

WHV – Projet de restauration des Tatas du site Koutammakou

Koutammakou, the land of the Batammariba, Togo

◆ Cultural property inscribed on the
World Heritage List since 2004

11/07/2016 – 21/07/2016



The Koutammakou landscape in north-eastern Togo, which extends into neighbouring Benin, is home to the Batammariba whose remarkable mud tower-houses (Takienta or Tatas) have come to be seen as a symbol of Togo. In this landscape, nature is strongly associated with the rituals and beliefs of society. The 50,000-ha cultural landscape is remarkable due to the architecture of its tower-houses which are a reflection of social structure; its farmland and forest; and the associations between people and landscape. Many of the buildings are two storeys high and those with granaries feature an almost spherical form above a cylindrical base. Some of the buildings have flat roofs, others have conical thatched roofs. They are grouped in villages, which also include ceremonial spaces, springs, rocks and sites reserved for initiation ceremonies.

Project objectives: The project aims to repair the traditional *Tatas* which have decayed due to violent rains and to preserve the plants used to build the *Tatas*. It also aims at creating partnerships between young people, local community, local youth organisations, and the site management in order to raise awareness about the property, its preservation and sustainability.

Project activities: During the project, the volunteers will focus on the restoration and plastering of *Tatas* by learning and using traditional techniques. The volunteers will protect the trees, which are used as local and sustainable materials for the construction of the *Tatas*, from the bush fires. Several trainings will take place for local associations about the importance of preserving the site. The volunteers will eventually conduct workshops about the preservation and maintenance of *Tatas* addressed to the young people of the local community and the owners of *Tatas*.

Partners: Minister for youth, sports and culture and local associations for community development.