

The Challenge of Slums in the Global South and Community-led Settlement Planning and Design under UN-HABITAT's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme in Ga Mashie in Accra

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Abstract

Initially, colonial urbanisation and subsequently, spontaneous urbanisation and the growth related to both trends, as well as the post-colonial challenge of managing these, resulted in the phenomenal development of slums in the towns and cities of the developing countries, especially in Africa. Previously, slums were seen as undesirable and became targets of brutal, violent demolitions, removals and unfair relocation practices. However, global responses included the general acceptance and recognition of slum upgrading, in situ, and as an integral part of citywide scale-up. UN-HABITAT piloted its Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF) in four developing countries and upon its success, initiated the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP), which, in Ghana, was piloted in the indigenous community of Ga Mashie/Old Accra, where its residents took up their own settlement planning and design; their experience was unique, innovative and exemplary. The study appraised this initiative in terms of the PSUP phases, objectives of the participatory community settlement planning and design process, stakeholders, consultative approaches and planning techniques, proposals, implementation roadmap and the planning administration procedures involved, identified issues and challenges and made suggestions for improvement of slum settlement planning and design practices and amelioration of the conditions of the Ga Mashie community.

Keywords: Inner-city slum conditions, slum upgrading initiatives, participatory community settlement planning processes, local spatial design, Ga Mashie, Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme

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1. Introduction

Urbanisation processes were initiated mainly through European colonisation of developing countries because the colonial administrative systems were based in only a few targeted towns and cities (African Planning Association and UN-HABITAT, 2013). Gaining Independence by the 1960s-1970s, most developing countries, particularly in Africa failed to implement effective distributive urban development policies and sustain investment in urban development, generally. Moreover, apart from only certain quarters in the major cities, the rest of urban space was unplanned, the former becoming the formal and the latter developing largely into the informal built environment. The developing country built environment thus dualised, the formal urban sector accommodated the European colonists, the informal and traditional sector housed the natives. Urbanisation was rapidly increasing by the 1970s-1980s and exacerbating this dualisation of the limited built environment, alongside the neglect of the origins of rural migrants. By the latter part of the periods, this urbanisation process had taken a most rapid and spontaneous form across most of the developing world (UN-HABITAT, 2012). Consequently, this rapidly oppressed the existing formal parts, congesting the informal areas, creating slums in these and other existing spaces. Since then, the slums have been home to millions of the urban poor who have little capital or income, lacking access to appropriate and affordable shelter (Republic of Ghana, 2015a). These have also contributed to the urban expansion and sprawl, synonymous with such informal and unplanned urbanisation that is a constraining challenge to municipalities in maximising their functions and role in economic development, wealth creation and social prosperity (UN-HABITAT, 2012). Slums are, therefore, a manifestation of poverty through rapid urbanisation and spatialisation of poverty, including the upshot of the worst shelter and physical environmental conditions, with the highest concentrations of the poor and poorest people in urban society (UN-HABITAT, 2003 & 2010).

By 2010, it was estimated that approximately 1 billion people lived in slums in cities, globally (UN-HABITAT, 2008, 2009), especially in the developing countries and particularly Africa. However, globally, worst in the developing countries, slums are characterised by the poorest living conditions with the highest concentrations of poverty, social and economic deprivation, which tend to include broken families, substantial unemployment rates as well as economic, physical and social exclusion (UN-HABITAT, 2003 & 2010). As the UN-HABITAT (2014: 10; Republic of Ghana, 2015a) indicated, there is hardly any universally accepted

definition of slums but the ‘only characteristic that is generally accepted is that slums are neighbourhoods that are lacking in some respects’, based on the 5 specific criteria of ‘poor structural quality of housing, overcrowding, inadequate access to water, inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure, insecure residential status’, location on sub-standard or hazardous land. Therefore, a slum is considered to consist of a household or group of people living under the same roof and lacking one or more of the five amenities. Certainly, all these constitute a challenge to urban planning and management and municipal authorities (Amoako et al., 2011).

Moreover, since the 1970-1990 periods, many urban slum communities have suffered very difficult challenges, including violent evictions, displacement without any compensations and lack of consideration for their sustainable living (UN-HABITAT, 2003 & 2010, 2014; Republic of Ghana, 2015a). Mostly, these were made to clear urban spaces for the development of formal built environments, including world-class city constructions meant to serve the wealthy sections of society, especially in the developing countries (Adama, 2020; De Leon et al., 2020). Nonetheless, in various parts of the world, the need to, at least, upgrade the urban slums was dawning upon many realms, decision makers and political actors. By the late 1980s into the early 1990s, forms of slum upgrading strategies were being introduced in various jurisdictions, globally, mostly in the global South (Amoako et al., 2011; UN-HABITAT, 2003 & 2010).

This study aims to assess and reflect on a specific aspect of a major slum upgrading programme piloted in an indigenous and traditional community, which historically declined from the colonial to the Independence era in south-central coastal Accra. The initiative was the UN-HABITAT’s Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) in Ga Mashie in Accra metropolis, where the British colonial administration relocated their headquarters from Cape Coast in 1877 (Ofori 2021). Specific focus was on the spatial/settlement planning initiative undertaken by the Ga Mashie community, with the innovative and full participation of all stakeholders; an assessment of the spatial planning and design process, its product and future. Undertaken in 2021, the study used both secondary and primary approaches. Secondary approaches included the review of literature on global and national slum upgrading policies and programmes, reports, journal articles and relevant case studies. These provided some concepts and definitions of slum upgrading, trends and processes of programme delivery. Primary approaches involved personal field interviews with key leaders of the Ga Mashie Development Agency (GAMADA), a community-based structure, officially recognised and placed under the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), including other respondent from the Ashiedu-Keteke Sub-Metropolitan Council, a neighbourhood office, within the AMA. Interviews were also held with a team of representatives from the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the Rural and Urban Development Unit (RUDU) of the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD) and the Metropolitan Planning Co-ordinating Unit of AMA. Another primary method used was personal observation of the study area and historical knowledge of its development. Both the secondary and primary research yielded entirely qualitative data and information. First the global historical development of slum upgrading programmes is reviewed. Second, the statutory urban policy and planning context in Ghana is indicated. Third, the national spatial and land-use planning system is explained. Fourth, slum development and conditions and problems in Ga Mashie are identified. Fifth, the actual participatory community spatial planning processes and practices are assessed and some reflection made on these. Finally, conclusions are drawn and suggestions made for improving participatory community settlement planning and design processes and practices, generally and conditions in Ga Mashie.

2. Global Historical Development of Slum Upgrading Programmes

In response to the development and proliferation of slums across the towns and cities of mostly the developing countries, the governments of these and several other global institutions have been evolving various policies and programmes to upgrade urban slums and informal communities, improve these as human habitats, life and well-being therein (The World Bank, UNCHS (Habitat) and Cities Alliance, 1999; The Cities Alliance, 2002, 2008). However, efforts of many governments to stem the development of slums and improve conditions in existing ones were always too late and the processes of decline and degeneration faster than any urban policy and planning interventions (UN-HABITAT, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014; The Cities Alliance, 2002, 2008; Interview with former Director-General, NDPC, January 2021). Nevertheless, individual countries and global institutions gradually accepted the practice of upgrading urban slums, in situ, than subjecting slum dwellers to forceful, violent and brutal eviction, displacement, eradication and involuntary relocation. From the 1970s to the late 1990s, a number of global institutions ‘gained immeasurable experience in implementing projects designed to upgrade slums worldwide’ (The World Bank, UNCHS (Habitat) and Cities Alliance, 1999: 9). These included the World Bank, UN-HABITAT, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labour Organisation (ILO), regional banks, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), many bilateral donors, thousands of Non-Governmental Organisations and community-based groups. A number of projects these implemented ‘successfully, demonstrated that slums and the lives of their

residents can be improved' (The World Bank, UNCHS (Habitat) and Cities Alliance, 1999: 9).

During the 1950s and 1960s, a number of governments adopted a *laissez-faire* attitude to slums, which were seen as illegal and temporary, needing minimal management actions. Interventions, especially in the low-income housing sector were not sustainable and ended in the creation of more slums (UN-HABITAT, 2003-2010; Amoako et al., 2011). In the 1970s, site and service schemes were also attempted in many places, involving policy focus on the provision of basic social services, legal access to land and credit, all aimed to help slum residents develop or improve their residential structures (UN-HABITAT, 2003-2010; Amoako et al., 2011). However, the lack of strong political will, ineffective local government institutions and poor community participation resulted in the mass failure of the approach (Amoako et al., 2011). Since the 1980s, particularly the 1990s, slum upgrading was formally recognised and accepted and types of it implemented, globally (Amoako et al., 2011). Slum upgrading came to be seen as not only 'improvements in housing and/or basic infrastructure in slums areas' but including 'enhancements in the economic and social processes that can bring about such physical improvements' (UN-HABITAT, 2014: 15). More comprehensively, slum upgrading 'consists of physical, social, economic, organisational and environmental improvements undertaken co-operatively and locally among citizens, community groups, businesses, and national governments and city authorities' (UN-HABITAT, 2014: 15).

