

WHV - Sauvons la Takienta

Koutammakou, le pays des Batammaribas, Togo

Cultural property inscribed on the List of World
Heritage since 2004

01/09/2017 – 15/09/2017



The Koutammakou landscape in north-eastern Togo, which extends into neighbouring Benin, is home to the Batammariba whose remarkable mud tower-houses (Takienta) 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 main objective of the project is to contribute to the restoration, the safeguard and the promotion of takientas' architecture, also called "tatas sombas" which are the traditional house, which are threatened by a progressive abandonment or by modern buildings. The project also aims at raising awareness about it to future generations and protect it from further damages.

Project activities:

The volunteers will participate in the restoration of takientas (roofs, walls and foundations) after having learnt the basic traditional construction techniques. They will learn how to weave straw for the roof. They will also help in the construction of further infrastructures using local materials and will be involved in the restoration works at the Bassamba cave to allow the visitors to access the cave. Besides, the project includes visits, excursions and other cultural activities (theater, music, traditional dances). Last, the volunteers will raise awareness towards local communities, and especially the youth, about the challenges faced by the property (deforestation, modernisation and rural depopulation).

Partners:

Perfect Union, Qatar Museum

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