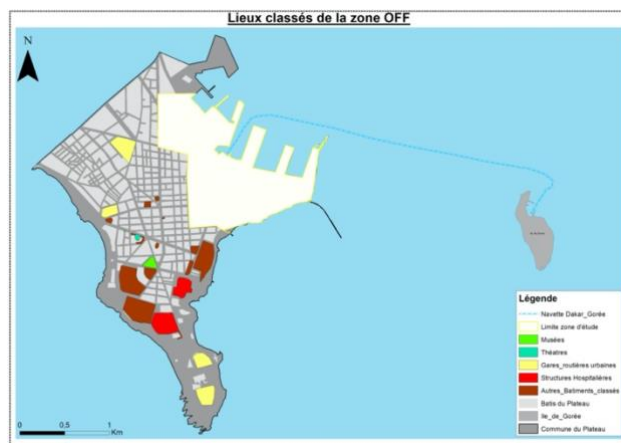
The territorial scope of the project will be exclusively part of the implementation of the Dakar 235 master plan. The Master Plan regulations apply to this part of the city of Dakar commonly referred to as “The Plateau” and thus demarcated: in the north-west, by Avenue Malick SY; in the north-east by Avenue de l’Arsenal - Boulevard de la Libération; in the south-east, south and west by the Atlantic Ocean.

The regulations define different zones: zones with special status and those earmarked for special purposes; the nature and conditions of land use, planning rules and easements of public interest.

Areas with major facilities: This is land occupied by facilities of national interest, to which the Plateau regulation are not applicable. These areas include in particular: the Presidency of the Republic; the General Staff of the Armed Forces (Camp Dial Diop); the “Principal” and “Le Dantec” hospitals; the area reserved for the Dakar cultural complex; the city hall; the great mosque and the cathedral; the Sandaga and Kermel markets.

With respect to the nature of land use in the demarcated area, the types of land use permitted are as follows:

- buildings for individual and collective residential use, with their annexes;
- co-operative collective housing operations;
- housing developments and subdivisions of parcels of land, provided that the parcels of land resulting from these divisions correspond to the minimum required in Article 12;
- religious, cultural and social facilities;
- green spaces, play areas and service areas related to housing;
- permanent car parking areas;
- premises and spaces for artisanal activity involving less than 10 employees and trades, provided that they are not a source of inconvenience for the dwelling (intense traffic, noise, pollution, use of flammable or potentially dangerous products, etc.);
- commercial premises and their annexes; i. only in zones 4. (Indépendance), 6 (Laprade) and 8 (Papa Guèye Fall), office buildings, civil service, corporate offices. Public assembly buildings remain subject to the requirements of the city planning code.



## Some more information about the city of Dakar

In Senegal, the city planning and housing sector has one of the highest rates of urbanization in Africa with 45%, varying from region to region (96% in Dakar, 8% in the northern center of the country). The urban structure is characterized by an unbalanced concentration in the national capital, where 54% of the urban population are concentrated alone.

This intensive urbanization is at the root of several problems:

- Segregation in the spatial organization inherited from the colonial legacy, but aggravated by the influx of populations and the irregular development of housing conditions.
- Huge problems in the transport sector.
- Hold-ups in the drainage and sanitation sector etc.

Therefore, to control this urban development and meet the growing needs arising from accelerated and uncontrolled urbanization, Senegal has adopted several strategies through a National Land Development Plan.

All in all, the rebalancing of Senegalese territory through planning and development efforts leads to operations in several areas and includes:

- Dakar's internal restructuring and development.
- Building an infrastructure network for regions other than Dakar.
- The creation or strengthening of development hubs capable of counterbalancing the dominance of the capital region.

According to Jean Marc Ela, the city must be tested in multiple and varied situations. Or, as Henri Lefebvre notes, the city must be analyzed like an object. This object has a special status that he compares to that of language. But if the city is compared to an object like a book {to a sociological system}, it has no right to forget its facilitating nature. The city cannot be separated from what it contains or from what contains it by isolating it as a complete system.

### **Dakar in numbers:**

- 0.27% of the national territory
- 20% of the national population
- 90% of the country's businesses
- Political and economic capital
- Seafront (West Africa's largest port)
- Relatively large infrastructure
- Many natural resources (fish, mining, Niayes, etc.)
- Existence of a consumer market
- Beauty of the site and mildness of the climate
- Dynamic tourism (47.8% of national accommodation capacity)
- Concentration of the bulk of the industrial base (more than 90%)
- Dynamic commerce (85% concentrated in the city of Dakar)
- Transportation: airport and port (outward compulsory flow paths)

## Language requirements

Proposals can be presented in French or English.