In May 1999, the World Bank and UN-HABITAT jointly launched the Cities Alliance in Berlin, aimed at helping developing countries, particularly deal with the growth of slums and the long-term health of their small and large cities (The Cities Alliance, 2008). The Cities Alliance is a unique policy forum that 'brings together representatives of the world's cities as equal partners in a direct dialogue with bi-lateral and multi-lateral development agencies and financial institutions' (The Cities Alliance, 2002: 5, 2008). It aims to promote and encourage slum upgrading interventions and the integration of slums and informal settlements with the formal parts of the built environment and improve the well-being and living conditions of the urban poor and slum-dwellers, in situ, and citywide up-scaling, through experiential learning, participatory processes, sharing of lessons and resource mobilisation and material support (The World Bank, UNCHS (Habitat) and Cities Alliance, 1999: 12). In the same year, the Alliance launched its maiden Slum Upgrading Action Plan to improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020, built upon community-based slum upgrading programmes that had been successfully implemented, particularly in the global South, while emphasising the wide policy and institutional contexts that effectively promote sustainability. Also emphasised was the international community's exemplary and successful experience in slum upgrading initiatives in Latin America, South East Asia and parts of Africa, especially led by the World bank.

In 2001, the Cities Alliance, with the backing of the World Bank and UN-HABITAT, convinced world leaders about adopting Target 11 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 'to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers' by 2020 and monitored through indicator 30 on improved access to sanitation and 31 on the proportion of people with secure tenure (United Nations, 2001; The Cities Alliance, 2002, 2008). This achievement brought to the fore the imperative of focusing on the city as a unit of analysis, not on sectors, and on participatory and joined-up solution of the poor themselves, local authorities and other concerned stakeholders. An essentially citywide focus also aimed to tackle urban poverty reduction through citywide development strategies (The Cities Alliance, 2002, 2008) and strategic decision-making in urban growth management (The Cities Alliance, 2002: 7).

During the 2002-2006 periods, 3 World Urban Forums held in Nairobi in Kenya, Barcelona in Spain and Vancouver in Canada also called attention to the concern for slums. In 2003, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT resolved to act on the improvement of slums and other informal settlements and their poor residents. In the same year, UN-HABITAT produced its first global report on human settlements, generally, and focused on the challenges of slums. During the 2004-2006 periods, UN-HABITAT proposed, designed and implemented the Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF) initiative, involving slum upgrading with a local community financing mechanism (UN-HABITAT, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2011). The SUF intervention was piloted in Ghana, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. In Ghana, the pilot project sites were Amui Djor in Ashaiman Municipality and Kojokrom in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Area (STMA). Fortunately, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into existence in 2016, to end in 2030 (UN, 2015). Goal 11, out of the 17 SDGs, aims to 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' (UN, 2015), with Goal 11.1 to 'By 2030 ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums' (UN, 2015).

Following the successful piloting of the SUF, UN-HABITAT introduced the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) in the 2015-2016 periods. Based on the SUF experience, UN-HABITAT selected Ghana, other developing countries, including many African countries to participate in the Participatory Slum Upgrading and Prevention Programme, under the MDGs: Goal 7, Target 11 (Republic of Ghana, 2015a). Apart from emphasis on effective community participation, this approach to slum upgrading also aimed to address poverty reduction, as the best practice (UN-HABITAT, 2003 and 2010). It included investment in citywide infrastructure as a cardinal condition for affordable slum upgrading and as a strong mechanism for turning around slum dweller

social-economic exclusion. All these lit upon the need to fully involve the urban poor and for urban policy to be more inclusive (UN-HABITAT, 2003 & 2010). The PSUP was funded by UN-HABITAT, the European Commission and the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Group of States Secretariat. The PSUP afforded the participating countries to attend a number of training programmes in Nairobi in 2013 and 2014, in Cameroun in 2015 and the other African countries included Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Niger, Kenya, Senegal and Zambia. So far, the PSUP has helped more than 800,000 slum dwellers with improved secure tenure, with 5 million slum dwellers benefiting from it. And 190 cities in sub-Saharan Africa have since joined in the programme (UN-HABITAT). In October 2016, the UN adopted a New Urban Agenda for global urbanisation, which had 51 entry points for slum upgrading (Ga Mashie Development Agency (GAMADA), undated; Republic of Ghana, 2015a). In Ghana, the PSUP provided Government with the knowledge and experience in undertaking a national survey of slums and preparation of the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy in 2013, which is awaiting funding availability for implementation (Republic of Ghana, 2015a). However, the Strategy provided the platform for Government's introduction and implementation process of the earliest formal Ghana National Urban Policy and Action Plan (Republic of Ghana, 2012).

3. Statutory Urban Policy and Planning Contexts in Ghana

Slum existence rates in Ghana are at about 56 per cent, generally, 54 per cent in the urban and 46 per cent in the rural areas (UN-HABITAT, 2020a). In the national capital, Accra, it has 50 per cent presence and extension of 2 per cent. In Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi, slum presence ranges between 15 and 37 per cent with a slum extension rate between 1 and 2 per cent across both cities, respectively. Such statistics accord with and tend to be exacerbated by the urban transition of Ghana, now at 56.7 per cent and growing (Republic of Ghana, 2021). However, Action Area 3, Policy Initiative 3, Key Activity 3.1.7, under the National Urban Policy, aims at 'upgrading inner city areas in order to revitalise social and economic activities' (Republic of Ghana, 2012). In Ghana, most of the urban slums are concentrated within or around the inner-city areas. Similarly, Action Area 7, Policy Initiative 1, Key Activity 7.1.1 aims 'to identify slum areas for upgrading'. Key Activity 7.1.2 aims to 'Educate and create awareness on the need for slum upgrading', while Key Activity 7.1.4 aims to 'Encourage private sector participation in slum upgrading and redevelopment'. A second policy framework was the first formal National Housing Policy (Republic of Ghana, 2015b). Out of its 8 policy objectives, the 8th aims 'To upgrade existing slums and prevent the occurrence of new ones' (Republic of Ghana, 2015b). Targeted initiatives under this objective include the implementation of infrastructure improvement policy and development of slum infrastructure strategies, apart from improving other degraded settlements. Second, the progressive integration of 'existing slums through the revitalisation, redevelopment and regeneration into formal neighbourhoods and communities' (Republic of Ghana, 2015b: 23). Third, amelioration of 'the effects of poverty on slum dwellers' through a combined strategy, including 'infrastructure investments', quality social services, upgrading incentives and land regularisation assistance (Republic of Ghana, 2015b: 23). Fourth, empowering 'low-income slum dwellers to be economically viable to sustain their livelihoods', apart from participation in deterrent decision-making (Republic of Ghana, 2015b: 23-24).

A further slum policy context is the Habitat III National Report (Republic of Ghana, 2015a). A number of slum issues were addressed as part of various World Bank and other strategic projects, including roads, drainage, sanitation, and solid waste services in targeted areas during the 1990-2000 periods. Introduction of the UN-HABITAT's SUF in 2003 was indicated previously. It was also noted that success of the SUF led to introduction of the PSUP. And it was in relation to the successful piloting of the PSUP in Ga Mashie, that Government developed a National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy in 2013 'to guide the identification, categorisation and improvement of slum areas' (PSS Urbania, 2010; Republic of Ghana, 2015b: 53) (Interview with respondents from various public sector organisations, January 2021).

4. Statutory Land Use and Spatial Planning System

The national planning system is constituted of development planning, land-use and spatial planning functions but both responsibilities fall under separate institutions, although the whole system is meant to be unified in the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) (Republic of Ghana, 1994). The institutions are the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD), generally overseeing rural and urban development programmes, managed by its Rural and Urban Development Unit (RUDU) and the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, undertaken by its Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), responsible for human settlement planning (Republic of Ghana, 2016a). Local governance, which falls under the MLGDRD is represented by the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCC) at the regional level and the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) at the local levels (Republic Ghana, 2016b). However, each MMDA has both a Planning Co-ordinating Unit and a Physical Planning Department. The former is responsible for development planning matters and the latter, settlement/land-use and spatial

planning. At the regional level, the two forms of planning are, generally, under the joined-up administration of the Regional Planning Co-ordinating Unit of the RCC and the regional offices of the LUSPA, respectively. Generally, therefore, the local Planning Co-ordinating Unit reports to the RPCU, while the Physical Planning Department reports to the regional offices of the LUSPA.

However, a District Planning Authority may on its own prepare or direct a local community within the district to prepare a sub-district or Local Action Plan that may be required for the implementation of the existing Medium Term District Development Plan. In doing so, the local community must produce the plan in accordance with the approved District Development Plan and any guidelines that may be provided by the NDPC. While the Local Action Plan is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority, the NDPC may call it in for any further consideration and moderation. And the local community is required to conduct a public hearing on the Local Action Plan before its adoption, just like the District Planning Authority conducting one on its proposed District Development Plan (section 87, sub-section (1), (2), (3), Act 936). But while the District Planning Authority is required to attach a public hearing report to its proposed District Development Plan, it is unclear in Act 936 whether this applies in the case of the local community and its proposed Local Action Plan. The view here is that this should be permissible.

The Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016 (Act 925) (Republic of Ghana, 2016a) consolidates the spatial planning system introduced in 2011. First, was the *Manual for the Preparation of Spatial Plans*, emphasising 'The need to have adequate stakeholder consultations which is key in the spatial planning model' (Republic of Ghana, 2011a: 5). Its procedural stages focus on the participants and their roles, including professional planners and other technical undertakers. However, Government is emphatic that 'planners will have to listen very carefully to the views of many people who are looking at the' Spatial Development Framework 'from different angles, often giving conflicting views' (Republic of Ghana, 2011a: 32). Under Ghana's spatial planning system, the NDPC prepares a National Spatial Development Framework, the RCC, led by its RPCU and the regional LUSPA Office, prepares the Regional Spatial Development Framework; the MMDAs prepare the District Spatial Development Framework, which is the context for the preparation of Structure Plans and Local Plans. Spatial Development Frameworks are, essentially, aimed at presenting the spatial implications of development plans.

Government also launched *The New Spatial Planning Model Guidelines*, a revision and consolidation of the *Manual* (Republic of Ghana, 2011b). Generally, procedures for the making of both instruments is the same. However, the *Guidelines* detail out the timelines for the entailed activities and tasks. These include the identification of the planning area; creation of joint planning teams; data collection and preparation of base maps; consultation and scenario-writing; setting out options and visions; financial planning; preparation and presentation of the full framework; approval and further review of the Spatial Development Framework; monitoring and evaluation. Ga Mashie's participatory settlement/spatial planning experience drew guidance from these statutory processes, without strict conformance.

5. Slum Development and Conditions in Old Accra

Ga Mashie or Old Accra is the most historic core of indigenous Accra, original settlement of the Ga-Dagme people who arrived there by the beginning of the 15th century, in multi-stage migration, from the eastern part of the West African coast and in the region of coastal western Nigeria. Originally farmers and fishers, they later developed commercial trading activities and have sustained the fishing economy at any scale. Ga Mashie is constituted of James Town (Ngleshie, a vernacularised form of 'English') and Ussher Town, the oldest districts of Accra metropolis (Figure 1; Figure 2 shows an aerial view of part of the community). Both towns emerged around the 17th century, developing by the end of the century and subsequently under the rapid urban growth in Ghana during the 20th century. By this era, both settlements had grown in density and mixed commercial and residential uses (Accra Metropolitan Assembly and Ga Mashie Development Agency, 2011).

During the 1550-1598 periods, the Dutch colonists established the incipient 'Great Accra' at Ayawaso Hill in the area and developed the earliest non-Portuguese fort along the coast. In 1642, they built Fort Crevacouer, which later became Ussher Fort and around which Ussher Town subsequently developed (Accra Metropolitan Assembly and Ga Mashie Development Agency, 2011). British activities grew along the coast, focused on Old Accra, during the 1650-1663 periods and by 1672, they built James Fort, around which James Town later grew. The Quarters formed around Ussher Fort and James Fort bloomed into towns during the 1677-1680 periods. However, during the 1850-1860 periods, the British bought Dutch Town (i.e. Ussher Town) and the Dutch left. In 1871, the British built the original lighthouse at James Fort, which was replaced by a taller and better one in the 1830s. By this time, the slave trade had also taken place; slaves were sold at Salaga Market, which still retains its name. Another factor that promoted the development of Ga Mashie was the transfer of the headquarters of the British colonial government from Cape Coast to Accra in 1877 and sited in the community. All the noted factors hugely impacted commercial and trading functions and expansion of Ga Mashie and Accra was booming economically and politically.

However, Ga Mashie began to decline, irreversibly, with a series of earthquakes that hit the area and a few other parts of Accra, especially in 1863, 1892, 1896, particularly in 1939, which destroyed many residential structures, some of which still remain not built at the time of writing in 2023 (Nature, 1941; Mahama et al., 2011). In 1908, there was an outbreak of the Bubonic plague in the area and the British colonial government, rather indiscriminately, demolished many houses, negatively impacting the population. Housing shortages resulted and some residents started moving out of the area outwards into the modern Central Business District (CBD) of Accra and beyond. However, by Independence in 1957, the Civil Service quarter in Ga Mashie was relocated about 3 km eastwards to the present Ministries area. And in 1962, the James Town surf port/harbour was moved to Tema, some 17 km further eastwards. The centre of commerce also migrated to the present Accra CBD, focused on Makola and Tudu. Under all these dynamics, more sections, especially the nouveau-riche of Ga Mashie migrated outwards in all directions (Figure 1). With the consistent lack of investment in the area and with the subsequent population increases and under the impact of the wider urbanisation, especially of the spontaneous type, Old Accra was abandoned and it declined and degenerated into a slum (UN-HABITAT, 2019). As the Executive-Director of GAMADA tersely put it: “Ga Mashie is the oldest district in Accra. In its heyday it was one of the most beautiful spots at the former Gold Coast of Africa ... However, since Ghana’s independence in 1957, this area has not seen any kind of intervention” (UN-HABITAT, 2019).

In the contemporary era, the slummed Ga Mashie is faced with several difficult challenges. One is the subsequent high population increase in the area. From under 20,000 people during the 1891-1911 periods, it grew to 97,646 in 2000 and about 125,000 in 2010, one of the most densely populated parts of Accra, with a population density of 250 persons per ha on some 98 ha of land. Second, this is complicated by the generally unplanned nature of Ga Mashie, a far cry from the partly well-laid out construction in the colonial era (Mahama et al., 2011; KPF.com, 2022). Both factors, additional to the weak statutory planning system, have resulted in uncontrolled in-fill development, creating an irregular building scale and range (KPF.com, 2022). Third, land ownership, conforming to the general national mode, is largely under the control of traditional authorities. And there has been a historic sub-division of family lands and individualisation of family land rights, both resulting in an extensive pattern of family land ownership (CHF International and Ga Mashie Development Agency, 2010; Mahama et al., 2011; KPF.com, 2022). Because of this situation, ‘to acquire land for any development project in the community, the family heads and principal elders must be consulted’ (Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015: 3). Fourth, Ga Mashie is full of historic buildings, including UNESCO-listed World Heritage Sites such as Ussher Fort, James Fort and the Lighthouse. However, some of the buildings remain worn-out, deeply blighted or completely collapsed, partly resulting from the earthquakes experienced in the colonial era, especially in 1939.

Fifth, housing is largely inadequate, with most people sharing in the historical clustered family homes, despite some being storey structures (Figure 2). But these are still mostly unplanned, congested and overcrowded (CHF International and GAMADA, 2010; KPF.com, 2022). Today, there is significant homelessness, with a high number of people sleeping on the streets and in verandahs in the area because residences are overcrowded (CHF International and GAMADA, 2010; Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015). Generally, houses are old, declined and deteriorated, and without any consistent housing investment (Mahama et al., 2011). Ga Mashie also lacks residential-related and other urban services, including water, with irregular flows of it, sanitation, solid waste management and efficient power wiring in some places; similarly fewer schools than needed.

Sixth, Ga Mashie faces other environmental challenges. A major wetland zone to the western margin of the area, Korle Lagoon, is intensely degraded and heavily polluted. A municipal waste treatment plant was provided but it broke down soon because of the level of pollution in the area, which is extensively littered with waste and all efforts to clear this not efficient and effective enough (Mahama et al., 2011; KPF.com 2022). Generally, there is also poor surface drainage in the area, drains lacking maintenance or choked with waste. An extensive marine erosion also plagues the area, threatening shoreline properties, including the forts and the lighthouse. Another challenge relates to not the lack but the abundance of open spaces, including green and brown parks. But the related infrastructure is so minimal and limits accessibility to these. And due to the congested and overcrowded residential spaces, residents tend to relocate some uses to the streets, examples including funerals, washing and cooking activities. Still another problem relates to poor sanitation and healthcare resources, with fewer of these available. The most aged properties lack private toilets and bathroom facilities. Some communal facilities were provided in the residential-related environment but not adequate enough. And although a private waste management company operates in the area, a number of households could not afford user fees, resulting in refuse dump heap-ups in many places.

Furthermore, the routescape in Ga Mashie is generally good and connects the CBD and further into Accra because of the fairly sensitive maintenance in the past due to the electoral politics generated about the status of the community. However, this was not always sustained and traffic lighting is much lacking, which tends to cause pedestrian-vehicular conflicts (Mahama et al., 2011). Linked to this is the lack of pedestrian accesses, especially to penetrate the block interior of the community. Existing ones are rather narrow and difficult to

navigate, the distinction between public and private spaces also conflicting (Mahama et al., 2011). Local economic development consists of small private retail and artisan trades, fishing and fish-mongering, cooked food sales, especially of the staple kenkey, garages and salons. But existence of the London and Salaga Markets is not enough to cater for trading spaces, Moreover, the existing infrastructure is in need of extensive maintenance and rehabilitation. Traders also have very limited incomes and low financing capacities. This set of challenges has contributed to creating a situation of abject poverty, deprivation and economic starvation (Mahama et al., 2011; AMA and GAMADA, 2011). However, completion of the construction of the modern Accra Fishing Harbour in James Town, in progress, is expected to significantly impact job-creation.

It is these problems and challenges in Ga Mashie that the PSUP aimed to ameliorate. Because of the heritage and historical importance of Ga Mashie as the origin of Accra, its regeneration and redevelopment has been in Government discussions and other development partners since the late 1990s. A number of interventions were made, previously, in the area, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Old Accra Programme; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) National Poverty Reduction Programme; and United Nations International Children's Educational Fund (UNICEF) HIV/AIDS Programme (Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015; Accra Metropolitan Assembly, 2021). The UN-HABITAT's PSUP is the latest and major addition and it is under it that the Ga Mashie community decided to undertake their own participatory settlement planning.

6. Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) in Ga Mashie

6.1 Phases of the PSUP in Ga Mashie

Ga Mashie was the sole nationally targeted PSUP piloting site, intended for scale-up upon the success of the intervention, and was undertaken in 3 phases. Phase 1 involved undertaking and reviewing relevant studies and surveys on the urban profile of Accra to identify the metropolitan context for citywide up-scaling and prevention of slum development (Interview with Executive Director of GAMADA, April 2021). First, the urban profiling aimed to help the formulation of urban poverty reduction policies across the local, regional and national spatial scales, based on a rapidly comprehensive and actor-based needs assessment (UN-HABITAT, 2009). Second, it promoted the enhancement of interaction, opportunity awareness and constraints so as to identify a responsive approach related to the implementation of the MDGs (2001-2015) (UN-HABITAT, 2009). Urban profiling addressed the main themes of governance, slums, gender and HIV/AIDS and the environment, including a national focus on the national capital city, a medium-sized and small town. Profiles provided an overview of the urban situation in each participating city, based on a series of interviews and interactions with leading urban actors. It also took place in Tamale, Ho, and nationwide. Objective of Ghana's pilot PSUP was 'to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the urban poor in the Ga Mashie community' and contribute to halving the population of those who were denied of sustainable access to water and basic sanitation and significantly improving the lives of the slum dwellers (MDG Goal 7, targets (a) and (b), GAMADA, undated: 1). The New Urban Agenda, globally, supported the in situ slum upgrading approach, which already had a lead in the ACP countries. In Ghana, the Agenda provided a platform to consolidate gains of the PSUP into the slum upgrading interventions it supported.

Phase 2 consisted of initial community sensitisation and review of the operation of various community activities (Interaction with Executive Director, GAMADA, April 2021). Activities covered were the economic, social, cultural, physical and environmental aspects of the local community. One importance of phase 2 was its identification of the variety of individual and group engagements in the community. Second, it encouraged the assembling of their community representatives from a wide array of stakeholders, including traditional authorities, youth, women groups, fisher folk, Community Based, Faith Based and Non-Governmental Organisations. And this demonstrated the interest and preparedness of these groups in supporting the participatory upgrading of their slum community (GAMADA, undated; UN-HABITAT, 2019). It was in phase 2 that Ga Mashie was prioritised as a pilot site to guide the citywide Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy 'due to its deprivations - housing, water, sanitation and formal security of tenure, compared with other neighbourhoods assessed' (GAMADA, undated: 4).

Phase 3 focused on 5 main areas of intervention, identified by the Ga Mashie residents themselves. These were: (a) 'Mobilization of community representation and capacity building'; (b) 'Review of prioritised interventions ... with an expanded Country Team - the residents had previously broadly identified the projects in phase 1, particularly in phase 2 and together with community representatives, the Project Planning Team and Country Team needed to review and establish the real priorities; (c) set-up of a community-managed project mechanism, including the creation of the Ga Mashie Community Managed Funds to provide small revolving loans for individual and group business activities; item (c) involved the Planning Team visiting the various project sites within the community to clarify the sanity and maintenance potential of these; (d) an innovative and exemplary participatory community spatial and land-use planning initiative, which produced a real spatial and land-use or settlement plan and design for Ga Mashie under guidance of the local Planning Team; (e) 'physical

works implementation', in which the community decided on alley paving, development of a Youth and Homework Centre/Community Centre and the construction of in-house toilets (GAMADA, undated: 4). The rest of the study is focused on an appraisal of and reflection on the participatory community settlement planning and design processes under Ga Mashie's PSUP intervention.

6.2 Participatory community settlement planning and design processes in Ga Mashie

6.2.1 Spatial plan making aims and objectives

Principal aim of the settlement planning and design¹ initiatives was to enable Ga Mashie residents, themselves, produce, originally, a long-term 30-year settlement/spatial plan for the 2015-2045 periods, towards addressing the challenges facing their community, including making proposals for tapping the potentials of the area for its future development (Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015: 7). Residents, rightly, took great pride and celebration in taking up the production of a spatial plan and design for their own community. During the author's field interaction with the team of representatives from various public sector organisations, one of them from AMA stated: 'You know these planners, they always come with their own plans' and was emphatic that this time round, the residents themselves made the spatial planning and design of their own community. And as the Physical Planning Department of AMA (2015: 1) admitted: 'As the name suggests, this component' was 'a departure from the practice of spatial planning where experts prepare spatial plans for communities with limited involvement of the beneficiaries'. And 'The new spatial plan has been prepared with full participation of the community' (Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015: 1). However, 'The community members led in the decision-making process of the future state of Ga Mashie in the next 10 years', guided by the Physical Planning Department, Ashiedu-Keteke Sub-Metropolitan Council and GAMADA, and with the co-operation of the local Traditional Authorities.

Ga Mashie's spatial planning project had 5 main objectives (Physical Planning Department, AMA, 2015: 1), originally, to cover a 30-year period. First, 'To engage the community members to review the existing land-use plan of the community to conform to the existing ground situation'. Second, 'To make proposals to address the existing access problems'. Third, 'To stimulate stakeholders interest, awareness, buy-in and ownership of the revision of the Planning Scheme'. Fourth, 'To create a feedback platform for the implementation of the revised planning scheme and enhance education, communication and innovation sharing amongst stakeholders'. Fifth, 'To make proposals to stimulate economic growth and tap the potential of the area to address youth unemployment'.

However, the Planning Team, together with all other stakeholders later agreed on a plan period of 10 years, without any explanation for the disparity and inconsistency between this and the original period of 30 years. In the face of the long period and extent of decline and degeneration of Ga Mashie, the participating stakeholders and partners should have considered retaining the equally longer and more committed 3-decade period of upgrading and regeneration to turn the situation around. It appears that the main reason was the lack of funding. Nevertheless, the stated objectives pervaded the participatory community spatial plan making process² which involved a variety of both mechanisms and participating stakeholders. The major factors that were considered in the preparation of the plan were aspirations of the residents, land ownership system, location and size of the proposed sites and the existing Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan (2014-2017) of AMA as the plan context.

6.2.2 Stakeholder groups in Ga Mashie's participatory spatial plan making process

Putting the Ga Mashie community at the forefront of the participatory spatial plan making initiative allowed its aspirations to guide the process. Key stakeholders and participants were drawn from all sectors, segments and social groupings of the community (Table 1). And this afforded the Planning Team the opportunity to enumerate and register all the diverse opinions, aspirations, interests and preferences to guide the planning process and design of the new scheme. Stakeholder interests indicated in column 3 of Table 1 aptly indicated their values and preferences according to the group perceptions and wishes. For instance, the youth valued sporting activities, including football, boxing as well as job-creation and employment. Ga Mashie, nationally, is popularly known for the boxing prowess and performance of its youth and has produced highly talented professional boxers, trained at its several boxing gyms. While students and women groups valued education and social facilities, generally, traditional groups also had preference for open-air market infrastructure, a common and popular development in Ghanaian and other African towns and cities. Fishermen and fish mongers took to beach sanitation and hygiene, development of an ice factory, cold stores and a fishery training school, etc. However, children, as separate from the youth, were not explicitly featured in the list of stakeholders; their specific interests could also have been captured in the initial consultation.

6.2.3 Consultative approaches and planning techniques and processes

The participatory community spatial planning experience involved a variety of consultative approaches and suitable planning techniques (Table 2). First, a set of forums was held separately and consecutively at James Town, Ussher Town and the Bukom neighbourhood within the former. Focus of discussion was on the

introduction of the main community planning process, encouragement and invitation of the various stakeholder groups for their effective participation and initial speaking about the area's problems and resident expectations. Second, a series of community workshops was held to advance the planning process. First of these involved the Planning Team and Key Stakeholders and group representatives reflecting on the physically identifiable as well as spatially non-manifested problems of the area and broad recommendation for the amelioration of these. Next, was a start-up workshop at which the existing schemes and plans for the community were reviewed and actual spatial locations and sites for the proposed projects identified. Participants were organised into various groups to focus on the separate problems and issues in the various localities and neighbourhoods; and more detailed analysis of stakeholder views was made. A follow-up stakeholder workshop was subsequently held to further assess the outcome of the start-up workshop and other solutions were identified and appraised. And a further follow-up workshop took the form of a final community meeting to fine up the various group design options proposed previously and integrate these into the spatial plan and vision for James Town and Ussher Town.

Following the forums and workshops, a community plan exhibition was mounted at specific points in the community, with field officers stationed at these to explain the proposals to individual residents passing by and enquiring about these (Table 2). Next, a very innovative community meeting was held to discuss resident feedback on the plan proposals. However, only key stakeholders attended these meetings. The view in this study is that it would have been more worthwhile for a wider community meeting than an interaction with key representatives only. This would have yielded a digested and dissected confirmation of resident view and opinions on the proposed developments and recommended solutions. Finalisation of the community spatial and land-use plan technically involved the Planning Team and Field Officers but took them out of the studios and workshops into the community. They went out there on a transect walk through the area to confirm the existing land-uses, identifying the sites and areas for the proposed developments and capturing new developments that were not identified previously, interacting with residents in places about the plan proposals. They also analysed issues of relevance to plan implementation and compatibility with existing schemes. Then the final Ga Mashie community spatial plan (2015-2025) was produced and copies distributed to the two settlements.

6.2.4 Participatory community proposals

The main project proposals are indicated in Table 3 for both James Town and Ussher Town, covering education, healthcare, sanitation, road and drains, housing and land issues, economy and commerce, utilities, civic/culture and tourism developments. Generally, the proposals related to and reflected the problems and challenges of slum development identified previously. Projects were more of the provision of social, economic, cultural and physical infrastructure facilities and services, apart from environmental assets. Others related to regeneration and renewal, the latter including redevelopment, rehabilitation and maintenance, reconstruction, renovation and revitalisation interventions. Apparently, the rich variety of stakeholder groups, effective participation, detailed consultation and multiple planning techniques and processes also contributed to generating a sustainable development flair of the community spatial and land-use plan. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, all the proposals were put together to produce the composite map/plan in Figure 3.

6.2.5 Participatory community spatial and land-use plan implementation roadmap

Perhaps, the most statutory part of the Ga Mashie participatory spatial and land-use production process was its actual implementation aspect (Table 4). Generally, the community plan had to be integrated with the existing Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan for the 2014-2017 periods. And AMA's Physical Planning Department (2015: 21) indicated some 'critical issues that' were to 'be considered for successful implementation of the plan'. Actually, these issues were identified during the consultation and plan design stages of the planning process in Ga Mashie. Actually, in substantive, technical and procedural terms, these should not be part of the implementation phase and its management. After all, problems and challenges in Ga Mashie justified the need to implement the participatory community plan towards ameliorating these. Certainly, issues like land assembly and availability and funding needed to be addressed before implementation could take off. Moreover, the Planning Team and stakeholders did not make any mention of funding for plan implementation. Generally, UN-HABITAT provided some funding for the PSUP, with Government of Ghana expected to provide counterpart financing but the latter failed to do so. Funding for plan implementation should have been critically discussed as part of the consultation and design processes.

Nonetheless, the study appraised the identified obstacles to plan implementation. Table 3 (last column) indicated that the consultation and design processes identified historic and heritage assets as resources for Ga Mashie's development. So, item 1 in Table 4 and the need to regenerate and redevelop these assets could have been included with this consideration. Such a situation was akin to the regeneration of cultural heritage, including castles and a fort, traditional shrines and historic residential homes in Cape Coast (KIT Publishers and Government of Ghana, 2008). Second, definitely, the overcrowded and congested nature of households, being within family homes and in clustered structures should only have been addressed as part of the challenges of the slum community in the consultation and design stages. And these are critically linked to the problem of homelessness, with some people sleeping in verandahs and on the street. Moreover, a previous study by CHF

International, a non-for-profit organisation had identified this in its housing survey of Ga Mashie. Third, the issue of certain uses over-spilling the streets could equally have been addressed during the problem identification stage of the planning process. Fourth, issues of ownership of all abandoned sites and the clearing of these to create part of the land required for project development was a critical one that should have been addressed in the problem identification stage, equally under the housing and land column in Table 3, and emphasised as part of the observation made during the transect walk through the community. Fifth, the issue of waste management was indicated under the sanitation column in Table 3 and should have been discussed and left as such. Waste management is an all-time challenge in the Ga Mashie slum community, with the implementation of any plan. Sixth, the need to create commercial or economic development spaces could also have been part of the economy/commerce column in Table 3, as one of the critical challenges of the slum community to be ameliorated through implementation of the participatory spatial and land-use plan. Otherwise, the issues indicated in Table 4 could have been expressed as special conditions for plan implementation, still as part of the problem identification stage in the planning process. Indeed, these belong more to that phase of the whole engagement.

6.2.6 Plan implementation timelines and administrative procedure

Having addressed the critical proposals of the slum community (Table 3 and 4), the contents of Table 5 appropriately belong to plan implementation and its management. Generally, the whole planning process was well conducted, innovative and substantively participatory, with the community in the lead and driving its spatial and land-use plan making. However, the Technical sub-Committee of the Metropolitan Planning Committee had to assess the plan for its formal statutory approval as a working development instrument. Second, it was a democratic innovation that the approved plan document was brought back to the community, in a further exhibition for them to indicate their acceptance and very final approval or non-acceptance of it. Following this, the Planning Team prepared feasibility plans on the proposals for actual integration with the existing Four-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan. This also meant a revision of any previous proposals for Ga Mashie's development or new proposals in the existing Medium Term Plan. Thus the Planning Team had to prepare Community Action Plans, based on the social-cultural problems in Ga Mashie for inclusion in the existing Metropolitan Plan (2014-2017). However, it was somewhat at odds with the community plan's timescale of 2015-2025, during which two more Four-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plans, 2018-2021 and 2022-2026, would have been made. Otherwise, the community plan component would have been carried over during these two periods. Writing in 2023, the study has no evidence of the implementation performance of AMA's Medium Term Development Plans, particularly the part relating to Ga Mashie's sub-district or Area Action Plan. However, these issues were, apparently, tied to those of the citywide plan implementation and funding.

The Planning Team and other stakeholders may have considered Accra-wide and nationwide slum upgrading initiatives that were in preparation or had been designed and would benefit Ga Mashie. For instance, AMA had compiled detailed data on its over 20 slums for future upgrading programmes, subject to funding availability. Government, through the MLGDRD, was also preparing to undertake its national survey of slums, the results of which were later used to produce the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy (PSS Urbana, 2010), equally awaiting funding availability (Republic of Ghana, 2015a; Interview with Director of Plan Implementation, NDPC; representatives of the Rural and Urban Development Unit, MLGDRD and AMA, January 2021). In relation to these, it may also have been considered rather too far-fetched or less feasible to have targeted a 30-year plan implementation period. Nevertheless, it is the view in this study that targeted funding should have been provided for the specific implementation of the participatory community plan as part of phase 3 of the PSUP for an explicit and sustainable transformation of Ga Mashie.

Another aspect of the implementation schedule related to plan monitoring and review. Two timelines of 3-year and 5-year periods were indicated for monitoring and review, without any clarification. Perhaps, clarification should also have been provided in relation to the difference between 'monitoring' and 'review'. Usually, the former refers to the day-to-day and shortest-term assessment; review to any period between this and an annual or more stock-taking (Ofori, 2021). So, monitoring could be on monthly, six-monthly basis; review, between 1-3 year periods. Otherwise, it was probably the intent to monitor on a 3-year basis and review on a 5-year period basis, towards the final plan evaluation after the 2015-2025 periods. Evaluation was also to reflect results of the periodic plan monitoring and review. However, in view of the fact that the community spatial plan became part of the wider entirety of the Four Year Medium Term Metropolitan Plan, it is also understandable that the former would have been monitored, reviewed and evaluated according to the existing statutory schedule (Ofori, 2021). Under it, the Medium Term District Development Plans are monitored and reviewed on annual basis and evaluated after the full 4-year implementation period.

Furthermore, in relation to funding, it is usual practice to cost project implementation and display this in an overall plan budgetary allocation. If the community plan implementation cost more than the annual period of the Four-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Plan, it would have meant that the Planning Authority would have

needed more funding for its project financing. Therefore, this would have justified the need to have costed the proposed community development projects as part of the participatory spatial and land-use plan. These details could also have been indicated as part of the feasibility plans (Table 5). It was a bit odd that funding provided for the PSUP initiative covered the preparation of the participatory community plan but not its implementation.

7. Conclusions

Against the phenomenal development and proliferation of slums in the towns and cities, mostly in developing countries, where these are home to millions of the poor and poorest in society, the unfair treatment meted out to the residents, the global community, in the 1980s and 1990s, gradually, came to recognise and embrace slum upgrading, in situ, as the solution to the challenge and as pertained to the Ga Mashie Community in Accra metropolis. Notable global initiatives included the SUF and PSUP, both initiated by UN-HABITAT and the latter introduced upon the success of the former. Ghana was fortunate to be one of the four countries in which the SUF was piloted and of the many in which the PSUP is being implemented, for which Ga Mashie was the pilot community. The study also indicated how slum upgrading policies have been expressed in the National Urban Policy and Action Plan 2012, National Housing Policy 2015, the Habitat III Report 2015 and the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy 2013, awaiting funding for implementation, indicating Government's seriousness in meeting the challenge of slums.

Ga Mashie's PSUP was well-phased out. Phase 1 on literature review and urban profiling provided the opportunities to identify relevant broad policies, needs-based assessment, various strategic issues on slums and citywide initiatives and interaction with leading actors. Phase 2 focused on real community sensitisation and review of relevant existing locality activities, apart from explicit identification and assembly of various stakeholders, which was to be sustained in the community plan making process. Phase 3 identified the actual areas of intervention, including a review of the projects broadly indicated in phases 1 and 2, creation of a community project management structure, including the Local Financial Facility (LFF) and the participatory community settlement planning and design assessed in this study. Residents were careful to make demands that were just necessary and could be fulfilled.

Invariably, communities, including recognised slum areas and other informal settlements are planned for by actors considered to be professional planners in municipal institutions, led by local political actors. In the case of Ga Mashie's PSUP, however, the residents opted for a participatory planning and design of their own community and this was recognised by the Metropolitan Planning Authority. Generally, local communities tend to mistrust professional planners and political actors in planning activities that do not effectively respect and serve their values, interests and preferences. On this occasion, therefore, the residents of Ga Mashie were quite happy and proud to conduct the planning and design of their community, of all, under a global initiative, UN-HABITAT's PSUP, which has been implemented in thousands of other cities in the developing world. However, the community received some guidance of a Planning Team composed of professional planners from the Physical Planning Department of AMA, Ashiedu-Keteke Sub-Metropolitan Council and GAMADA. The initiative demonstrated that provided such organisation and guidance, slums and informal settlements can take up the planning and design of their settlements. Moreover, the national planning system provides for local communities, on their own, or under the direction of their planning authority, to make plans for their community, which are then revised into the existing Four-Year Medium Term District/Municipal/Metropolitan Development Plan.

Originally, the community intended to make a spatial plan and design for a 3-decade period but due to seemingly funding challenges, they eventually covered a 10-year period. However, in view of the long period of abject decline and degeneration of Ga Mashie, a long-term/30-year plan would have been more beneficial. Indeed, the challenge of slums requires a more committed slum upgrading and development period and should apply to any such interventions, and as the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy is yet to be implemented. And the specific objectives reflected the procedural planning process, including engagement with residents and review of existing schemes, stimulating stakeholder interest, making proposals for addressing the community's problems as indicated previously, getting residents involved in implementation processes and procedures, and generating economic development and growth.

Stakeholder groups identified in phase 2 of the PSUP were further streamlined and enhanced. Major stakeholder groups were effectively identified into more specific groups and each of these expressed their interests in the settlement plan and design (Table 1). However, children were not specifically and explicitly targeted among the stakeholder groups. Nonetheless, such an enlightened array of stakeholders contributed to the phenomenal success of the participatory community settlement planning initiative, and this is exemplary and worth replication in future slum upgrading interventions.

Equally, the initiative involved a variety of consultative approaches and planning techniques. These included community and neighbourhood forums, a series of community workshops to identify problems, propose solutions, further analyse these and make formal proposals. A community plan exhibition followed, a form of

Examination in-Public or Public Hearing, for resident feedback; and the Planning Team had a walk through the community to verify the proposed developments and land allocations to these, further engaging with the residents. The proposals related to infrastructure, housing, environmental and land issues, cultural development and tourism and local economic development, generally, but clearly reflected the challenges of Ga Mashie. It would have been worthwhile, however, to have costed the proposals. And the issues identified as being obstacles to implementation (Table 4) could have been included with the consultation, design and proposals making stages.

Plan monitoring and review should have been more clarified, whether this was on a 3-year or a 5-year basis. Since proposals did not include costed projects, these were not reflected in the planning and administrative arrangements for implementation. UN-HABITAT provided some funding for the spatial plan and design initiative but not for its implementation. And the plan had to be revised into the existing Four-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan, perhaps carried over into subsequent plans, delaying programme delivery for the highly deprived and degenerated community. Although the Government of Ghana was required to provide counterpart funding, it failed to do so. All these link up with the outstanding challenge of funding slum upgrading and, generally, urban regeneration interventions in particular. Without a committed and sustained funding, all the slum upgrading and urban regeneration initiatives would not be effective. Although the PSUP included the creation of a Local Finance Facility, i.e. the Ga Mashie Community Managed Funds, these were meagre, compared with the substantial and adequate budgetary allocations needed for project implementation. Furthermore, a specific provision should have been made for post-commissioning facility management and with the existence of such important local structures as GAMADA, the Community Development Committee and Ga Mashie Community Managed Funds.

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Notes

- Note 1. In this study, 'settlement planning and design' is used as synonymous with 'spatial and land-use planning and design' or 'spatial planning and design'.
- Note 2. Also known as 'planning methodology', 'planning procedure', 'planning technology'.

Table 1. Ga Mashie: Stakeholder groups in the participatory settlement plan making process

<i>Community Stakeholder Groups</i>	<i>Specific Groups Engaged at Community Level</i>	<i>Community Stakeholder Interest</i>
Community Based Organisation; Faith Based Organisations, etc.	Act for Change; Methodist Church, Bukom; Great Thinkers; Kings Social Club.	Creation of jobs and employment opportunities

<i>Community Stakeholder Groups</i>	<i>Specific Groups Engaged at Community Level</i>	<i>Community Stakeholder Interest</i>
Women's Groups	Ga Traditional Caterer's Association	Renovation of London Market; Education issues (e.g. school facilities, etc)
Youth Groups	Concerned Youth; Tafo Youth,	Football Park; Boxing Gym (Bukom); Creating jobs and employment.
Opinion Leaders; Assemblymen & Assemblywomen (Local Councilors/Political actors).	Opinion Leaders	Construction of Tourist sites; Provision of pipe-borne water and toilet facilities; Provision of Street light
Traditional Leaders and Land Owners	Chief of James Town; Koteiman Mantse Asere; Queen Mother.	Construction of mausoleum; Land registration; Proper settlement layout; Sanitation.
Students	Sacred Heart Technical Institute	Building of schools; Upgrading of existing schools; Free education.
Fishermen and Fish mongers	James Town Chief Fisherman; Ga Mashie Canoe Owners.	Clearing squatters along the beach front; Building of an ice factory and cold stores; Construction of a fishing training school.
Traditional Groups	London Market Traders	Renovation of London and Salaga/Sraha Markets; Desilting of choked gutters/drains.
Key Festivals	Fire service; Ussher Polyclinic; National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO); Social welfare.	Renovation of Ussher Polyclinic; Sanitation; Education.

Source: Tabulated and revised from Physical Planning Department, 2015: 8-9.

Table 2. Participatory planning techniques and consultative processes in Ga Mashie

<i>Planning Techniques and Consultation Mechanisms</i>	<i>Settlement/Spatial Planning and Design Engagement (All Forums)</i>
Community Forums: (a) James Town Community Forum held at Ga Mashie Community Centre, 24 June 2015; (b) Ussher Town Community Forum held at Ga Mashie Community Centre, 25 June 2015; (c) Bukom Residents Community Forum held at the Methodist Church/Chapel, 26 June 2015	Introduction of the spatial and land-use planning process to the Ga Mashie community on all 3 occasions; its rationale, etc.; Seeking the participation and involvement of the resident groups at each stage of the planning process; Creating start-up opportunity for community members to voice out their problems and expectations in relation to the proposed projects.

<i>Planning Techniques and Consultation Mechanisms</i>	<i>Settlement/Spatial Planning and Design Engagement (All Forums)</i>
Community Spatial Planning & Land-use Design Workshop	<p>Planning Team held a workshop with key/selected stakeholders from the identified groups within James Town and Ussher Town to identify the problems within Ga Mashie that must be addressed in the new spatial plan;</p> <p>Discussion of spatially non-manifested proposals and classification of these to be included as recommendations for action plans in the AMA's Medium-Term Plan.</p>
Community Spatial Planning and Land-use Design Start-up Workshops (2 days)	<p>Review of existing schemes and plans with the key stakeholders; starting the design process;</p> <p>Identification of spatial locations and sites for the proposed projects; Participants broken into smaller groups to deal with specific problems (e.g. James Town had 5 groups, merging into 2 later; Ussher Town had 3 groups merged into 2 later;</p> <p>Detailed analysis of the views and opinions of the workshop participants.</p>
Community Spatial Planning Follow-up Workshop 1 (1 day)	<p>Further assessment of the problems considered at the Start-up workshops with key stakeholders;</p> <p>Identification of possible solutions to address the problems by key stakeholders.</p>
Final Community Design (Further Follow-up Meeting) 2 (1 day)	<p>Following stakeholder designs, the Planning Team fine-tuned the designs and presented these at a community meeting;</p> <p>Final community decision on the design options, based on the strengths and weaknesses of the designs.</p> <p>The various stakeholder groups integrated issues and solutions and derived a final plan and community strategic vision for each of James Town and Ussher Town.</p>
Community Plan Exhibition	<p>Display of draft plans and designs at vantage places within the community for the ordinary residents to make individual comments on these;</p> <p>Field officers stationed at the various vantage points to explain plans and designs to residents and compile their views on the draft instruments.</p>
Community Meeting on Plan and Design Exhibition - Feedback	<p>Planning Team collated feedback for the Plan Exhibition and discussed these with key stakeholders for their acceptance or otherwise of the plan.</p>
Finalisation of the Community Spatial and Land-use Plan (3 days)	<p>Planning Team and Field Officers undertook transect walks through the community interacting with and seeking opinions of some of the residents in both towns;</p> <p>Opportunity for Planning Team to confirm existing land-uses, identify areas of proposed land-uses and capture new developments that were not covered in the updated/new planning scheme, and ascertain land owners and their willingness to release their lands for the proposed projects;</p> <p>Planning Team analysed the critical issues relevant to plan implementation and compatibility of these with existing plans in Ga Mashie;</p> <p>Production of the final plan and strategic vision (2015-2025), including the Composite Plan (Figure 3); copies distributed to both James Town and Ussher Town.</p>

Source: Author's tabulation

Table 3. Participatory community planning proposals from James Town and Ussher Town

<i>Town</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Roads/Drains</i>	<i>Housing/Land</i>	<i>Economy/Commerce</i>	<i>Utilities</i>	<i>Civic & Culture/Tour</i>
James Town	Construction of Junior, Senior High Schools & Tertiary buildings; Provision of Community Library; Sensitisation of residents on education issues; Free basic education.	Construction of 2 health facilities; Conversion of old warehouse to clinics.	Construction of roads and drains; Construction of alleys and pathways; Desilting of choked gutters/drains.	Demolition of structures on walkways; Demolition of haphazard settlements along the coastal areas; Land registration and proper settlement layout; Housing upgrading to reduce congestion.	Provision of cold store; Upgrading of ice company into a factory; Renovation of old abattoir; Renovation of open-air markets.	Provision of street lights; Provision of pipe-borne water facilities; Fixing of all electrical wires.	Construction of tourist site; Construction of recreation centres; Construction of mausoleum; Renovation of James Fort.
Ussher Town	Sensitisation of residents on educational issues; Construction of basic school and Senior High School; Construction of training centre.	Renovation of Ussher Town Polyclinic; Construction of new health centre; Employment of more health workers.	Desilting of choked gutters/drains; Construction of roads and drains.	Demolition of unauthorised buildings; Reconstruction of houses into multi-storey buildings.	Renovation of Salaga/Sraha and London Markets; Job creation and unemployment; Relocation of Salaga/Sraha Market.	Construction of boreholes.	Construction of tourist sites; Construction of recreational grounds Bukom; Renovation of Ussher Town.

Source: Author's revision and tabulation from Physical Planning Department, 2015: 11-12.

Table 4. Critical issues addressed to facilitate implementation

<i>Main Issue</i>	<i>Details of Issues Addressed</i>
Historic heritage assets and tourism	Abounding historic and cultural heritage in Ga Mashie, including family houses, shrine houses, chiefs' palaces, European colonial fortifications and other residences; Need for plan implementation to recognise these as opportunities for improving the tourism services and market in the community.
Homelessness and housing improvement	High rate of homelessness in Ga Mashie, with a significant number of people sleeping in house verandahs and on the streets; Need to target housing improvement for effective plan implementation.
Routescape spaces	Some roads encroached on through unpermitted building extensions and presence of temporary structures; Need to pave lanes and alleys to withdraw some of the road over-spilled uses into these; Also improving emergency access, e.g., fire fighting services.

<i>Main Issue</i>	<i>Details of Issues Addressed</i>
Sites and spaces and abandoned structures	<p>Community proposals included the development of sites of old and abandoned structures into other facilities, e.g., hospitals, recreational and cold store facilities;</p> <p>Such development as a way of obtaining additional land for project implementation;</p> <p>But used to confirm ownership details of such places before any acquisition of these.</p>
Waste management	<p>Challenge of refuse dumping in drains and ‘gutters’, creating insanitary conditions in households and at street level;</p> <p>Need to cleanse these areas to avoid any possible out-breeding of diseases like cholera, diarrhoea, dysentary, etc.</p>
Established places for commercial activities	<p>Commercial activities, especially cooked food and retail sales of it; other cuisine like popular local “kenkey”;</p> <p>Such spaces provided for fish-mongers in James Town; need to recreate such spaces for “kenkey” manufacturers and chefs to facilitate plan implementation.</p>

Source: Author’s tabulation from text (Physical Planning Department, 2015).

Table 5. Implementation schedule and activities for the participatory spatial plan: Ga Mashie, 2015-2025

<i>Main Implementation Activity</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Agent</i>	<i>Specific Implementation Actions</i>
Statutory plan assessment and approval process	December 2015	Physical Planning Department, AMA; Accra Metropolitan Planning Committee.	Assessment of the Community Spatial and Land use Plan by the Technical sub-Committee of the Accra Metropolitan Planning Committee; Approval of the plan for adoption as a statutory working document/instrument.
Final community exhibition and approved plan	December 2015	Physical Planning Department, AMA; GAMADA; Key community leaders.	Further exhibition of the approved plan at the community level for residents to register their final acceptance of it;
Feasibility assessment of community proposals	January 2016	Physical Planning Department, AMA; GAMADA;	Preparation of Feasibility Plans on proposals and incorporation of these into the AMA’s Four-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan.
Preparation of special implementation plans	January 2016	Physical Planning Department, AMA; GAMADA; Community Development and Social Work Department.	Preparation of Community Action Plans, including focus on social-cultural challenges and for incorporation of the approved plan into the 4-Year Medium Term Metropolitan Development Plan.

<i>Main Implementation Activity</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Responsible Agent</i>	<i>Specific Implementation Actions</i>
Plan monitoring and review	Every 3-year or 5-year period	Physical Planning Department, AMA; GAMADA; Metropolitan Development Planning Co-ordinating Unit; Key community members.	Plan monitoring, generally on annual basis; Plan review every 3 or 5-year period.
Plan evaluation	End of the 10-year period: 2015-2025	Physical Planning Department, AMA; GAMADA; Metropolitan Development Planning Co-ordinating Unit; Key community members.	Final evaluation after the 10-year plan implementation period.

Source: Author's extraction and tabulation from Physical Planning Department, 2015: 20.

GA MASHIE (OLD ACCRA) IN THE CITY OF ACCRA CONTEXT

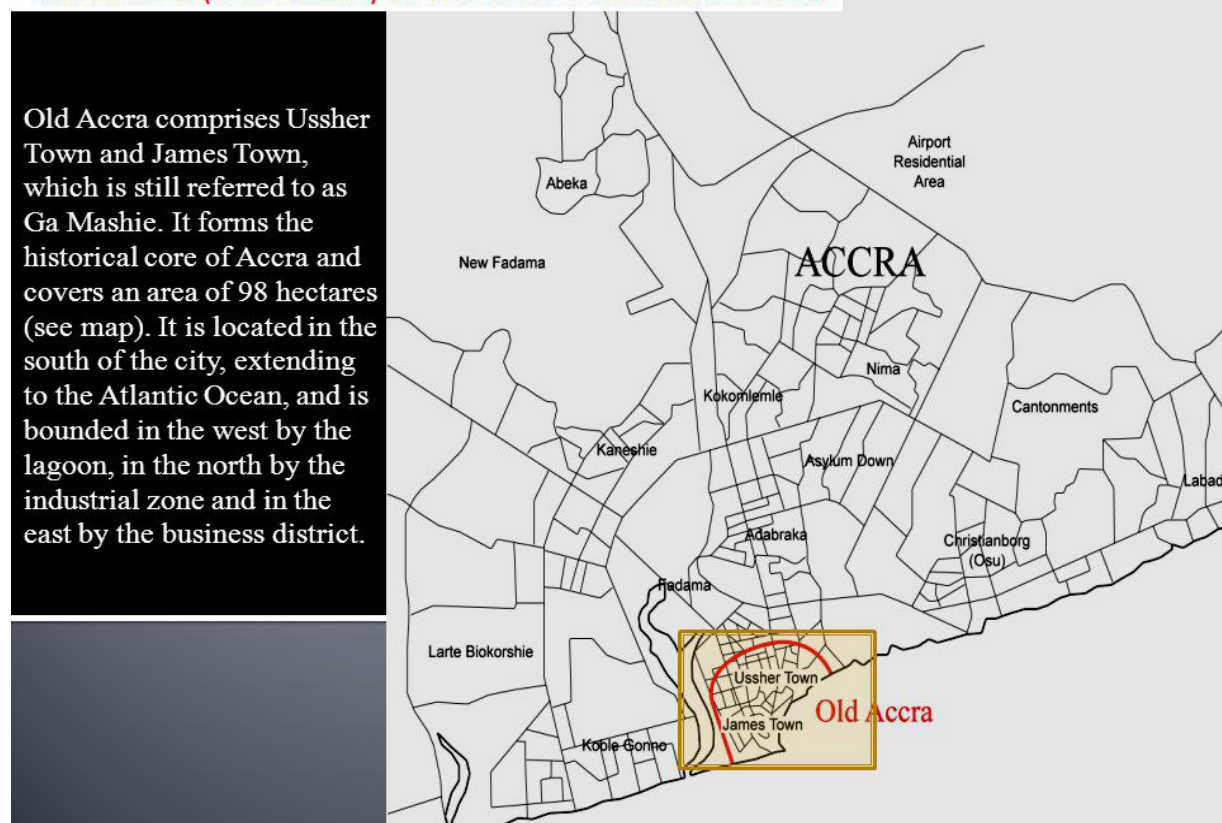


Figure 1. Ga Mashie in the context of Accra metropolis

Source: Accra Metropolitan Assembly and Ga Mashie Development Agency, 2011



Figure 2. Aerial view of part of Ga Mashie/Old Accra, showing the common two-storey properties and generally worn-out and blighted properties, with highly rusted roofscales.
 Source: Google maps.com, 2021

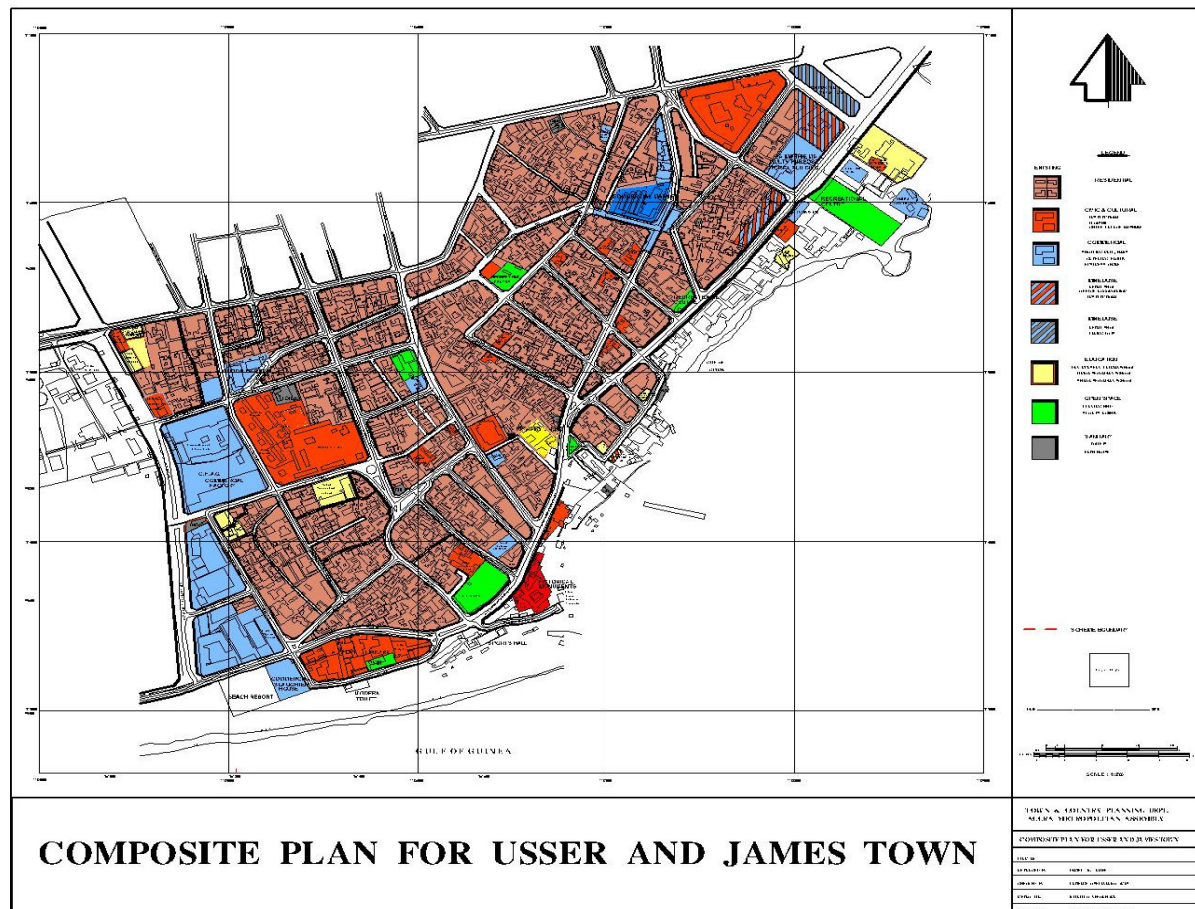


Figure 3. Community-designed Composite Plan of Ga Mashie (Ussher spelt as ‘USSER’)
 Source: Ga Mashie Development Agency, 2021.